



2022 ANNUAL REPORT TO STRATFORD CITY COUNCIL

Committee Name: **Energy and Environment**

Date Submitted: **Friday, December 9, 2022**

1. Outline of accomplishments/projects completed in 2022:

The E&E Advisory Committee completed several projects during 2022, even though we were unable to meet for the last 3 months of the year because of the municipal election. These projects included:

Tree Power program. This is a partnership event shared by E&E, Festival Hydro, the UTRCA and Stratford Master Gardeners, and it took place on Saturday, April 9, 2022. This program gives local homeowners the opportunity to purchase native hardwood trees and shrubs at a reduced cost (\$25) to plant on their properties. The goal of the project is to create a greener and more beautiful community by adding native trees.

Native Grass planting. This project took place close to the T J Dolan entrance, where the new multi-use path meets John Street. The existing grass was removed in the spring and replaced with Blue Stem, Little Blue Stem, Sorghastrum nutans and Butterfly weed, which are all native grasses that are great for local wildlife, are attractive, and which will require very little maintenance once established. Additional plugs were added to the original spring planting in October.

Lake Victoria Shoreline Stabilization and Habitat Work: In February, work was carried out to reconstruct 100M of shoreline on the south shore. Cap rock installed 3 years ago had begun to tilt and slip down the slope of the bank - probably due to hidden ice lense in the bank that once thawed caused the slump. The work involved reinforcing the toe of the slope with more river stone to support the cap rock and repositioning the existing cap rock to correct the tilt. Some backfilling with soil was also carried out. In addition to this work, the 2 wooden crib structures located along the south shore were covered with decking to increase accessibility to the lake by providing better footing for the public.

Invasive species Control – Phragmites in the TJ Dolan Nature Area: The Committee applied to the Invasive Species Council of Canada for funding to help remove this

invasive species from the TJ Dolan. Working with the UTRCA as a partner, identify the areas and treat them was developed. The application was successful and \$5,000 was approved. The grant will be spent over the next 2 years. It is important to stop this invasive plant before it encroaches any further in the area as it smothers all other native plants and ruins native wildlife habitat.

2. Summary of how the Advisory Committee's mandate in the Terms of Reference is reflected in the Committee's accomplishments/projects for 2022:

The main purpose of the Energy and Environment Committee is to study all matters coming to its attention which might have any effect on the environment, particularly the environment of the City of Stratford and its surroundings. The Committee's principal goal will be to improve the environment and advocate for energy efficiency across the entire municipal spectrum. The Committee will strive to maintain Stratford's reputation as a community of environmental excellence. The Committee shall be advisory in nature and shall advise City Council of environmental matters and may from time to time make such recommendations to Stratford City Council concerning the environment as it deems advisable.

3. Summary of 2022 recommendations made to Sub-committee, Committee or Council:

Some of our recommendations included:

March 2022

THAT the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee recommends Stratford City Council undertake a formal review of the Secondary Plans and make recommendations for revisions based on a climate lens.

June 2022

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee requests City Council consider the City of Stratford join the Canada Plastics Pact to ensure that the issue of plastic waste can be addressed;

AND That Stratford City Council direct the Climate Change Committee or Staff to review the by-laws currently in place, namely those in Surrey and Victoria BC, related to plastic reduction with a goal of creating plastic reduction by-laws for the City of Stratford.

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee – Industrial, Commercial, Industrial Waste Working Group requests that Stratford City Council approve the Committee begin a Green Recognition Program in Stratford as outlined in their draft proposal.

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee recommends that Stratford City Council further direct staff that in the creation of the RFP for hiring a consultant to complete the review of the Official Plan, that it includes a climate lens.

4. Please summarize how your 2022 projects/plans have reflected the City's strategic priorities:

The Lake Victoria shoreline work is something that strongly reflects the City's strategic priorities. This work not only benefits the users of the park system by making it more accessible and safer, it also helps to improve the water quality and the natural habitat of the wildlife that lives there. This aligns with the City's priority for "More greening of the city" as well as improving accessibility and ensuring the safety of our citizens. The Tree Power program, native grass and invasive species removal programs also fills the priority of greening of the City.

5. Comments regarding impact of COVID-19 on your Committee's operations in 2022:

Covid continued to have an impact on our meetings (which were still on Zoom), but we were able to make more progress on our projects compared to 2020 and 2021. Unfortunately, the impact of shortages and price increases around lumber and other supplies affected the cost of some of our shoreline work, making it much more expensive to do the same work.

6. Outline of projects/plans for 2023 budget funds:

Our plans are to continue with the existing projects, especially the Lake Victoria shoreline work and the invasive species removal. We continue to identify projects that improve the shoreline and we work in partnership with the City and UTRCA. We also plan to be involved in the establishment of a green recognition program, continue work on reducing ICI waste, and working with and providing feedback to the City's new Climate Initiative co-ordinator.

We also plan to return to providing educational events to help our community learn about and connect via various initiatives to protect and sustain the environment.