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The City of Burlington's Climate Action Plan

Engagement Strategy

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PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF BURLINGTON

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1. Introduction

Burlington's City Council unanimously passed a motion to declare a climate emergency at the April 23, 2019 City Council meeting. With this declaration came a call for staff to create a Climate Action Plan (CAP). The City of Burlington contracted LURA Consulting to facilitate public and stakeholder feedback on the CAP. Over the summer of 2019, various opportunities were provided for engagement. Key engagement activities included: pop-up engagements at local events; online survey; in-person workshops with stakeholders and members of the public; and a drop-in open house.

In addition to facilitating and reporting on the engagement for the development of the Climate Action Plan (outlined above), LURA was also tasked with developing this Community Engagement Strategy for the implementation of the plan. The purpose of this strategy is to encourage and support the widespread adoption and implementation of the actions and programs outlined in the Climate Action Plan. Successful implementation of the Plan will require action from all of us - residents, businesses and government.

1.1. City Commitments for Community Engagement

This engagement strategy adheres to the City of Burlington's Community Engagement Charter. The commitments as outlined in the charter are listed below.

- **Accountability:** The City of Burlington will be responsible to its citizens and stakeholders for decisions made and policies implemented, as well as its actions or inactions.
- **Capacity Building:** The City of Burlington will encourage the ability of its citizens and stakeholders to effectively participate in the development and implementation of engagement processes with respect to issues and decisions that affect their lives and their community.
- **Clear Language:** The City of Burlington will use plain and clear language in documents and public communications that is more engaging and understandable for citizens than technical language and jargon.
- **City Feedback:** The City of Burlington will inform citizens and stakeholders about how their input was considered and adopted or why it was not adopted in City projects, initiatives and policy development. Feedback will usually be provided in a summarized format rather than on an individual basis.
- **Delegation Process:** The delegation process, which allows citizens to address Council and Standing Committees on issues, will be respectful and welcoming. Delegations can learn how their input affected decision-making by reading the minutes of Standing Committees and Council on the city's website or by requesting a written copy, or by viewing webcasts of discussions on the topic of their delegation. However, it is suggested that citizens first explore alternatives

such as approaching City staff or their ward councillor to see if their issue can be resolved without escalation to a decision by Council.

- **Early and Widespread Notification:** The City of Burlington will provide early and widespread notification to citizens and stakeholders about proposed developments, policies, initiatives and municipal projects. Widespread notification will not be given for purely localized issues such as neighbourhood traffic calming.
- **Inclusion and Accessibility:** Every citizen has the right to participate in community engagement regarding issues of concern to them. Engaging and enabling the participation of all Burlington citizens is a goal of this Charter.
- **Openness and Access to Information:** The City of Burlington will provide a variety of ways for citizens, city staff and members of City Council to access and share information and discuss ideas and options. The City of Burlington will provide open data and information to the public in recognized and useable formats, including routinely available information in on-line formats, print material, and face-to-face opportunities to facilitate healthy discussion of city issues.
- **Resourcing:** The City of Burlington will support the Engagement Charter by ensuring that its engagement processes are adequately resourced. Charter requirements will be met by City Council, city employees, volunteers, agents and contractors in their efforts on behalf of the City of Burlington.
- **Transparency:** The city's decision-making processes will be open and clear to the public and the city will actively encourage and facilitate citizen and stakeholder participation in them.

1.2. Key Messages and Target Audiences

The following key messages were developed as part of the initial engagement activities, and have been amended to focus on implementation. This section also outlines some additional considerations for specific audiences. Through the engagement process, it was identified that these audiences have unique needs and challenges, therefore, it is recommended that the messages below be tailored on a case-by-case basis.

- Climate change is already having an impact locally, as seen by events such as the recent ice storm (2013), flooding (2014), increased high wind events and high lake levels.
- City Council passed a Climate Change Emergency Declaration, which called for the creation of a Climate Action Plan.
- The City has a goal for its operations to become net carbon neutral by 2040 and is working to become a net carbon-neutral community. In Burlington, transportation and buildings present the biggest challenge – and opportunity – for reducing our carbon footprint.
- Becoming net carbon neutral will require action from all of us - residents, businesses and government.

- This plan focuses on high-impact actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. While every sustainable action brings us closer to our goal, the key focus is on implementing the pre-identified high-impact actions.

Audience	Challenges	Opportunities
Older adults and seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older adults and seniors may have mobility issues, making active transportation a challenge for them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the new Free65 Pass offered by Burlington Transit. • Highlight the importance of preserving the environment for future generations. • Older adults and seniors who own their homes may be good candidates for energy retrofit initiatives. • Highlight the options of EVs and/or e-bikes for those with mobility challenges.
Renters and residents of multi-use residential buildings (MURBs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renters and residents of MURBs may be limited in their ability to implement deep retrofits and/or install EV charging stations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the support of this strategy and relevant information, renters/residents may be able to propose climate action to building owners/managers.
Young Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young families may find traditional vehicles to be the most convenient form of transportation given their busy lifestyles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcase local families who use sustainable transportation and/or EVs. • Highlight the importance of preserving the environment for future generations. • Highlight the cross benefits of active transportation (e.g. walking or cycling to school). • As the needs of the family change over time (older children, multi-generational) there may be increased capital to fund home retrofits, leading to increased home comfort and reduced utility bills.
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth may feel their influence is limited given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage youth to get involved in local climate action, through opportunities such as

Audience	Challenges	Opportunities
	<p>their lack of political and economic power.</p>	<p>the Burlington Transit Youth Ambassador program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the impact of recent climate strikes, locally and globally. • There may be an opportunity to lead a youth-focused engagement surrounding the CAP and ways youth can make a difference.
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees may be limited in their ability to implement deep retrofits and/or install EV charging stations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the support of this strategy and relevant information, employees may be able to propose climate action to employers and building owners/managers. • Highlight the ability of employees to choose more sustainable methods of commuting. • Highlight studies that show that employees are more productive in 'green' buildings and that 'green' buildings could get more rent. • Employees may be drawn to 'green' companies which offer increased comfort and a healthier indoor environment.
Vulnerable Populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable populations (such as individuals with low socioeconomic status, or those who are new to Canada) are often the most negatively impacted by climate issues. • These groups may be intimidated by the capital costs required by certain programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the existing programs and incentives targeted to vulnerable populations, such as those offered through Burlington Transit and local utilities. • Highlight that energy conservation measures often result in reduced operating costs.

1.3. Low Carbon Actions

As outlined above, the City has a goal for its operations to become net carbon neutral by 2040 and is working to become a net carbon-neutral community. A low-carbon future for Burlington requires changes across all aspects of the community, including new and existing buildings, transportation, industry, and waste management. In order to model these changes, a catalogue of actions was developed, based on the research of best practices of municipal actions. This catalogue was reviewed with city staff and additional refinement and analysis was undertaken to develop a list of actions.

In total, 21 actions were identified for Burlington. Stakeholder and community engagement completed to date has focused on the program areas and related actions outlined below. These actions were selected for their relevance to the respective audiences and was not meant to indicate priority over other actions.

Program Area	Related Action(s)
Active Transportation / Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choosing sustainable transportation options like walking, cycling or transit
Electric Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electrify commercial vehicles• Switching to electric vehicles (personal)
Existing Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete deep retrofits of commercial and industrial buildings• Use heat pumps and/or solar hot water in industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) buildings• Retrofitting your home to be more energy efficient• Installing a heat pump or solar hot water heater at home
Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use solar PV for energy generation in ICI buildings

2. Engagement and Communications Tactics

This section provides a list of potential engagement and communications tactics, organized by level of effort and engagement. For example, Table 1 outlines primarily one-way information sharing, while Table 4 outlines opportunities for interactive workshops and events. Within each table, tactics are included for each of the program areas highlighted in the previous section. Separate communications materials will likely be needed for ICI and residential audiences. An important first step for ongoing engagement and communications will be to create and maintain a master contact list (likely stemming from the existing Get Involved Burlington list collected during the 2019 engagement).

Table 1 – Information Sharing & Communications

Program Area	Description	Target Audiences	Special Considerations
Active Transportation / Transit	<p>Information on sustainable transportation distributed through various channels by the City (website, social media) and at transit stops. Information may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus routes and schedule information • Fare information • Map of cycling routes • Locations of carpool lots • The benefits of sustainable transportation • Safety tips 	<p>Residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commuters • Single occupancy vehicle drivers • Students and parents <p>ICI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers • Employees • School boards • Local schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity to profile residents/employees who use sustainable transportation, in an effort to try and address concerns about convenience, safety and comfort. For example, local businesses could provide staff with information on the percentage of employees that travel to work sustainably. • Communications for ICI audiences should highlight the benefits of supporting employees in accessing sustainable transportation. • There is an opportunity to work with local school boards and individual schools to provide parents and students with information on Active

Program Area	Description	Target Audiences	Special Considerations
			and Safe Routes to School programs and activities.
Electric Mobility	<p>Information on electric vehicles distributed through various channels by the City, local environmental groups, current EV drivers/owners and dealerships. Information may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of EVs available on the market • How, when and where to charge the vehicle • Vehicle range • Overall lifetime costs and potential cost savings (return on investment) • Available incentives, as applicable • Locations of publicly available chargers 	<p>Residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gasoline/ diesel vehicle owners • Those looking to purchase a new vehicle <p>ICI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business owners • Fleet managers • Employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity to highlight non-monetary incentives associated with EVs, such as the quiet ride and the ability to use HOV lanes on 400-series highways. • Communications for ICI audiences should provide information on electric service vehicles offered on the market. • There is an opportunity to look beyond automobiles and provide information on the benefits of using an e-assist bikes/e-scooters in Burlington (i.e. for longer distances, hilly sections and dealing with strong headwinds), as well as switching small appliances to electric options (i.e. lawnmowers and trimmers).
Existing Buildings	<p>Information on energy audits distributed through various channels by government sources (all levels) and local utilities. Information may include:</p>	<p>Residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeowners/condo owners • Renters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources for renters and employees should provide suggested language for speaking to the building owner.

Program Area	Description	Target Audiences	Special Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical sources of GHGs in-home/office environments • The typical cost of an energy audit • Potential savings from an energy audit and information about the return on investment • Tips for finding a professional energy auditor • Available incentives, as applicable • A list of the top five to ten energy efficiency measures to implement, for each target audience 	ICI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business owners • Building managers • Employees 	
Renewable Energy Generation (Solar PV)	Information on renewable energy generation distributed through various channels. The information would likely come from government sources (all levels) and local utilities. Information may include:	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeowners/condo owners • Renters ICI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business owners • Building managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources for renters and employees should provide suggested language for speaking to the building owner. • There is an opportunity to work with local utilities to provide information about solar PV through bill inserts or door hangers.

Program Area	Description	Target Audiences	Special Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tips for identifying a renewable energy contractor • Overall lifetime costs and potential cost savings (return on investment) • Available incentives, as applicable • Comparison of feed-in-tariff (FIT and microFIT) and net metering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees 	

Table 2 – Education & Training

Program Area	Description	Target Audiences	Special Considerations
Active Transportation / Transit	Encourage the use of existing multi-modal trip planning tools and applications (such as Triplinx), which integrate walking, transit, bicycle and driving options. Residents could be challenged to participate in sustainable trip planning for trips to work, school, errands, etc. and compare the overall travel time and costs.	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commuters • Single occupancy vehicle drivers • Students and parents ICI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers • Employees • School boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications for ICI audiences should highlight the benefits of supporting employees in accessing sustainable transportation. • Leverage existing resources, such as the School Travel Planning toolkit offered by Ontario Active School Travel.

Program Area	Description	Target Audiences	Special Considerations
Electric Mobility	Encourage local businesses to implement existing fleet assessment tools, with the goal of building the business case for purchasing EVs. Once businesses have a better understanding of their fleet needs (e.g. required vehicle range), they will be better positioned to transition to an electric fleet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local schools ICI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business owners • Fleet managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses may be more receptive to considering EVs when current fleet vehicles are reaching end of life.
Existing Buildings	Develop a directory of formal and informal training and education programs targeted towards energy retrofits, with a focus on offerings within the local area. The directory should address both the technical aspects of completing retrofits, as well as strategies to increase adoption and demonstrating return on investment.	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth, students • Individuals looking to retrain • Homeowners ICI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractors • Tradespersons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The directory may be best facilitated by a local non-government organization, preventing the appearance of City endorsement of such programs.
Renewable Energy Generation (Solar PV)	Develop a directory of formal and informal training and education programs targeted towards renewable energy generation, with a focus on	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth, students • Individuals looking to retrain • Homeowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The directory may be best facilitated by a local non-government organization, preventing the appearance of City endorsement of such programs.

Program Area	Description	Target Audiences	Special Considerations
	offerings within the local area. The directory should address both the technical aspects of renewable energy generation, as well as strategies to increase adoption and demonstrating return on investment.	ICI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractors • Tradespersons 	

Table 3 – Collaborative Research

Program Area	Description	Target Audiences	Special Considerations
Active Transportation / Transit	Facilitate community engagement around the location of future transit stops/routes, cycling infrastructure, etc., either in-person or online, using visual displays and maps. People could use coloured dots to indicate their preferred locations for sustainable transportation infrastructure.	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current sustainable transportation users • Prospective sustainable transportation users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Such an engagement program would need to align with the City’s plans to implement additional sustainable transportation infrastructure. • Consider hosting such engagement events with students and parents to capture their views on active and safe school travel.
Electric Mobility	Facilitate community engagement around the location of future City-owned EV charging stations, either in-person or online, using visual displays and maps. People could use	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current EV owners • Prospective EV owners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Such an engagement program would need to align with the City’s plans to implement additional charging stations

Program Area	Description	Target Audiences	Special Considerations
	coloured dots to indicate their preferred charging locations.		
Electric Mobility	Conduct a survey with stakeholders and local businesses around the demand for personal/commercial electric vehicles within the City of Burlington and communicate findings with dealerships/manufacturers.	ICI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealerships/manufacturers Business owners Fleet managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Such a survey could explore the unique needs of the residential and ICI communities in terms of EVs.
Existing Buildings	Crowd-source a directory of local contractors and suppliers that are qualified to conduct energy audits and/or deep energy retrofits. Members of the public could submit, rate and comment on various service providers.	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeowners/condo owners ICI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business owners Building managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The directory may be best managed by a local non-government organization, preventing the appearance of City endorsement of specific service providers. There is an educational opportunity of having owners/managers participate in the energy audit process.
Renewable Energy Generation (Solar PV)	Conduct a survey with stakeholders and local businesses around the demand for localized renewable energy generation (at ICI buildings and homes) within the City of Burlington and communicate findings with contractors, suppliers and developers.	ICI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractors Suppliers Developers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Such a survey could explore the unique needs of the residential and ICI communities in terms of renewable energy generation.

Table 4 – Workshops & Interactive Events

Program Area	Description	Target Audiences	Special Considerations
Active Transportation / Transit	Provide community members with the opportunity to participate in complete streets design charettes. Such an activity could allow participants to represent (visually and interactively) their preferred street design, balancing opportunities and constraints.	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current sustainable transportation users • Prospective sustainable transportation users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Such an engagement program would need to align with the City’s plans to implement additional sustainable transportation infrastructure. • The City could consider pilot testing elements of these complete street designs informed by the public. • Consider hosting such engagement events with students and parents to capture their views on active and safe school travel.
Active Transportation / Transit	Implement an e-bike/e-scooter loan program, which would allow individuals to borrow the e-bikes/e-scooters for a set period of time to test out the technology.	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prospective sustainable transportation users • Those considering purchasing an e-bike or e-scooter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The e-bikes/e-scooters could be test-driven at community events or loaned out for longer periods of time. • Such a loan program would need to be actively managed and maintained by the City or partner organization. • There would be an initial cost to procure the e-bikes/e-scooters, as well as ongoing maintenance costs.
Electric Mobility	Host in-person events where current EV owners showcase their vehicles and answer common questions from other drivers. This would provide prospective owners with an opportunity to view EVs and	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gasoline/ diesel vehicle owners • Those looking to purchase a new car ICI:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity to encourage buy-in amongst EV owners through incentives (e.g. “Ask me about my EV” bumper stickers). • Similar events could be held for businesses, where those who have switched to EVs for commercial

Program Area	Description	Target Audiences	Special Considerations
	gain first-hand experience from local owners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business owners • Fleet managers 	vehicles could speak to other businesses.
Existing Buildings	Facilitate tours of sustainable homes and businesses that have undergone deep retrofits. This would provide home and business owners with an opportunity to view completed retrofits and gain first-hand experience from local residents/business owners.	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeowners/condo owners ICI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business owners • Building managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity to leverage existing networks/events, such as hosting a “Business After 5” event at a local sustainable business.
Renewable Energy Generation (Solar PV)	Facilitate tours of sustainable homes and businesses that have implemented renewable energy generation technology. This would provide home and business owners with an opportunity to view completed retrofits and gain first-hand experience from local residents/business owners.	Residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeowners/condo owners ICI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business owners • Building managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity to leverage existing networks/events, such as hosting a “Business After 5” event at a local sustainable business.

2.1 Overall Engagement & Communications Considerations

The following considerations were highlighted in stakeholder and public engagement sessions:

- Provide information on both *how* and *why* individuals/businesses should implement climate action, with a focus on capacity-building
- Develop and communicate the business case or return-on-investment associated with the suggested actions
- Highlight the benefits to the specific individual or business
- Preferred communications tactics included receiving information online (website, email, newsletters, social media) and via in-person events

3. Other Considerations for Strategy Implementation & Evaluation

3.1 Community Partnerships

Working with new and existing partners will be vitally important to the successful implementation of this strategy. Feedback from community stakeholders suggested that the message be decentralized, communicating the importance of climate action through various channels and organizations across the City, through a coordinated approach. Potential partners are listed below, this is not a comprehensive list, but a starting point for continued collaboration.

Potential Partners (alphabetical):

- Bay Area Climate Change Council
- Bay Area Restoration Council
- Building Owners and Managers Association
- Burlington Chamber of Commerce
- Burlington Economic Development Corporation
- Burlington Hydro
- Burlington Cycling Advisory Committee
- Burlington Integrated Transportation Advisory Committee
- Burlington Sustainable Development Advisory Committee
- Burlington Transit
- BurlingtonGreen
- Conservation Halton
- Enbridge Gas
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Halton Catholic District School Board
- Halton Climate Collective
- Halton Community Housing Corporation
- Halton District School Board
- Halton Public Health
- Halton Region
- Halton Region Federation of Agriculture
- Halton Waste Management
- McMaster University

- Metrolinx (GO, SmartCommute)
- Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
- Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation
- Mohawk College
- Plug'n Drive
- Royal Botanical Gardens
- Sustainable Hamilton Burlington

3.2 Alignment Across the City

When engaging stakeholders and the community on the CAP, it may be beneficial to highlight the alignment of the CAP's recommended actions with other City activities and planning documents, reinforcing the climate lens approach as directed through Council's Emergency Climate Declaration. Demonstrating the alignment of the CAP with existing plans (e.g., Burlington's Official Plan, Strategic Plan, Cycling Plan, Integrated Mobility Plan, etc.) may reinforce the importance of recommended actions, not only for the climate but for the betterment of the city as a whole. Demonstrating such alignment may also galvanize support for the CAP across departments with City operations.

3.3 Communicating Progress

An important aspect of keeping the wider community engaged in the implementation of the CAP is communicating progress – sharing successes and lessons learned. One possible method for communicating progress would be through an online portal. The portal should be user-friendly and accessible to anyone working towards climate action in Burlington.

There will also be a need to measure progress amongst the general public. This might be accomplished through a follow-up survey to gauge the uptake of climate actions as identified in the 2019 survey. Such a survey could also gain insight on ongoing challenges faced by the public and ongoing engagement preferences.

3.4 Update of the Engagement Strategy

Recognizing that the CAP includes actions to 2050, this engagement strategy should be a living document. The strategy, and its engagement and communications tactics, in particular, should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis (every five years), as required. Tactics such as the follow-up survey outlined above can be used to help refine this strategy over the life of the CAP, with the goal of continuously improving the tools to support local climate action. Ongoing review of this engagement strategy and its tactics should be completed in partnership with the City's Communications department.