

Town rolling out Community Climate Action Plan to tackle local environmental issues

Written By ALYSSA PARKHILL

Climate change and protecting our environment has become a crucial topic of conversation. Communities are coming together to create action plans on how they can contribute to caring for our environment.

Mayor Allan Thompson and the Town of Caledon have dedicated their time and effort to providing a clean and eco-friendly environment for Caledon residents. The Community Climate Action Plan has been in the works since 2010 to target a variety of changes that allows the community to come together to become an environmentally safe municipality. It is categorized into 11 sectors: transportation, green development, energy, schools, agriculture, community awareness, tree planting, waste, local food and long-term actions. The

The plan was created to meet the commitments that the Partners for Climate Protection has put in place. The Town's Partners for Climate Protection is a platform of approximately 200 municipal governments who are dedicated to improving greenhouse gas reduction and climate change actions across the country.

The Town of Caledon has made some significant changes in regards to energy saving, tree planting and preparing for harsh weather conditions.

Mayor Allan Thompson has been working with several partners such as Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), the Neighbourhood Retrofit and the Action Plan to bring local and efficient support.

'We've been able to accomplish a lot. Since 2002 we've planted over 180,000 trees and to me this is something I think we need to ramp up a little more especially on our concession roads and get some of these maple and oaks returned to the roadside. Another thing is the LED lighting for all our street lights, which we did in a 24-hour period,' said Thompson. 'These are a lot of things that we can definitely do.'

Resilient Caledon launched on Oct 9 at the Goodlot Farmstead Brewing Co. to engage Caledon residents in planning on how to play a part in helping the climate change cause in Caledon. Stefan Wiesen of the Green Party accompanied Mayor Allan Thompson as well as Town of Caledon Staff, members of council and the Climate Change Task Force.

'The worlds always been changing, it has for millions of years so I think with the increased population things are moving faster,' said Thompson. 'It's how to build a resilient community.'

Mayor Allan Thompson and the Town don't take full responsibility for all the positive changes in the environment in Caledon.

'The reason we've been successful here in Caledon as leaders, is because the community has gotten behind us. We've had EcoCaledon, Cool Caledon and a lot of people who have come forward on programs in the past and councils listened for the past 12 to 15 years to say 'okay, we need to do this because this is what the publics expecting',' explained Thompson. 'There's a lot of things that we're constantly looking at, even in new development how we can do things better and in more efficient way. It is paying off, and it doesn't mean we pat ourselves on the back, it means we've got a lot more to do.'

For more information about Caledon climate change action plans, visit caledon.ca/climatechange.