



Climate Change and Environment Committee Agenda

November 20, 2025, 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Conestoga Room

City of Kitchener

200 King Street W, Kitchener, ON N2G 407

People interested in participating in this meeting can email Committee Administrator, Eda Islemecioglu at eda.islemecioglu@kitchener.ca. Please refer to the delegation section on the agenda below for the registration deadline. Written comments received will be circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting and will form part of the public record.

Accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request. If you require assistance to take part in a city meeting or event, please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994.

Co-Chairs: V. Nhio-son & K. Charlesworth

Pages

1. Commencement

The meeting will begin with a Land Acknowledgement given by the Chair.

The City of Kitchener is situated on the traditional territory of the Chonnonton, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee Peoples.

We recognize our responsibility to serve as stewards for the land and honour the original caretakers who came before us. Our community is enriched by the enduring knowledge and deep-rooted traditions of the diverse First Nations, Metis and Inuit in Kitchener today.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

Members of Council and members of the City's local boards/committees are required to file a written statement when they have a conflict of interest. If a conflict is declared, please visit www.kitchener.ca/conflict to submit your written form.

3. Delegations

Pursuant to Council's Procedural By-law, delegations are permitted to address the Committee for a maximum of five (5) minutes. All Delegations where possible are encouraged to register prior to the start of the meeting. For Delegates who are attending in-person, registration is permitted up to the start of the meeting. Delegates who are interested in attending virtually must register by 1:00 p.m. on November 20, 2025 in order to participate electronically.

4. Discussion Items

- | | | | |
|-----|---|------|----|
| 4.1 | Integrated Stormwater Master Plan Update,
INS-2025-447, INS-2025-447, INS-2025-447 | 30 m | 1 |
| | <i>S. Anderson, Engagement Associate (S&S), will provide a 5-minute presentation on this matter.</i> | | |
| 4.2 | Kitchener 2051, DSD-2025-461 | 30 m | 22 |
| | <i>N. Goss, Manager of Policy & Research, will provide a 5-minute presentation on this matter.</i> | | |
| 4.3 | Council Report Template Discussion, DSD-2025-457 | 15 m | 26 |
| | <i>Committee/Council Report Template Change(s) Sub-committee will provide a 5-minute discussion on this matter.</i> | | |
| 4.4 | Mid-Term Reflections | 20 m | |
| | <i>Co-Chair, K. Charlesworth, will facilitate a continuous improvement exercise.</i> | | |

5. Information Items

- | | | |
|-------|--|------|
| 5.1 | Sub-Committee Year-End Updates | 10 m |
| 5.1.a | Environmental Rodent Control Impacts | |
| | <i>A. Hohenadel, C. Corocan, Cllr. Stretch will provide a 5-minute sub-committee year-end update.</i> | |
| 5.1.b | Sustainable Food Systems | |
| | <i>A. Di Battista, A. Hohenadel, and P. Nojo, will provide a 5-minute sub-committee year-end update.</i> | |

**5.1.c Committee/Council Report
TemplateChange(s)**

K. Charlesworth, P. Boot, and P. Nojo will provide an update under Discussion Item 4.4.

**5.1.d High Performance Development
Standards**

K. Charlesworth, B. Wallis, and J. Phan will provide a 5-minute subcommittee year-end update.

6. Adjournment

Eda Islemecioglu
Committee Administrator

Staff Report



Infrastructure Services Department

www.kitchener.ca

REPORT TO: Climate Change and Environment Committee

DATE OF MEETING: November 20, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Natalie Goss, Manager, Policy & Research, 519-783-8933

PREPARED BY: Sarah Anderson, Engagement Associate, Sanitary and Stormwater, 519-783-8824

WARD(S) INVOLVED: All Wards

DATE OF REPORT: October 19, 2025

REPORT NO.: INS-2025-447

SUBJECT: Integrated Stormwater Master Plan Update Pre-Engagement

RECOMMENDATION:

For Discussion.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- This report provides information about the upcoming 2026-2027 ISWMP update. At this early stage, we're gathering ideas to consider as we set the project scope and engagement process.
- We are conducting pre-engagement during Fall 2025. We will keep the CCEC informed, listen to your priorities, concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how your input influenced decisions.
- This report supports the delivery of core services and the strategic goal of cultivating a green city together.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City's Sanitary and Stormwater Utilities (SSU) is preparing to update Kitchener's Integrated Stormwater Master Plan (ISWMP) in 2026 and 2027. The plan guides how Kitchener plans to adapt our infrastructure and support the community to deal with wetter, wilder weather. This fall, SSU will be starting early conversations to share a project overview and gain feedback, which will be used to help shape the scope and engagement process for the ISWMP update.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Kitchener's first integrated stormwater master plan was approved in 2016 with the objective of maintaining the natural hydrologic cycle to minimize flood risks and erosion and improve water quality. Over the past eight years, the City of Kitchener has achieved significant success:

*** This information is available in accessible formats upon request. ***
Please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994 for assistance.

- 80% of Kitchener's creeks increased in water quality between 2016 and 2020
- Enhanced stormwater management, expanded neighbourhood connections, and cultivated a greener city. Between 2016-2030, we will have added:
 - 8 new stormwater facilities in parks, including seating, trails and native plantings
 - 7,300 meters of rehabilitated creeks
 - 3,000 meters of concrete channels removed
 - 48,924 meters of road reconstruction stormwater upgrades
- Awarded \$53.7 million for implementation
 - \$49.9 million Government of Canada Disaster Mitigation Adaptation Fund
 - \$3 million Province of Ontario Build Faster Fund
 - \$800,000 Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund

See Appendix A for a more detailed overview of the 2016 ISWMP achievements and status.

As a planning process, the ISWMP serves as a decision-support tool for prioritizing future capital works, provides updated guidance for stormwater management, and establishes funding strategies and policy recommendations to sustain and enhance stormwater management over the following ten to fifteen years.

Recommendations in the ISWMP support Kitchener's commitments to climate adaptation.

REPORT:

As part of Kitchener's climate adaptation efforts, we're preparing to update the Integrated Stormwater Master Plan (ISWMP) in 2026 and 2027. This update will revisit the 2016 projects and programs while exploring new data-driven opportunities to:

- Strengthen stormwater infrastructure resilience
- Reduce and prepare for climate-driven flood risks
- Improve water quality and ecological health
- Address disproportionate stormwater impacts
- Ensure regulatory compliance
- Build trust through collaboration

The update will use recent innovations in stormwater modelling and software capacity to identify areas with the highest overland flood risk and develop tailored solutions where capacity improvements are most urgent. Overlaying social impact data onto the expanded stormwater model strengthens our prioritization abilities, so we can look for opportunities to reduce the disproportionate impacts of flooding on residents facing systemic barriers. By combining demographic and lived experience data, we can better understand the needs of groups more vulnerable to flood impacts, including low-income households, renters, and seniors living alone.

Planning Approach & Schedule

To set an appropriate scope and increase cross-departmental and partner coordination, we added a pre-engagement phase to the ISWMP update. The pre-engagement phase will help set the scope and engagement design. We intend to meet or exceed Municipal Class

Environmental Assessment requirements for master planning under the Environmental Assessment Act.

Phase	Approximate Timeline	Key activities
1A. Groundwork: Pre-engagement and project scoping	2025	Hydraulic model development; scoping workshops with internal teams, rights holder, agencies and key parties
1B: Framing: Defining the challenge	2026	TBD from phase 1A
2. Discovery: Exploring options	2026-2027	TBD from phase 1A
3. Direction: Choosing the preferred solution	2027	TBD from phase 1A
4. Framework: Finalizing the plan	2027-2028	Council endorsement; publication
5. Delivery: Implementation	2028-2043	

Next Steps

Timeline	Action
2025	
September – December	• Distribute briefing guide & survey • Pre-engagement workshops – Internal teams, rights holders, agencies, public, organizations • Complete meeting notes
2026	
January-February	• Share What We Heard report and pre-engagement report • Ongoing coordination: Establish project advisory team and steering committee
Winter/Spring	• Circulate Terms of Reference and Engagement Plan • Hire consultant for the ISWMP update

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services and the strategic goal of cultivating a green city together.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

No financial implications at this time.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the committee meeting.

CONSULT – The pre-engagement phase is being used to assess engagement interests and needs through a series of workshops and meetings. For the pre-engagement phase, communications will be conducted in person and through email. During pre-engagement, we will define the project scope and engagement approach by considering input from internal teams, Indigenous rights holders, and key groups such as advisory committees, school boards, researchers, developers, real estate professionals, social service providers, climate and environmental advocates, and youth organizations. Lived experiences will help shape an impact-driven lens, while shared ideas and priorities will inform stakeholder analysis and help guide project design.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- [MUN-UTI-2003 Stormwater Management](#)

REVIEWED BY: Bu Lam, Director of Sanitary and Stormwater Utilities, 519-783-8835
Denise McGoldrick, General Manager Infrastructure Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A: 2016 ISWMP Achievements & Status



Fall 2025

Achievements and status of the 2016 Master Plan

In 2016, the City of Kitchener approved an integrated stormwater master plan with the objective of maintaining the natural hydrologic cycle to minimize flood risks and erosion and improve water quality. Over the past eight years, the City of Kitchener has achieved significant success.

Achievement Highlights:

Area	Achievement	Details
Plan status	43 out of 52 ISWMP projects and programs to be completed by 2030	See the Plan Status Details table below.
Water quality	80% of Kitchener's creeks (also called subwatersheds) increased in water quality between 2016-2020	- Six creeks saw a direct benefit in their score or health indicators from restoration efforts and stormwater management projects. - Three creeks saw significant improvement in overall health: Idlewood, Sandrock, and Shoemaker Creek.
Creek restoration	Reduced flood and erosion risks, restored habitat, improved water quality, by rehabilitating 7,300 meters of creek.	- Removed more than 3,000 meters of concrete channels using nature-based engineered solutions. - Accumulated 20,000 square meters of fish habitat credits from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for habitat created. - Expanded opportunities for nature connection and community building through integrated design.
Integrated design of stormwater facilities	Reduced flood risk, improved water quality, and restored habitat, while responding to	Collaborated with Parks staff and consulted hundreds of community members to design eight new ponds and wetlands that

	Indigenous and community priorities.	enhance neighbourhood connection and nature exploration. • Integrated the knowledge and priorities of Indigenous rights holders.
Road reconstructions	Leveraged 48,924 m of road reconstructions to reduce flood risk and improve water quality.	• Rehabilitated and enhanced storm sewers to improve capacity. • Changed streets to allow stormwater to be managed and infiltrated at source.
Policy	MUN-UTI-2003 Stormwater Management Policy led to the industry standard of 12.5 mm retention of runoff required for new development and city-led construction projects.	• The policy established a Stormwater Management Fee of \$118,855/hectare to be paid if the proponent can't achieve this requirement for technical reasons. This funding contributes to stormwater projects in priority subwatersheds.
Funding	Awarded over \$50 million in funding for implementation.	• \$49.9 Million: Federal Disaster Mitigation Adaptation Fund • \$3 Million: Provincial Build Faster Fund. • \$800,000: Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund.

Plan Status Details

Program Element	Status June 2025	Notes / Next steps
Low-Impact Development	Partially implemented	Outcomes limited; needs revised design, maintenance, and monitoring.
Sediment Management Program	Completed	Moved to Operations & Maintenance (SSU-O&M) budget; forebay bathymetry & VPL hydraulic dredging required.
Drainage Improvement Program	Completed	Ongoing SSU-PP Capital Program.
Stormwater Infrastructure Maintenance	Completed	Transitioned to SSU-O&M; Define maintenance priorities through this update.
Capital Infrastructure Implementation	Completed	Smaller miscellaneous projects completed; 1D-2D or 2D modelling to be added.
Drainage Basin Risk Studies	Deferred	Recommend conducting a GIS analysis of SWMF catchment characteristics (% impervious, land use, etc.) to evaluate pond performance.
Monitoring Program	Completed	Update to focus on water quantity. Consider inflow and infiltration (I&). Integrate with the asset management plan.

Market Incentive Program (MIP)	Deferred due to DMAF	Revisit, including the credit-trading study scope and intermunicipal co-design.
Watercourse Improvements	In progress through DMAF	Update to consider Shoemaker Schneider Creek Phase 2; other reaches of Schneider Creek near Old Carriage Dr; Filsinger Phase 3; coordination with Department of Fisheries and Oceans.
SWM Facility Retrofits	8 complete, 4 deferred	The next retrofits are pending hydraulic analysis and drainage basin risk study results.
Park SWM Enhancements	8 complete, 4 deferred	Engage with Parks teams to consider inclusion in the ISWMP update.
Borehole & Groundwater Data Integration	Conceptual	Include database & contour mapping with the Environmental Compliance and Utility Performance team.



KITCHENER'S **STORMWATER** PLAN

Integrated Stormwater Master Plan Update Pre- engagement Brief

Sanitary and Stormwater Utilities
(SSU) Planning and Programs

Fall 2025



Pre-Engagement Discussion Objectives

- Share ISWMP overview
- Hear CCEC member ideas for scope, co-benefits and multisolving
- Understand CCEC member priorities for participation
- Explore impact-driven lens

A photograph of a construction site for a stormwater management project. Several workers in orange and yellow safety gear and hard hats are standing on a grid of black plastic modules. The site is a deep excavation with sandy soil walls. In the background, there are orange and black striped traffic barrels and a green truck. A large white plastic sheet is partially visible on the left. The word 'Overview' is overlaid in large white text.

Overview

Kitchener's first Integrated Stormwater Master Plan (ISWMP), completed in 2016, introduced a city-wide, integrated approach to stormwater management. The ISWMP guides capital planning, updates stormwater management practices, and outlines funding and policy strategies for long-term sustainability. A comprehensive update is now needed to address remaining projects and

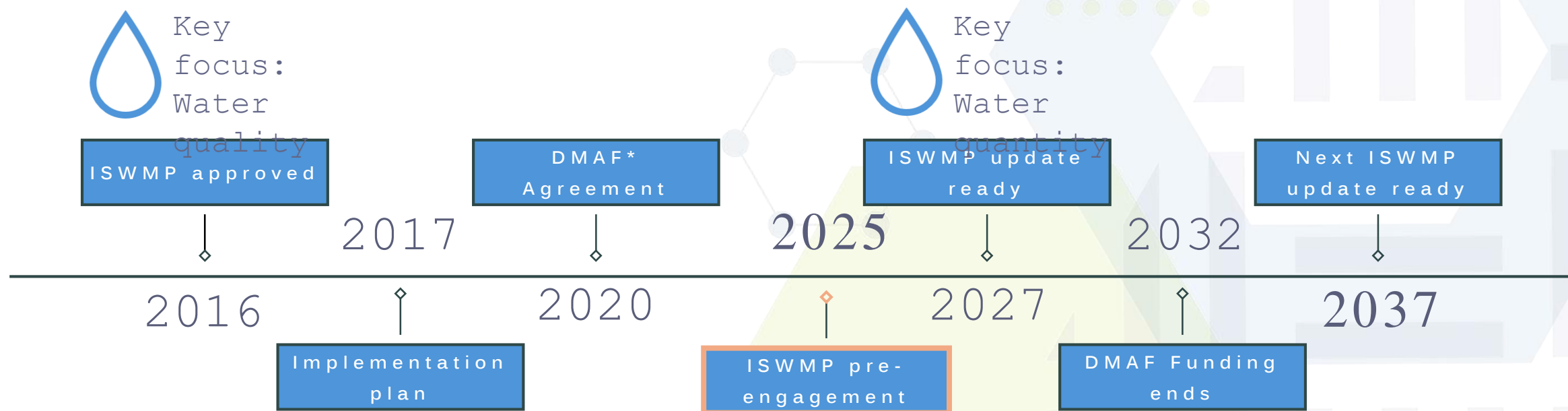
Stormwater management as catalyst



Morningstar Designs | Alanah
Jewell. @morning.star.designs

Enhancing Kitchener's stormwater management through nature-based solutions delivers multiple co-benefits, including improved water and air quality, increased biodiversity, habitat creation, urban cooling, and

Timeline



*Disaster Mitigation Adaptation Fund (DMAF)

Plan Achievements and Status



80% of Kitchener's creeks increased in water quality



43 out of 52 projects and programs completed by 2030



- ✓ Enhanced stormwater management
- ✓ Greener city
- ✓ Expanded neighbourhood connections



\$53.7 million awarded

- 8 new stormwater facilities in parks
- 7,300 m of creek rehabilitated
- 3,000 m of concrete channels removed
- 48,924 m of road reconstruction stormwater upgrades
- Created 20,000 square meters of fish habitat
- Integrated Indigenous rights holder priorities
- Consulted and involved hundreds of residents
- **\$49.9 million:** Federal Disaster Mitigation Adaptation Fund
- Expanded nature connection opportunities in parks
- **\$3 million:** Provincial Build Faster Fund.
- **\$800,000:** Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund.

Proposed Objectives



Advance innovations in stormwater infrastructure to respond to vulnerabilities and support a resilient community



Reduce the disproportionate impact of stormwater challenges on specific communities



Reduce flood risks to adapt to the extreme weather driven by climate change



Strengthen trust and collaboration with the public, partners, rights holders, and internal teams, including by seeking opportunities to integrate co-benefits

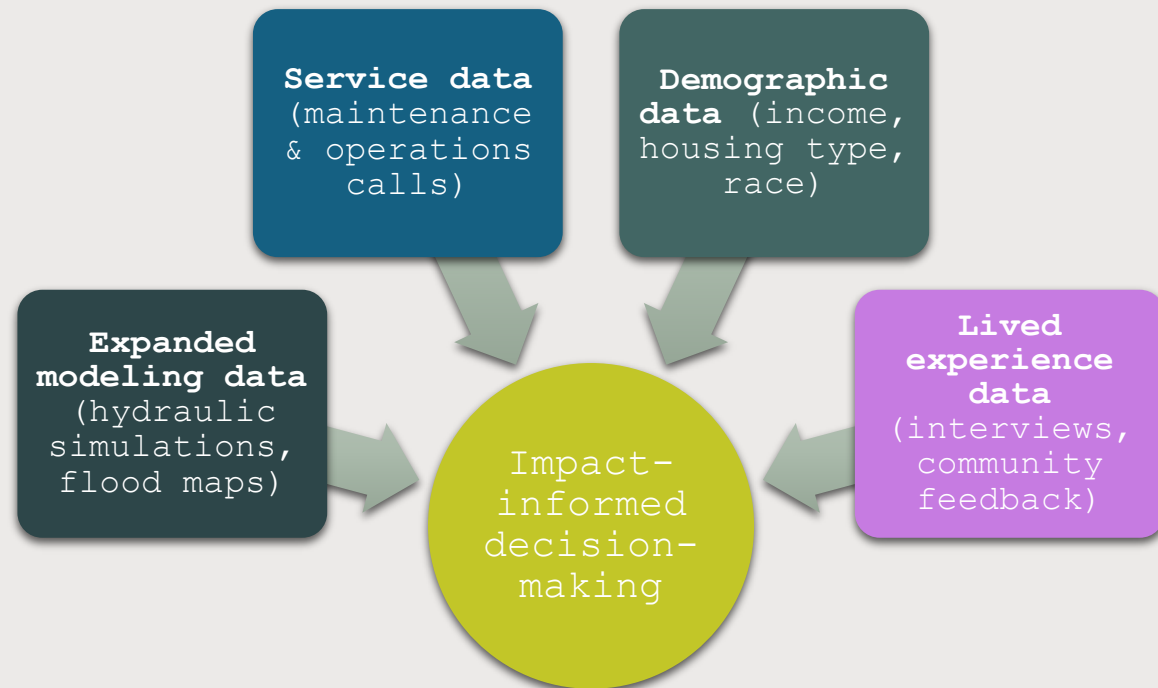


Improve water quality and the overall ecological health of Kitchener's creeks



Ensure ongoing compliance with evolving provincial and federal regulations

Impact-driven lens: Problem framing & solution design



Flood impacts

By modelling the storm sewer network, we can identify Kitchener areas with the highest overland flood risk and hazard.

Using an impact-driven lens, we can also understand who will be most affected – so we can design solutions that reduce harm for those facing systemic barriers.

Setting expectations



Reep Green Solutions Rain Smart Neighbourhoods

Stormwater planning can't prevent floods, but it can help make Kitchener more flood-ready.

We all have a role to play in preparing for wetter and wilder weather. The ISWMP update is an opportunity to consider solutions for private and public lands.

Emergency response is outside the scope of the ISWMP. To support emergency response planning, we will communicate with Kitchener's emergency management committee throughout the update.

Shaping the ISWMP update scope

Opportunities for multi-solving:

What significant challenges or opportunities should Kitchener address through stormwater management?

Participation in planning

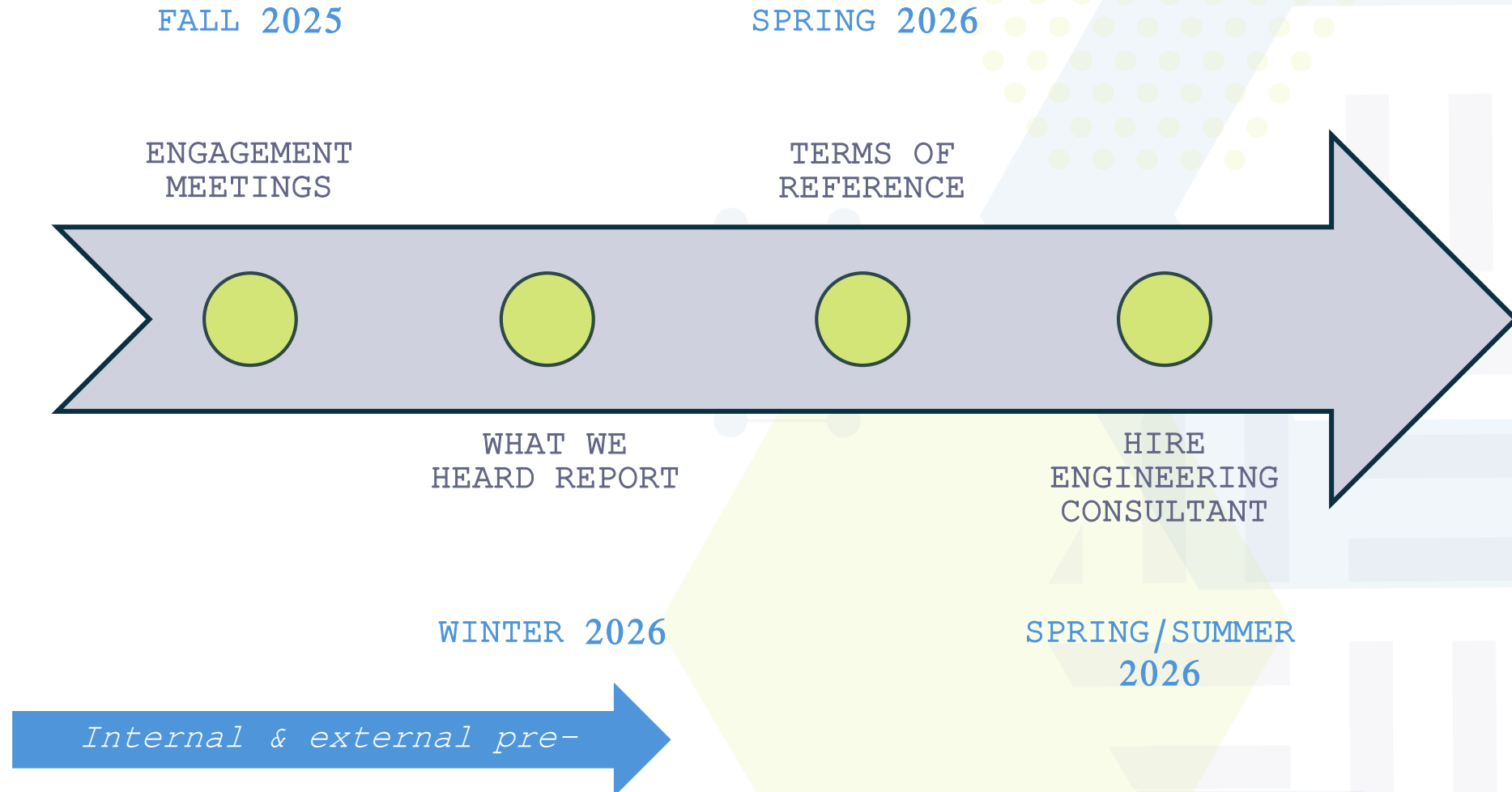
What does successful engagement look like for the CCEC?

Building our impact-driven lens

Tell us your experiences of local creeks and rivers. What do you do when you visit them? Do you have a favourite place to go? If you don't or can't visit them, why not? What do creeks or rivers mean to you?

What's on your mind when you think of flooding and intense rainstorms? Have you or someone you know been affected by intense rainstorms? If your neighbourhood flooded, what challenges would be most difficult to recover from?

Next steps





Thank you!

Sarah Anderson

Engagement Associate
Sanitary and Stormwater
Utilities

City of Kitchener

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519-783-8824

REPORT TO: Climate Change and Environment Committee

DATE OF MEETING: November 20, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Natalie Goss, Manager Policy & Research, 519-783-8933

PREPARED BY: Mike Balch, Planner (Policy), 519-783-8928
Natalie Goss, Manager Policy & Research, 519-783-8933

WARD(S) INVOLVED: ALL

DATE OF REPORT: October 31, 2025

REPORT NO.: DSD-2025-461

SUBJECT: Kitchener 2051: Draft Climate and Energy Policies

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Climate Change and Environment Committee's comments be considered by staff as input on the draft Official Plan.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to provide an overview Kitchener 2051 draft Official Plan to CCEC, specifically the climate change and energy policies.
- There are no financial implications of this report.
- Community and collaborator engagement on the draft Official Plan is occurring throughout November and December 2025. This includes engagement at Kitchener's advisory committees including the Climate Change and Environment Committee.
- This report supports **Cultivating a Green City Together: Focuses a sustainable path to a greener, healthier city; enhancing & protecting parks & natural environment while transitioning to a low-carbon future; supporting businesses & residents to make climate-positive choices.**

BACKGROUND:

The City of Kitchener is preparing a new Official Plan (OP) – referred to as Kitchener 2051. An OP is a document that shapes the way a city grows and develops. Provincial legislation, specifically the Planning Act, sets out what an OP can do, including:

- Directing growth and change, mostly related to how land and buildings are used;
- Guiding decisions on land use, development, transportation, physical and community infrastructure, and more;
- Implementing the City's vision, established through the Strategic Plan; and
- Providing direction for implementing tools.

To inform and shape foundational elements of a new OP, in Spring 2025 the Climate Change and Environment Committee, hosted a "community conversation kit" on draft big ideas &

emerging directions. Input gathered from that discussion as well as similar discussions with other advisory committees and the community was considered in the preparation of a first draft. A number of technical studies were also prepared to provide staff with best practices and recommendations for policy development. The Climate and Energy Technical Background Study was shared with the Climate Change and Environment Committee in June of this year for information.

REPORT:

A draft new OP has been prepared for community and collaborator engagement. Engagement is occurring throughout November and December. Input received will be considered, along with all technical background studies, in the preparation of a final OP for Council's consideration in 2026.

The draft new OP is centered on three big ideas which have shaped an [approach to growth](#) that was considered by Council in August 2025, as well as the objectives and policies of the draft new OP. The three big ideas represent our shared future and are the heart of the draft new OP.

Our Neighbourhoods will be vibrant, connected, and inclusive places where people of all ages, incomes, and abilities can live, work, learn, play, connect, and move around safely and conveniently.

Our Economy will be as diverse as the city it supports, built on businesses of all types in neighbourhoods across the city. People and goods will get where they need to go quickly, efficiently and sustainably and coordinated energy and infrastructure investments will create a more competitive, economically resilient city.

We will value, protect, and restore **Our Environment**, emitting almost no greenhouse gases and building resilience to a warmer, wetter, and wilder climate. We will learn from Indigenous land-based cultural practices and stewardship in the spirit of reconciliation to build a stronger community where everyone can be healthy, safe, and food secure for generations to come.

The draft new OP will be available the week of November 10th at www.engagewr.ca/kitchener2051. Key highlights of the draft new Official Plan related to energy transition and climate change are summarized in this report.

Thriving Through the Energy Transition

The way that we get and use energy is changing, in Kitchener and across the world. In Kitchener today, we mainly use fossil fuels to power our vehicles and heat our buildings. Using these energy sources is responsible for the vast majority of our greenhouse gas emissions. In order to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, we need to achieve net-zero emissions globally by the middle of this century. The OP prioritizes compact, mixed-use communities as a key strategy to address two primary emission sources: transportation, and heating and cooling of our buildings. The draft OP includes a new chapter focusing on thriving through the energy transition. It follows a reduce, switch, improve model: first we must prioritize reducing our emissions, then we must consider how we can move away from fossil fuels, and finally we must improve our processes, infrastructure, and generation and storage methods.

Reduce: Cutting Fossil Fuels

The pathway to greenhouse gas emissions reductions must take into account how and where we build. As such, the draft OP proposes the establishment of development standards that include passive techniques to cut energy consumption through site layout and building orientation in new neighbourhoods as well as ways to promote the opportunity for energy generation. When considering the future of industry in the city, Kitchener has considered the impacts of large energy users (e.g. data centres). The draft OP includes requirements for study submissions for large energy users including the need to demonstrate capacity and energy and water efficiency measures.

Switch: Clean Energy and Heat

Kitchener has access to clean heat sources such as geothermal, solar thermal, air source heat pumps, industrial waste heat, renewable natural gas, biomass, and wastewater heat recovery. The city, utilities, and energy providers, developers, and businesses all have a role in the planning and deployment of infrastructure to generate and harness clean energy and connect supply it to the buildings that need it. New developments will not automatically be developed with fossil fuel connections as they have in the past. Where feasible, options like full electrification or district energy/heat systems will be applied. Energy strategies will be recommended for sites past a noted threshold and the city will work with applicants on options to connect to future district systems or otherwise establish stand-alone systems for energy conservation/generation.

Improve: Generate and store clean electricity locally

Generating and storing clean energy in Kitchener helps increase grid build reliability and resilience and meet with growing energy demand and supporting peak loads. Solar energy can be used to offset high daytime electricity demand during extreme weather and battery storage can be used to distribute energy for use overnight. The draft OP will support the implementation of renewable energy systems as a principal use through appropriate by-law provisions. This will also apply to large-scale battery storage systems. While maintaining a good public realm, small scale private renewable systems and associated battery storage will be promoted where possible throughout the city.

Climate Change (Mitigation and Adaptation)

The way we live, where we live, and how we travel can have tremendous impacts on climate change. It is important that climate change considerations are integrated throughout the OP as climate change must be considered in all land use decisions. You will see in the draft new OP that there is no climate change “chapter”, rather that the entirety of the OP has been considered through a climate change lens. Due to the inherent interconnectedness in climate change mitigation and adaptation methods, numerous policies serve as co-benefits; simultaneously reducing greenhouse gas emissions and building resiliency to the impacts of a changing climate. Some noteworthy policy approaches include:

- Acknowledging that our climate will be different in the future and that we can’t just plan for “the future” but must plan for multiple different futures
- Expanding protections of our urban forest and designated wetlands, understanding their role as carbon sinks. These features also serve as adaptation measures, providing shade during extreme heat, and protection/buffers during severe weather events.

- Continuing to recognize that Kitchener's natural heritage system plays a critical role in adapting to a changing climate
- Consideration of the connected role of natural systems, like rivers, streams, infiltration galleries and other low impact development along with more traditional "grey" infrastructure in handling increasingly wild weather conditions
- Building in resilience into our built and natural environment, considering the impact of stronger, and more frequent storm events. This includes expanding flood line buffers based on updated design period storms.
- Acknowledging the importance of integrated land uses that reduce single occupancy vehicle travel demand, making communities more accessible for active transportation and public transit.
- Promoting a local food economy, that reduces carbon emissions associated with transportation.
- Establishing community spaces as emergency recovery areas, including warming and cooling centres.
- Recognizing the role that trails play as a critical component of our transportation network. Providing shade/shelter, and rest areas along routes to reduce the impact of severe weather and allow residents to use this network throughout the year.
- Conducting a Climate Risk Vulnerability Assessment to further understand our vulnerabilities as a community to inform future resilience policy changes.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports **Cultivating a Green City Together: Focuses a sustainable path to a greener, healthier city; enhancing & protecting parks & natural environment while transitioning to a low-carbon future; supporting businesses & residents to make climate-positive choices.**

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

CONSULT – The draft OP will be released for community and collaborator conversations in November 2025. It is being presented to CCEC on November 20th for their input.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- [DSD-2024-423 – Kitchener 2051 Official Plan project update](#)
- [DSD-2025-206 – Kitchener 2051 Community Conversation Kit](#)
- [DSD-2025-280 – Kitchener 2051 Official Plan Climate and Energy Technical Background Study Update](#)

REVIEWED BY: Janine Oosterveld, Manager, Customer Experience & Project Management

CCEC Subcommittee Update

Council Report Template Subcommittee

November 20, 2025

Background

- ▶ Waterloo Region's GHG emissions have fallen by 12% from 2010 levels
 - ▶ Gas usage has remained flat for the last several years (Kitchener Utilities data)
- ▶ Despite several declarations, commitments, strategies, plans and actions, we are not close to action and real results at the pace we need to be at
 - ▶ 50% by 2030 (~5 years from now)
 - ▶ 80% by 2050
- ▶ Individuals and community groups actively trying to enact the changes we need want to see evidence of this progress.
- ▶ At staff's suggestions, the sub-committee explored several options to increase GHG reduction accountability

Research

- ▶ Barrie
 - ▶ Council / Committee reports include a section called 'Environment and Climate Change Impact Matters'
- ▶ Brantford
 - ▶ Has a report section for "Climate and Environmental Implications" Staff report it has brought focus.
- ▶ Cambridge
 - ▶ Has a dropdown in their Council report template asking if the action or recommendation relates to one of the City's strategic plan actions -one of which is 'taking action to combat climate change'.
- ▶ Toronto
 - ▶ Does not have a required section in staff reports for a climate change lens, however, the city has embedded a climate lens through education and other processes:
 - ▶ non-traditional economic measures to the budget process
 - ▶ creation of a climate lens "program" which consists of several parts that serve a capacity-building mandate
 - ▶ a set of climate lens questions to determine whether budget projects contribute to the City's goals of reducing GHGs and increasing climate resilience and to prompt staff to provide further information where available (e.g. estimated GHG reduction from the project). As of 2022, this is now a mandatory requirement for all new and existing budget projects.
- ▶ Nelson, BC
 - ▶ Council report template includes a section that states "Impact on Sustainability Objectives and Staff Resources"

Proposed Motion

- ▶ *The Climate Change and Environment Advisory Committee recommends that when the next regularly scheduled review process of the Council Report Template occurs, that a climate—and specifically GHG reductions lens—be included as a standard item. It is suggested that the following questions be included in order to foster a culture of developing and applying a climate action lens in all decisions, initiatives and programs:*
 - *How will this decision increase or decrease GHG emissions in the short term (1-5yrs)*
 - *How will this decision increase or decrease GHG emissions in the long term (10-30yrs in keeping with the timeframe of the TransformWR plan)*

Conclusion

- ▶ *Integrating a clear climate and GHG reduction lens into Council's report template is a practical way to strengthen accountability and drive progress.*
- ▶ *By adopting this approach, Council can ensure that every decision supports our climate goals, reducing emissions, and fostering a sustainable culture in our City*

REPORT TO: Climate Change and Environment Committee

DATE OF MEETING: November 20, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Natalie Goss, Manager Policy & Research 519-783-8933

PREPARED BY: Natalie Goss, Manager Policy & Research on behalf of the CCEC
Report Template Subcommittee 519-783-8933

WARD(S) INVOLVED: ALL

DATE OF REPORT: October 31, 2025

REPORT NO.: DSD-2025-457

SUBJECT: CCEC Report Template Sub-Committee Update

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Climate Change and Environment Committee support the Report Template Subcommittee's recommendations outlined in this report being considered as part of the City's next corporate report template review.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the research conducted by the Climate Change and Environment Committee (CCEC) Report Template Subcommittee
- The key finding of this report is that some other municipalities include a climate change/GHG lens in their Council/Committee reports.
- There are no direct financial implications of this report.
- Community engagement included the posting of this report with the agenda in advance of the CCEC meeting.

BACKGROUND:

The original intent of the Report Template Subcommittee was to look at ways to ensure that staff and Council were considering the long-term costs and benefits of each action or inaction as it related to climate change and its consequences and costs (e.g., financial, health, infrastructure). The rationale being that if City decisions were considered with a climate prominent lens, different decisions may be made that would help us meet our GHG reduction commitments.

The key concern is that Waterloo Region's GHG emissions have reduced a bare 12% from 2010 levels (2022 figures) and Kitchener Utilities figures show gas usage has remained flat for the last several years.

Kitchener has made the following commitments in this space:

- In 2019, a declaration that we are in a Climate Emergency,
- A reduction in GHG emissions of 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2050,
- Is guided by its [Corporate Climate Action Plan](#), [Strategic Plan for the Environment](#), [Transform WR Strategy](#), and [Kitchener Utilities Clean Energy Transition Strategy](#).
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Despite these commitments, Kitchener, like other municipalities, is challenged to meet its GHG reductions, in particular its commitment for 2030. To continue to be on a path to achieve our 2050 GHG commitment, emissions must reduce by 4% a year which will continue to take focus and effort.

In addition to the city's commitments, individuals and community groups are actively trying to enact the changes that are needed. There is a desire from the CCEC to see evidence of our collective progress on climate matters documented more deliberately.

REPORT:

The Report Template subcommittee explored several options to increase GHG accountability and reporting including:

1. Talking with Compass Kitchener about the idea of including monitoring of Kitchener's Transform WR commitments,
2. Discussion about improving the efficacy of the Transform WR dashboard, and
3. Researching what other cities are doing to ensure there is a city-wide focus on connecting decisions to reducing GHG emissions.

The preferred outcome further researched by the Report Template Subcommittee was #3. This was preferred as it focuses on all staff on using a climate change and emissions lens when providing information to Council and for Council's decision making.

As part of the subcommittee's work a municipal scan was conducted. A summary of findings is below.

City of Barrie - The City of Barrie's Council/Committee reports include a section called Environment and Climate Change Impact Matters'. The intent of this section is to trigger some analysis and consideration of GHGs in each report. It was noted that this section is not always completed. To increase uptake in completion of this section of the report, City of Barrie staff noted that there are plans to meet with different departments across the city to normalize GHG considerations within their work portfolios.

City of Brantford – The City of Brantford currently has a section in their Council/Committee reports for 'Climate and Environmental Implications'. The sub-committee spoke to Brantford staff who stated the need to respond to this dropdown menu has created more opportunities for sustainability staff to get involved in projects before they get too far along. They felt that training on climate change in all departments is important, which also creates opportunities to consult the Climate Change Officer.

City of Cambridge – The City of Cambridge's Council/Committee report has a dropdown menu asking if the action or recommendation relates to one of the City's strategic plan actions, one of which is 'taking action to combat climate change'.

City of Toronto – The City of Toronto does not have a required section in Council/Committee reports for a climate change lens, however, the city has embedded a climate lens through education and other processes. In 2019, City Council directed staff to develop a climate lens that evaluates and considers the climate impacts of all major City decisions, including financial decisions. The intent is to apply non-traditional economic measures to the budget process to ensure the city can deliver outcomes to Torontonians that align with City's corporate strategic priorities and commitment to reach net-zero emissions. As part of developing process to evaluate and consider climate impacts of city decisions, a need was identified to build capacity. The end result was the creation of a climate lens "program" which consists of several parts that serve the capacity-building mandate, including:

- An internal website called 'Climate Hub' that includes climate-related resources and information, and tools and data to assist staff in applying a climate lens
- An internal "Climate 101" Learning Program to introduce any/all City staff to concepts of climate change and the City's plans to combat climate change
- Climate investment tracking and analysis in the City's annual budget process.

In 2020, the City of Toronto's capital and operating budget process released a set of climate lens questions to determine whether budget projects contribute to the City's goals of reducing GHGs and increasing climate resilience and to prompt staff to provide further information where available (e.g. estimated GHG reduction from the project). As of 2022, this is now a mandatory requirement for all new and existing budget projects. Also, starting in 2022, and as part of the Net Zero Strategy short-term implementation plan, Toronto is developing a carbon accountability framework (carbon budget) and associated key performance metrics that will ensure emissions impacts associated with major decisions are estimated and factor into decision making. Activities to progress the carbon accountability framework and the climate lens program have occurred from 2022 to 2025.

City of Nelson, British Columbia – The City of Nelson's Council/Committee report template includes a section that states "Impact on Sustainability Objectives and Staff Resources". This section is most useful when comments within it refer back to the City's Climate Plan. In addition, the subcommittee notes that the city has a sizable climate team that is partially funded by grants, embedded in different departments (e.g., Transit, Facilities, "Head of Development Services & Climate Action", and that team helps staff to look at GHG/climate effects.

City of Kitchener – The City of Kitchener's Council/Committee report template includes a drop-down menu tied to its Strategic Plan alignment which is required to be selected as part of all reports to Council/Committee. It includes the Strategic Plan priority of "Cultivating a Green City Together: Focuses a sustainable path to a greener, healthier city; enhancing & protecting parks & natural environment while transitioning to a low-carbon future; supporting businesses & residents to make climate-positive choices."

The Sustainability Office reports to Council on the progress of the City's Corporate Climate Action Plan 2.0: Pivot Net-Zero yearly, on or around Earth Day. This includes updated progress on the City's corporate GHG inventory, 19 corporate annual progress reporting metrics and 47 corporate action items.

In order to continue on our path to reducing GHG's by 80% by 2050 and provide more measurable, deliberate, and accountable recommendations and decisions from a climate lens, the subcommittee recommends that more emphasis and education should occur across the corporation. It is noted that this is starting to occur in neighbouring municipalities. Therefore, the Report Template Subcommittee recommends that the CCEC consider asking that the following updates to the Council/Committee report template be considered as part of the next report template update:

- That a climate – and specifically GHG reduction lens – be included as a standard item and,
- That the following questions be included to foster a culture of developing and applying a climate action lens in all decisions, initiatives and programs;
 - How will this decision increase or decrease GHG emissions in the short term (i.e., 1-5 years)?
 - How will this decision increase or decrease GHG emissions in the long term (i.e., 10-30 years in keeping with the timeframe of the Transform WR plan).

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports **Cultivating a Green City Together: Focuses a sustainable path to a greener, healthier city; enhancing & protecting parks & natural environment while transitioning to a low-carbon future; supporting businesses & residents to make climate-positive choices.**

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the CCEC meeting.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

There are no previous reports/authorities related to this matter.