



**SUBJECT: BurlingtonGreen fee for services**

**TO: Committee of the Whole**

**FROM: Environment and Energy**

Report Number: EICS-01-24

Wards Affected: N/A

Date to Committee: March 4, 2024

Date to Council: March 19, 2024

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**Recommendation:**

Approve one time funding for 2024 in the maximum amount of \$50,000 from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve Fund as a fee for services provided by BurlingtonGreen summarized in environment and energy report EICS-01-24; and

Direct the Executive Director of Environment, Infrastructure and Community Services to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and BurlingtonGreen outlining the services to be provided in 2024, including performance measures in a form satisfactory to the Executive Director of Legal Services and Corporation Counsel; and

Consider an ongoing fee for services approach with BurlingtonGreen in the amount of \$50,000 per calendar year during the Mayor's 2025 budget process.

**PURPOSE:**

**Vision to Focus Alignment:**

Protecting and improving the natural environment and taking action on climate change

Objective: Establish sustainable, healthy and low-carbon climate resilient communities.

We will know when we are successful when.... The City has formalized long-term partnerships with environmental partners such as BurlingtonGreen and have established other new partnerships.

The purpose of this report is to recommend a fee for services to be delivered by the local environmental non-profit organization, BurlingtonGreen. This report provides a summary of services to be provided and background information on the City's long relationship working with BurlingtonGreen.

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## **Background and Discussion:**

### **Proposal:**

BurlingtonGreen (BG) has requested continuation of a fee in exchange of the delivery of services in the amount of \$50,000 for the period of 2024 – 2027. In 2023, BG received \$70,000 under the Recreation, Community and Culture's Community Development program to deliver programs which support the City's strategic directions related to sustainable transportation, urban nature priorities, climate change actions and zero waste.

A detailed proposal is found in Appendix A and provides a breakdown of programming and events; outreach and resources; environmental services; and climate action demonstration features. It builds on the funding proposal submitted in 2023, supporting the following activities:

- The annual city-wide community Clean-up event (March through to October)
- Climate-related events (1 transportation and 1 home energy)
- Green Up Tree Planting event
- Urban forest education & appreciation
- Green Up home tips
- Community engagement activities at the Eco Hub
- Nature-Friendly Burlington program

### **Background:**

BurlingtonGreen has been operating in the community since 2007 and has a long history of partnering with the City. They took over the annual community Clean Up event from the City in 2011 (formerly organized by the Mayor's office) and significantly increased participation as it has evolved into the annual Clean-up Green-up event, running over several months instead of just one week around Earth Day. They provide greening services at events for a fee. Forestry staff and BurlingtonGreen have partnered on several occasions to deliver tree planting, give aways and educational events. The City entered into a funding agreement with BG in 2021/22 to complete the community based Electric Mobility Strategy presented to Council in September 2022 (fifty percent of funding was provided by the provincial Ministry of Energy).

In addition, BG has been delivering programs for years, including the BTYAs (Burlington Transit Youth Ambassadors), Nature Friendly Burlington, Green Up (along with Clean-

up), zero waste, active transportation, climate action, presenting in school classrooms to engage the youth and engaging youth through the BurlingtonGreen Youth Network.

In 2022, BG successfully made arrangements with the City to lease the Burlington pump house located on the Beach where they transformed it into a community Eco Hub. During their first season, it became evident that this location provided an excellent opportunity to engage Burlington residents on environmental actions in an area that is ecologically significant and where the community gathers. In fact, BG has a history of working to restore the Beachway dunes in partnership with Conservation Halton, Halton Region and the City, improving the biodiversity and protecting the ecological sensitivity of the area, engaging community members on its importance and the valuable ecosystem services it provides.

The Eco Hub has presented a brand-new opportunity for the City to partner with BG and deliver and engage the public on climate related programs and actions, such as:

- Home energy retrofits showcasing the air source heat pump installed at the Eco Hub;
- Active and sustainable transportation given the location on the multi-use trail along with bike parking and a bike repair station; and
- Electric mobility with the soon to be installed electric vehicle charging stations.

The fee for services approach helps to supplement external funding and provide additional support for staff and resources allowing BurlingtonGreen to attract volunteers, develop and coordinate communications and successfully deliver activities noted above. The 2024 fee for services request would enable BG to confirm the resources to continue delivering these activities and continue partnering with the City to engage community members.

Some of the success stories include:

- BurlingtonGreen hosting special events at the Eco Hub to engage Burlington residents on climate actions and active transportation.
- The annual Clean Up Green Up event
- Ongoing Beachway engagement activities – beach clean-ups, invasive species removals and dune plantings
- Tree planting and forestry education events
- The Climate Action Day featuring Plug'n Drive and EV test drives at the Eco Hub
- Electronics recycling events and hosting the Repair Café

A number of events are planned for 2024, such as the annual community Clean-Up Green-Up event, tree planting, outreach at the Eco Hub, workshops on biodiversity and climate action, event greening activities, waste events and several other. Some of their

planned events are tentative based on confirming the necessary resources to deliver the activities.

### **Strategy/process/risk**

City staff see the benefits of investing in the services that BurlingtonGreen provides to help achieve the City's lofty environmental goals and targets. The City's small sustainability team is effective but has limited resources to fully engage the community.

Given the history and close relationship between the City and BurlingtonGreen, staff support a fee for services arrangement with BG which help to achieve the City's key strategic environmental priorities.

This arrangement would have limited risk given the good working relationship staff have had with the organization over the years. A memorandum of understanding would be drafted and signed by each organization to oversee the services to be provided, performance measures to track progress and reporting requirements.

### **Options Considered**

The City also supports the Bay Area Climate Change Council with an annual contribution to Mohawk College who provides administration services for the council. This funding is confirmed until 2026 and supports a community collective approach to taking action on climate change. Staff see the benefits for supporting both organizations where BACCC engages with a range of stakeholders participating on the Council across both communities (Hamilton and Burlington), BurlingtonGreen is situated within the City limits, actively engages the community with ongoing events and programs, and has local visibility with the Eco Hub location.

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### **Financial Matters:**

In April 2023, \$70,000 was issued to BurlingtonGreen through the Recreation, Community and Culture's Community Development program in exchange for services, ending March 2024. A fee of \$50,000 in exchange for services to be delivered by BurlingtonGreen is proposed for the remainder of 2024.

### **Total Financial Impact**

The total financial impact for 2024 is \$50,000.

### Source of Funding

The proposed source of funding for the \$50,000 is the tax rate stabilization reserve fund.

### Other Resource Impacts

It is recommended that an ongoing fee for services approach be included in the Mayor’s 2025 budget for consideration. This arrangement would provide consistency and certainty for BurlingtonGreen to plan for and deliver programs and leverage the funding with external sources.

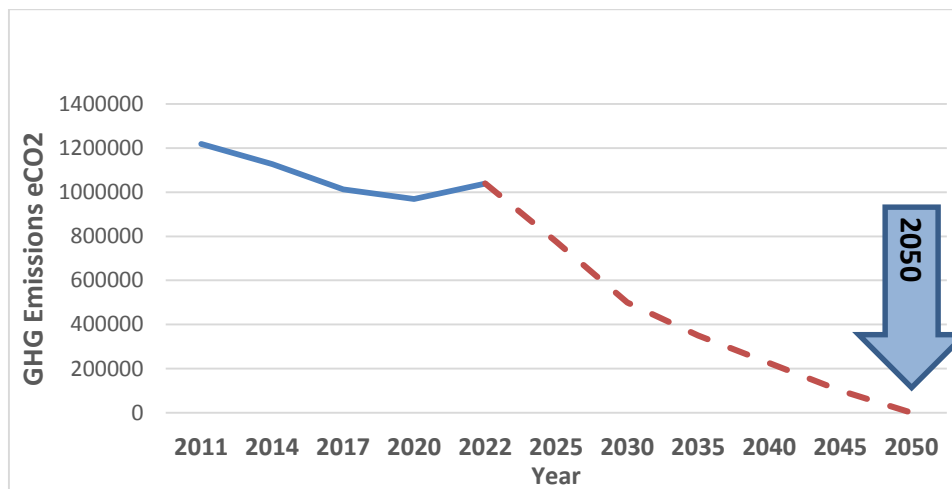
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### Climate Implications:

City Council approved a target for the Burlington community to be net carbon neutral by 2050 as part of the Climate Action Plan in 2020. This is an ambitious target where the City can help facilitate action by approving programs and infrastructure projects to support active and sustainable transportation, electric mobility, greener buildings and deep energy efficiency retrofits. In addition, Council has approved Climate Resilient Burlington – a Plan to Adapt to Warmer, Wetter and Wilder Weather, preparing and managing the risks of a changing climate.

BurlingtonGreen has been an active participant in the development and implementation of both plans. Many of their programs and events help to engage and educate the Burlington community members on how they can take action to reduce their carbon footprint and prepare for our changing climate. Taking action on climate change is not just about City Hall and requires ongoing engagement and programs to achieve our targets. The below table on Community Emissions was presented to Committee as part of the annual update on the implementation of the Climate Action Plan (EICS-10-23).

**Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Year Showing 2050 Target**



### **Engagement Matters:**

In 2022, City staff met with BG representatives at their new location to learn about their activities, and how community interest and demand in their programs have grown. Staff saw an opportunity to support BG's work to activate the community to achieve the City's strategic directions related to sustainable transportation, urban nature priorities, complete communities and zero waste. BurlingtonGreen also had one on one meetings with Council members to showcase their achievements and discuss opportunities for further engagement of the community on key environmental priorities.

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### **Conclusion:**

BurlingtonGreen's delivery of programs and activities positively benefit our community and local environment. The recommended fee for services approach would continue to recognize the work that this organization carries out to protect, enhance and restore our local environment. Their enthusiastic delivery of programs and activities directly supports the City's strategic environmental priorities, such as climate change, sustainable transportation (active and transit), complete communities and green infrastructure, urban nature and biodiversity, and reducing waste and community clean-ups.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Robichaud  
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### **Appendices:**

- A. BurlingtonGreen 2024 Funding Proposal

### **Notifications:**

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### **Report Approval:**

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.