Council Direction:

Not applicable.

Information:

The purpose of this Information Report is to provide Committee with some background information on the Hamilton Climate Change Action Charter prior to the presentation of this Charter by the Hamilton Climate Change Action Working Group to the September General Issues Committee meeting. Council will be approached to endorse and support this Charter (see attached Appendix A).

Context

In 2008, the City adopted Corporate emission targets of a 10% reduction of 2005 greenhouse gases levels by 2012 followed by a 20% of 2005 greenhouse gases levels by 2020 under the Corporate Air Quality and Climate Change Strategic Plan (PED06336(a)). Interim community targets of a 10% reduction of 2006 greenhouse gases levels by 2012 followed by a 20% of 2006 greenhouse gases levels by 2020 were also adopted under the Strategic Plan.

On September 12, 2011, City staff will be reporting to Council with an update on the progress of the Corporation and the City of Hamilton in tackling greenhouse gas emissions and reaching the adopted emissions targets (PED11149). In 2010, it was determined that Hamilton’s municipal operations emitted 135,058 tonnes of CO2e in
2005, and emissions decreased to 127,690 tonnes of CO2e in 2008, a decrease of 5.4%. Community emissions are much larger and were estimated at 12,758,652 tonnes\(^1\) of CO2e in 2006, and these emissions were estimated to have decreased to 11,928,322 tonnes of CO2e in 2008, a decrease of 6.5% since 2006.

In engaging and working with the community on local climate change actions, a Community Climate Change Action Charter has been established. This Charter has the support of Clean Air Hamilton, Green Venture, Environment Hamilton, Hamilton 350, McMaster University, Hamilton Conservation Authority, Dundas in Transition, Sustainable Hamilton, Horizons, ArcelorMittal Dofasco, Corr & Associates, Mohawk College, McKibbon & Wakefield.

**Charter Background**

The Charter is an outcome of consultations and feedback received from the community and stakeholders through the 2010 “Taking Stock: Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Hamilton” discussion paper (available at: [www.hamilton.ca/climatechange](http://www.hamilton.ca/climatechange)) and the 2011 Climate Change Action Town Hall.

Responses from the community indicate support for taking action on addressing climate change in the community. Areas of interest include active and sustainable transportation, energy conservation and alternative energy sources, more green spaces and trees, improved development and re-using existing building stock, light rail rapid transit, less consumption, and more information and communication to make informed decisions. The community also wished to see stronger support, communication and leadership from Council on climate change actions. As outlined in Figure 1, approximately 70% of responses request some form of action or commitment on action from the City.

\(^1\) Evaluation of the community emissions inventory in 2011 discovered baseline emissions to be higher at 17,382,000 tonnes, due to a discrepancy in the reported energy data and calculations.
Vision: To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.

Values: Honesty, Accountability, Innovation, Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Teamwork

At the 2011 Climate Change Town Hall, 83 stakeholders were engaged in discussion on climate change and its linkages to issues of personal transportation and goods movement, energy, consumption, water, food, economy and education, and the built environment. The outcome of the Town Hall identified the following needs in the community for action:

- Increased education on the linkages of climate change to social, economic and environmental drivers in Hamilton;
- The creation of a one-stop resources library with tools and information for organizations and individuals to identify what and how to take action; and,
- The need for collective, collaborative actions locally to reduce emissions.

Following the 2011 Town Hall, a volunteer working group of individuals was formed under Clean Air Hamilton to identify education, research and partnership needs and actions to address climate change in the community. The first outcome of their work is the Hamilton Climate Change Action Charter.

What is Hamilton Climate Change Action Charter and How does it impact the City

The Hamilton Climate Change Action Charter is a voluntary agreement that outlines the need for local action and a commitment to take action on climate change from individuals, organizations and businesses of all types and sizes in Hamilton. Endorsing and participating in the actions outlined in the Charter are voluntary. However, endorsing the Charter signals to the community that the City is committed to local action by everyone on climate change.

The Charter does not have any pre-signing requirements, it represents a broad public statement that any Hamilton individual or organization can make. There are no financial obligations on the City for endorsing and supporting the Charter. In 2011, the City of
Hamilton contributed $18,600 towards the Hamilton Climate Change Champions Program (PED11114) to host the Charter and supporting tools, including information on climate change and actions under the Charter, on their website [http://www.climatechangehamilton.ca/](http://www.climatechangehamilton.ca/) for the Hamilton community. The Hamilton Climate Change Champions is a Program that engages and supports local organizations in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Charter is meant to increase citizens’ awareness on climate change, seeks leadership and commitment to act from key organizations in the City, and provides a starting point for community action and measurements of progress on combating climate change in Hamilton.

The Charter commits signatories to undertake six actions that the City of Hamilton has already begun to undertake through the Corporate Air Quality and Climate Change Strategic Plan (PED06336(a)) adopted by Council in 2008.

1) Keeping informed of new information on climate change and its impacts in order to understand risks and effects on us as individuals and organizations.

   The City of Hamilton keeps informed on climate change through our partnerships in the community and associations. The Corporate Air Quality and Climate Change Strategic Plan (PED06336(a)) adopted by Council in 2008 recognizes the need to continually keep informed on climate change in order to take appropriate actions and responses in City operations and services to the community.

2) Establish a baseline measurement of our current contribution to climate change through our activities.

   In 2009, the City of Hamilton undertook a baseline greenhouse gas emissions inventory (PED09287) and tracks and reports to the community on these emissions every year.

3) Set significant specific targets for reducing our greenhouse gas emissions, identifying where we will focus our efforts to achieve those targets.

   In 2008, the City adopted Corporate emission targets of a 10% reduction of 2005 greenhouse gases levels by 2012 followed by a 20% of 2005 greenhouse gases levels by 2020 under the Corporate Air Quality and Climate Change Strategic Plan (PED06336(a)). The Strategic Plan Phase II (PED06336(b)) identified areas that the Corporation should address to combat climate change.

4) Take personal responsibility for these climate change commitments, and, in the case of businesses or organizations, assign responsibility to a senior individual. Collaborate with other groups, individuals, organizations, and businesses to address causes and consequences of climate change.
The City of Hamilton collaborates with a number of groups in addressing climate change both in the community and through associations. The 2008-2011 Corporate Strategic Plan Focus Area 6: Environmental Stewardship identified reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in City operations starting with a 10% reduction of 2005 levels by 2012 as a measurement ( Desired End Results 6.2).

Currently the Air Quality and Climate Change Co-ordinator (1 FTE) in the Planning and Economic Development Department currently leads and tracks the emissions reduction work of the City through a Corporate Air Quality and Climate Change Working Group and the Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory.

5) Report annually to the community and celebrate successes in reducing emissions and/or creating resiliency in response to climate change impacts during Hamilton’s Climate Change Action Month in October.

In 2008, the City of Hamilton declared October to be Climate Change Action Month. Since 2008, the City has declared this annual event as a means to report back to the community on community and Corporate actions in addressing climate change and to educate the community on climate change. To launch the 2011 Climate Change Action Month, signatories will be asked to attend a breakfast launch to formally sign and commit to the Charter.

6) Engage, educate, and involve individuals, families, groups, businesses, organizations, and other entities to also commit to this Charter and work collectively to address climate change.

Everybody has a role to play in addressing climate change. The City of Hamilton recognizes this role through its work on addressing climate change and encouraging others to take action. Endorsing the Charter will help continue to support the education and engagement on climate action in the community.

Participation and endorsing the Charter is voluntary. There are no penalties for not meeting the commitments set out in the Charter. The Charter is meant to build awareness to climate change in Hamilton and provide a broad public statement to others that local action on climate change is happening.

:BM
Attach. (1)
HAMILTON CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION CHARTER

We ..........................................................................................................................the undersigned agree that:

a) Scientific evidence shows climate change is happening now. There is consensus that greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activity are seriously affecting Earth’s climate.

b) Climate change is having increasingly negative impacts on all of Hamilton’s residents, environments, and economy.

c) We need to take responsibility and act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for climate change impacts in ways that promote economic prosperity, health and environmental benefits for all.

d) It is important for individuals and organizations to share ideas and best practices and coordinate efforts to accomplish these goals as effectively as possible.

We.......................................................................................................................... commit to:

1) Keep informed of new information on climate change and its impacts in order to understand risks and effects on us as individuals and organizations.

2) Establish a baseline measurement of our current contribution to climate change through our activities.

3) Set significant specific targets for reducing our greenhouse gas emissions, identifying where we will focus our efforts to achieve those targets.

4) Take personal responsibility for these climate change commitments, and, in the case of businesses or organizations, assign responsibility to a senior individual. Collaborate with other groups, individuals, organizations, and businesses to address causes and consequences of climate change.

5) Report annually to the community and celebrate successes in reducing emissions and/or creating resiliency in response to climate change impacts during Hamilton’s Climate Change Action Month in October.

6) Engage, educate, and involve individuals, families, groups, businesses, organizations, and other entities to also commit to this Charter and work collectively to address climate change.

..........................................................................................................................

(Name & Signature) (Organization)
EXPLANATORY NOTES:
Signing the Hamilton Climate Change Action Charter is a way to show commitment to tackle the causes and consequences of climate change. It represents a broad public statement that any Hamilton individual or organization can make. There are no pre-signing requirements, however signing the Charter indicates a commitment to take action.

1. **Keep informed:** Information about climate change is continually emerging. Signatories need to stay informed of the impacts of climate change to be aware of opportunities and risks.

2. **Establish a baseline:** Activities that cause greenhouse gas emissions include energy use, transportation, water use, and waste generation. Measuring our current carbon footprint provides a baseline against which to measure improvements. It also helps identify areas where we can create the greatest possible benefit, which makes it easier to set realistic plans and targets.

3. **Set targets:** The Charter enables signatories to set their own targets. Ambitious goals are encouraged.

4. **Take personal responsibility and collaborate:** By signing the Charter, individuals and organizations join a common effort to address climate change in Hamilton. Senior leadership encourages cultural change and commitment to action within an organization.

5. **Report and celebrate annually:** Signatories should show their progress in meeting their Charter commitments. October is Hamilton’s Climate Change Action Month, providing an opportunity for signatories to showcase their achievements and learn from each other.

6. **Engage, educate, and involve:** Education about climate change and its impacts promotes public understanding, and encourages us to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and become more resilient.