



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

BRIEFING NOTE

To: Council

File No.: 5335-20

From: Director of Engineering Services

Date: August 30, 2023

Subject: Local Government Climate Action Program – 2023 Update

PURPOSE: To inform Council of the 2023 submission to the Local Government Climate Action Program

BACKGROUND:

The Local Government Climate Action Program (LGCAP) is a provincial program that provides local governments with predictable and stable funding to support climate action. This funding supports climate actions that reduce emissions and prepare communities for the impacts of a changing climate. The LGCAP program was launched in 2022, and follows the former Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program (CARIP) which operated from 2010 to 2020.

The province has determined that the City of Courtenay is eligible to receive annual funding of \$173,082 upon meeting the following annual program requirements:

- Be signatories to the BC Climate Action Charter
- Measure and report corporate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- Complete an Online Survey
- Have the Chief Financial Officer, or equivalent position sign the attestation form to confirm all funds were or will be used toward climate action.
- Post a completed PDF version of the program survey and attestation form publicly.

The City of Courtenay fulfilled these program requirements in 2022, and received \$173,082. The City of Courtenay recently fulfilled the 2023 program requirements and is expecting to receive another \$173,082. Over the first three years of the program, the City of Courtenay is eligible to receive an approximate allocation of \$519,000.

To date, the funds have been placed in reserve as staff develop a recommended approach to allocate the funds. The plan to utilize these funds will reflect the City's strategic priorities and will be subject to future Council Direction. The province allows funds to be held in reserve year over year to fund larger projects, however all funds from the first three years of the program must be spent no later than March 31, 2025. The funds must be linked to climate change mitigation or climate change adaptation as described by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy in the documents *Clean BC Roadmap to 2030*, and *Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy*. The city must report on how these projects are linked to the objectives outlined in these documents.

DISCUSSION:

To fulfil the 2023 LGCAP program requirements, the City of Courtenay completed a corporate GHG Emissions Inventory for 2022 and a survey that reports climate action progress and initiatives.

GHG Inventory

The corporate GHG Emissions Inventory was completed using the template provided by the Province of BC, in accordance with the *2022 BC Best Practices Methodology for Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Emissions*. This inventory estimates the emissions produced from City of Courtenay operations related to the delivery of traditional municipal services, as defined in the *Scope Summary for Local Government and Modern Treaty Nation Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions*. This approach allows the reported emissions to be compared against the reported emissions of other jurisdictions nationally, and internationally.

The total GHG emissions from City of Courtenay operations were estimated to be 1280.07 tCO₂e in 2022. The GHG Emissions Inventory is provided in Attachment 1, and the results are summarized by Figure 1 below.

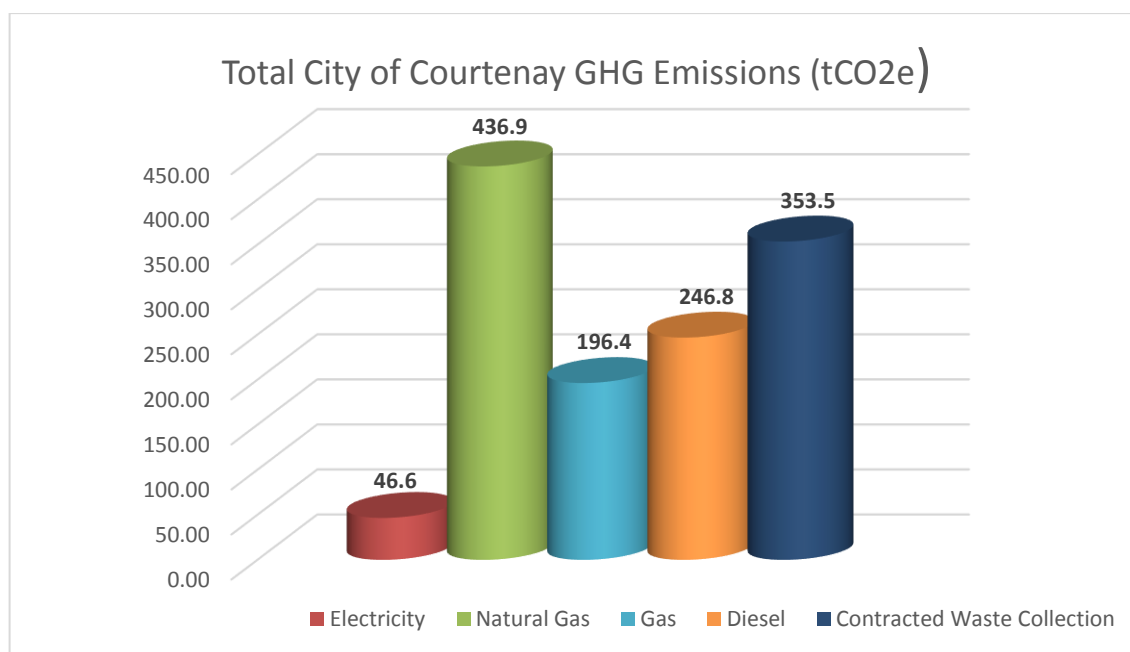


Figure 1: City of Courtenay Corporate Emissions Inventory, 2022.

The inventory found that the greatest source of GHG emissions is natural gas used in buildings, followed by fuel used by contracted waste collection, and City of Courtenay Equipment and Fleet vehicles. This estimate was prepared by referencing usage data reported by BC Hydro, FortisBC, and vehicle fuel records. This estimate will be used to help identify climate mitigation projects that offer the greatest reductions in GHG emissions.

Survey Findings

The survey is provided in Attachment 2, and was completed by engaging internal city staff across the organization, to ensure our response reflected all climate action efforts. This included consultation with staff from: Engineering; Public Works; Development Services; Recreation, Culture & Community Services; Financial Services; and the Fire Department. An equivalent of six full staff positions were estimated to be working on climate action, determined by summing the portions of staff time related to emergency management, sustainability, active transportation, and waste management across all departments. This

highlights how integrating climate considerations in our operations, will require collaboration and coordination throughout the organization.

This survey noted that the City's Corporate Climate Action Strategy was completed in 2009. The 2023-2026 Strategic Priorities identify an update of the Corporate Climate Action Plan as a key task. Staff have proposed that a portion of the LGCAP funds be used to update the Corporate Climate Action Strategy to align with the current provincial guidance and updated climate targets. It is anticipated that this strategy will identify the specific projects and actions needed to reduce corporate greenhouse gas emissions and reach our climate targets outlined in the Official Community Plan (OCP).

The Corporate GHG Emissions Inventory is focused on city operations, and does not reflect GHG emissions in the community. Community wide emissions are estimated by the Comox Valley Community Wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory prepared by the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD), on a three-year schedule. The most recent inventory was completed in 2021, and community wide emissions for the City of Courtenay were reported to be 181,157 tCO₂e. The community wide emissions estimate does not include emissions related to city operations. The CVRD is working to complete a regional climate action strategy using data from the Community Wide Emissions Reduction Strategy. The City of Courtenay has been engaged in this process, and will continue to support their efforts.

It was noted that the City of Courtenay is already advancing climate adaption plans to respond to the risk of flood and heavy rainfall. The risk associated with other climate hazards, such as extreme heat and stress, water shortages, wildfire, ecological impacts, and human health have not been analysed in depth. This represents an opportunity for future analysis to ensure the city can build resilience to the variety of climate hazards that may be experienced.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The City of Courtenay is expected to receive \$173,082 annually, for the first three years of the LGCAP program, for a total allocation of \$519,246. These funds will be directed toward climate action as required by the province, and will be allocated as part of the annual financial planning process.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

The preparation of the LGCAP submittals, and the development of a Corporate Climate Action Strategy will be led by Engineering Services, with support from Public Works, Development Services, and other departments as required. Once the strategy is developed, administrative impacts will be assessed in greater detail. The adoption of a climate lens in our operations may have implications for all departments.

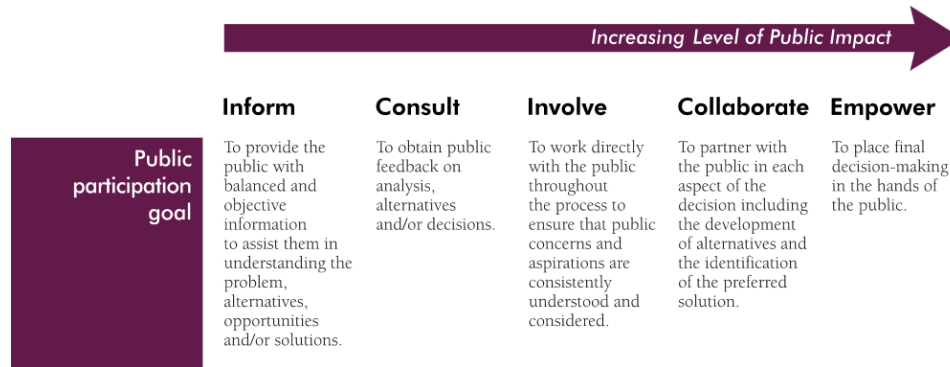
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

This initiative addresses the following strategic priorities:

- Natural Environment - Integrate climate change commitment into our governance work: Update Corporate Climate Action Plan
- Natural Environment - Integrate climate change commitment into our governance work: Include climate change lens in staff reports
- Natural Environment - Integrate climate change commitment into our governance work: Include carbon budget in municipal operations and purchasing

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

The 2023 LGCAP survey is publicly available on the City of Courtenay website. Staff are Informing the public based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation:



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RECOMMENDATION: THAT Council receive the “Local Government Climate Action Plan – 2023 Update” briefing note.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2022 City of Courtenay Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory
2. LGCAP Year 2 Survey

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