



REPORT

TO: Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

FROM: Jennifer Spence, Climate Change Outreach Coordinator

DATE: October 4, 2021

REPORT NO.: ADMIN-2021-0047

SUBJECT: 2021 Climate Change Investment Fund Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. ADMIN- 2021-0047 dated October 4, 2021, regarding requests for funding from the Climate Change Investment Fund capital project, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT funding for the 2021 Climate Change Investment Fund capital project, as recommended by the Climate Change and Asset Management division be approved and disbursed to the applicants providing any additional information that may be required is submitted.

AND FURTHER THAT all unused funds remain within the Climate Change Investment Fund capital project for distribution in 2022.

KEY POINTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- This is the first year of the Climate Change Investment Fund
- The maximum amount available per application is \$2,000.00
- The total amount of funding available in 2021 is \$15,000.00
- Funding in-take is once per year
- Projects are scored using the Climate Change Investment Fund criteria
- Applicants are encouraged to discuss projects with Town staff prior to applying

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

Through Memorandum ADMIN-2020-0017 dated June 23, 2020, the Community Sustainability Investment Fund (CSIF), capital project number 7300-22-1501 transitioned to a Climate Change Investment Fund (CCIF) to better align with Council's current strategic plan and in support of Council passing a climate change emergency declaration including setting the target of becoming a carbon neutral community by 2030.

The intention of the CCIF focuses on providing 'seed' funding through the capital budget to support practical, community-based initiatives relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation actions. The intention of the CCIF is to incentivize organizations and community groups to take actions to reduce carbon emissions through mitigation and adaptation measures that align with the Town's current climate change initiatives. For example, air quality, energy conservation/efficiency, environmental education, water conservation, waste reduction, green space enhancement, preserving natural assets including biodiversity and the ecosystem (tree plantings, and community gardens).

The proposed projects submitted to the 2021 CCIF have a combined value of \$31,900.00 which will be invested in Halton Hills and leverage \$10,000.00 of the available \$15,000.00 from the Climate Change Investment Fund. The remaining funds in the capital project will be carried over into the 2022 Climate Change Investment Fund for future community-based climate initiatives. Table 1 below highlights the local groups dollar amount they requested, the total value of the project and the amount recommended to be disbursed to the groups.

Table 1: Recommended Funding – 2021			
Name of Organization	Amount Requested	Total Value of Projects	Amount Recommended
Friends of the Old Seed House Garden	\$2,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$2,000.00
Halton Butterflyway	\$2,000.00	\$14,280.00	\$2,000.00
Halton/North Peel Naturalists Club	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Trees for Halton Hills	\$1,970.00	\$3,620.00	\$2,000.00
Willow Park Ecology Centre	\$2,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$2,000.00
Total	\$9,970.00	\$31,900.00	\$10,000.00

This is the first year of the CCIF which aligns with Council's climate change goals of taking actions towards a net-zero community. Each proposal is evaluated through the following steps:

- Applications are checked for completeness
- Summaries of the proposals are written for staff who are evaluating the proposals
- The new criteria listed in the Climate Change Investment Fund Application Guide (available on the Town's website) is used to evaluate the proposal
- The criteria have assigned points and Town staff score the proposal
- The criteria points are totalled and given an average score based on the number of staff reviewing the proposal
- The score of each proposal is reflected in the amount of funding recommended for approval in this report

The submissions to the 2021 CCIF were reviewed by Climate Change and Asset Management division staff. The funding recommendations were validated by the Change Action Task Force before being recommended for Council's approval in this report.

There are many ways the community can contribute to the Town's net-zero and climate resiliency goals. Below is a summary and description of projects that the Town is supporting this year.

Friends of the Old Seed House:

Friends of the Old Seed House are requesting funding to support the addition of native and pollinator plants to the Old Dominion Seed House Garden. The benefits of pollinator plants are:

- Provides pollen and nectar for bees, butterflies, bats, birds, and beetles which help pollinate and reproduce plants for food
- Grows deep roots, slows rainwater, and cleanses it before reaches streams and ponds
- Helps to clean the air we breathe by removing carbon dioxide and storing it in its roots
- Educates and inspires residents on the benefits of pollinator gardens so that they are inspired to create gardens

Halton Butterfly:

David Suzuki's local chapter of Halton Butterflyway is a program set up to create neighbourhood scale corridors for butterflies and bees. There are over 90 privately-owned pollinator gardens and 11 public gardens. Halton Butterflyway is seeking funds

to add pollinator gardens to Hungry Hollow, Delrex Parkette, and Joseph Gibbons Park, in partnership with Credit Valley Conservation and the Town of Halton Hills.

Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club:

The Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club is requesting funding to add signage at the marsh area near the Gellert Community Centre to educate the community on the flora, fauna, and important roles of wetlands in storing carbon emissions, filtering rainwater, providing habitat for wildlife, and how wetlands play an important role in addressing climate change.

Trees for Halton Hills:

The community group Trees for Halton Hills are seeking funding to involve and educate the public in mitigating climate impacts and enhancing community resilience to extreme weather by organizing a community tree planting event in the spring of 2022. Trees for Halton Hills will secure native trees and recruit volunteers to participate in public planting sites selected by Town staff. The trees will become part of the Town's natural assets. Town funding will allow Trees for Halton Hills in developing future community tree planting events with other sponsors invited to support the cause.

Willow Park Ecology Centre:

Willow Park is seeking funding to support climate change and energy conservation workshops through an educational signage promotional campaign and events. A fulsome planned program is planned for the fall of 2021 and the spring of 2022. Workshops range from building nest boxes, to learning about where food comes through gardening workshops including indigenous gardens, Naturescaping, and an air quality alternative transportation campaign

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report aligns to the Town's Strategic plan recognizing the value to preserve, protect and enhance our natural environment for the health benefits and enjoyment it provides to present and future generations.

This report also identifies climate change and the environment as one of the Town's Strategic priorities.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

This report impacts and/or helps address climate change through mitigation and adaptation measures.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public Engagement was not needed for this funding process

INTERNAL CONSULTATION:

Town staff who oversee other Town funding were circulated the 2021 CCIF requests to ensure there were no funding duplications. The Town Treasurer has reviewed this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report will be funded through an existing approved budget source.

Reviewed and approved by,

Dharmen Dhaliah, Senior Manager of Climate Change and Asset Management

Moya Jane Leighton, Director of Finance & Town Treasurer

Richard Cockfield, Director of Strategic Planning

Chris Mills, Acting Chief Administrative Officer