

Council updated on progress of Town's Climate Change Action plan

By Zachary Roman

Caledon is making progress on its climate change targets.

In January 2020, Caledon Council declared a climate change emergency and set a target for the Town to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

This led to Town staff developing the 'Resilient Caledon Community Climate Change Action Plan.'

The plan outlines actions for the Town to take to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change like flooding, storms, and extreme heat.

In addition to being net zero by 2050, Caledon is also aiming to have a 36 per cent reduction in its emissions by 2030.

The final version of Caledon's climate change action plan contains over 60 recommendations and includes the input of residents, businesses, and community groups.

At Caledon's June 6, 2023 Council meeting, a report detailing progress on the plan was submitted to Council by Alexandra Service, a team lead in Caledon's energy and environment division.

The report explains that with the growth coming to Caledon, four items will be most important.

They are the creation of green development standards to drive sustainable development, the requirement of climate studies for all future secondary plans, a home energy retrofit program, and an air quality monitoring study.

'Caledon's growth presents both a challenge and an opportunity to plan new communities in a different way that places climate and the environment at the forefront,' reads the report.

The final draft of Caledon's green development standards are set to come to Council this fall.

Town staff have already drafted terms of reference for climate studies in Caledon's official plan.

The municipal home retrofit program, being developed in partnership with Mississauga, will also be coming to Council this fall. The air quality monitoring study is being set up this summer and autumn, with data analysis and results expected in mid-2024.

The report from municipal staff notes the Town itself must be a leader in reducing greenhouse gases to set an example to the community. The report notes data gathered from 2017 to 2019 to show the Town's progress.

In those years, the Town saw a 4.6 per cent decrease in energy consumption; a 3.4 per cent reduction in natural gas usage; and a 40.6 per cent reduction in propane usage. Overall, the Town created 3.9 per cent less greenhouse gases in that time period.

The Town has also been working on electrifying its fleet of vehicles and using biodiesel in its heavy-duty trucks. It's even planning to pilot the use of a compressed natural gas-fuelled snowplow in the coming years.

Those interested in viewing the full update on Caledon's Climate Change Action Plan can visit caledon.ca and view agenda item 10.1.1 from Council's June 6 meeting.