



TOWN OF NEWMARKET  
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August 17, 2015

**DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMISSION  
ENGINEERING SERVICES  
INFORMATION REPORT – ES 2015-50**

TO: Mayor  
Members of Council

COPY: Bob Shelton, P.Eng., CAO  
Peter Noehammer, P.Eng., Commissioner, Development & Infrastructure

SUBJECT: Joint Town-LSRCA Senior Environmental Coordinator for Climate Change Adaptation

ORIGIN: Director, Engineering Services

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In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any Member of Council may request this Information Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of Whole Agenda for discussion through the Clerk.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to inform the Mayor, Council and CAO regarding a new “Senior Environmental Coordinator – Climate Change Adaptation” contract position to be funded jointly between the Town and the LSRCA as a pilot project to help the Town of Newmarket respond to the negative effects of climate change in 2015 and 2016.

**COMMENTS**

In Newmarket, residents, developers and community groups, including Council’s NEAC, have long advocated for a dedicated staff position to lead environmental sustainability and green initiatives, and also to position the Town to adapt to climate change and to help meet the more stringent requirements of the new Lake Simcoe Protection Plan. Furthermore, there have been numerous calls from residents concerned with flooding on private property as a result of climate change and municipal development.

Although the Town is not in the business of maintaining private property, there are many things that we can do to help adapt the Town to the effects of climate change on our own properties. We can also help our residents and business owners to “flood-proof” their properties and those downstream from them by providing education about Low Impact Development (LID) retrofits and new construction. However, with current workloads and limited resources, existing staff cannot respond to the increasing demand for sustainable planning and construction.



Increasingly, Ontario municipalities are coming under legal liability claims for damages as a result of floods due to climate change. For example, the City of Thunder Bay, the City of Mississauga, and the City of Stratford have already faced lawsuits in this regard. Municipalities which are aware of the negative effects of climate change, but fail to take any action whatsoever to respond, place themselves at increased risk of being found liable for damages.

Recognizing the costs involved and the need to protect the Town from legal repercussions and to keep our residents and businesses safe and thriving, the Town has forged an agreement with the LSRCA to fund a new position on a temporary contract basis dedicated to environmental sustainability and climate change.

This contract resource will enable us to implement the services and initiatives required to address the issues at hand and to institute an acceptable "standard of care". After several meetings with the LSRCA, the Town was able to obtain a commitment, in writing (see attachment 1), whereby the LSRCA will fund 50% of this contract up to a maximum of \$50,000 per year (prorated for a partial year in 2015) starting on October 1, 2015 until December 2016.

A large portion of this position's duties will consist of outreach and community engagement to get stakeholders on board to change the culture of stormwater management. By partnering 50-50 with the LSRCA, we demonstrate collaboration as well as fiscal responsibility and efficiency in financial management in addressing an issue that is time-sensitive and of great concern. This position will work closely with developers, contractors, residents, commercial and industrial landowners, Town staff and Council and partners such as the LSRCA, MOE, DFO, VivaNext, universities and other agencies to implement environmental strategies and apply technology to minimize stormwater runoff and to identify opportunities to reduce impervious surfaces and total surface area of existing and proposed stormwater management ponds.

The Senior Environmental Coordinator – Climate Change Adaptation will be a Town position having the following main duties, among others:

1. Develop and implement adaptation strategies for flood control by identifying potential flood zones within the Town and seeking to identify causes and propose solutions;
2. Work with Town Staff to ensure that all capital works being initiated by the Town (road reconstruction, bridges, sidewalk, etc.) take into consideration LID opportunities first before reverting to more traditional storm management alternatives;
3. Develop strategies and policy for proper erosion and sediment control in construction works and new developments and monitor results to ensure compliance;
4. Ensure that the Town complies with the new, more stringent Lake Simcoe Protection Plan by finding ways to reduce phosphorus from surface drainage, promoting cleaner runoff and developing strategies and Town policies to protect our lakes, rivers and Lake Simcoe;
5. Reduce or eliminate reliance on stormwater management ponds (SWM ponds) by finding ways to manage rainwater at the source;
6. Develop / deliver educational programs for residents, schools and the business community to inform stakeholders and the public on LID principles, initiatives and benefits, including

- those associated with permeable surfaces, roof drainage, tree trenches, rain gardens, bioswales and engineered ditches, etc., and implement an LID pilot project with a school;
7. Lead the development and implementation of “green” policies and guidelines, construction standards and specifications for new developments and the Town’s own capital works;
  8. Work with residents, developers, schools, Town Staff and all stakeholders to identify the type of incentive that would best motivate each sector to implement LID and environmental elements in their projects and designs and assist them in exploring potential funding opportunities for LID and climate change or sustainability initiatives from external sources;
  9. Create/maintain a database containing an inventory of private and public LID initiatives that are implemented throughout the community and a database to prioritize large impervious surfaces that can be targeted for future LID applications (rooftops, parking lots, etc.);
  10. Create/maintain a section of the Town’s website dedicated to environmental sustainability;
  11. Participate on boards, committees and policy groups as required to ensure that the Town is represented at the table and to develop policies, by-laws and strategies for green initiatives that are compatible with our environmental partners;
  12. Work with Finance to study the implementation of a stormwater management rate;
  13. Lead and coordinate the Town’s stormwater pond maintenance plan;
  14. Sustain and enhance Newmarket’s biodiversity by promoting the establishment of native plantings in rain gardens, bioswales and other landscape features;
  15. Advise on the protection of natural habitats for fish and wildlife;
  16. Propose and implement strategies to protect or improve air quality;
  17. Promote energy efficiency;
  18. All other municipal environmental adaptation initiatives.

By partnering with the LSRCA, the Town will be able to properly begin adapting to the challenges of climate change at a much lower cost. This will ensure that the Town’s core values of living well (by focusing on the environment) and being well-equipped and managed (by implementing processes and policy that reflect sound and accountable governance) will be met. Furthermore, the Town’s exposure to legal liability will be reduced significantly. Altogether, these initiatives will make Newmarket an even better place to live, work, learn and play.

## **COMMUNITY AND SERVICE IMPACTS**

This initiative will respond to community expectations for leadership and action to meet current and future environmental challenges. The Town can become a leader in LID and green initiatives and will have a strong community presence on environmental matters. Partnerships with schools and community groups will create community engagement to address climate change. Building on green initiatives such as the Mosaik development, the LEED Platinum Subdivision of Rodeo Homes and the strong partnership between the Town and the LSRCA, among others, will help Newmarket carve its name on a national and international scene as a leader in Environmental Sustainability. This will create economic development by raising the profile of the Town and increasing its appeal to outside businesses and developers. Recreational opportunities will be enhanced as a result of healthier greenspaces.

Partnering with the LSRCA on this position will enable the Town to greatly lower its costs to meet the needs expressed by the community and by internal / external stakeholders who expect the Town to provide support and demonstrate leadership in environmental initiatives, in meeting the challenges of climate change and in protecting Lake Simcoe.

Rallying the community through school programs and working with all of its stakeholders will instill a sense of pride and will create momentum in addressing environmental and climate change issues head-on in Newmarket.

Entering into this project allows the Town to begin to properly address the challenges of climate change and to become less vulnerable for damages as a result of climate change. The Town will be able to respond to increasing community demands for leadership and action in adapting to meet current and future environmental challenges. The Town will become a leader in LID implementation and green initiatives and will be able to apply for external funding programs to help fund activities to improve the environment. The Town will also be eligible for prestigious awards for leadership in green sustainable technologies, making it a more desirable place to live and in which to conduct business. Through leading by example, residents and the community will be compelled to action because there will be a strong community presence and leadership from the Town on environmental matters.

## **BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES**

Living Well By Focusing on the Environment to Promote Activity and Enrich Lives: By ensuring environmental protection and natural heritage preservation.

Well-Equipped and Managed by Implementing Processes and Policy that Reflect Sound and Accountable Governance: By exercising fiscal responsibility, leadership excellence, leading-edge management, service excellence, clear vision of the future and efficient management of capital assets and municipal services to meet existing and future operational demands.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION TEAM OBJECTIVES BEING MET**

Even Better Community Engagement: Through outreach by implementing advisory services and educational programs in schools, with residents and with the business community.

Even Better Customer Service: By responding to a need expressed by residents, businesses, NEAC and the community to safeguard private properties from damages due to climate change and for action on becoming a more environmentally sustainable “green” community.

Even Better Economic Development & Jobs: By creating an environment that is more conducive to keeping businesses safe and prospering and by creating a previously non-existing contract position at the Town.

Even Better Traffic Safety: By reducing the possibility of flooding on our roads.

Even Better Recreational Activities: By ensuring that parks and trails are kept dry and more conducive to play, leisure and social activities.

Even Better Efficiency and Financial Management: By reducing the Town's exposure to considerable risk and by capitalizing on an offer of financial partnership with the LSRCA.

### **BUDGET IMPACT**

Building on the great relationship that the Town has with the LSRCA has led to this extraordinary opportunity to add a contracted resource to the Town at a very low cost. The LSRCA is pledging \$62,000 towards this position: \$12,000 will be allocated for the remainder of 2015, with \$50,000 committed for 2016.

A full-time Contract Senior Environmental Coordinator – Climate Change Adaptation position is estimated to have an annual cost of less than \$100,000, inclusive of wages and benefits. It is anticipated that this position will spend approximately 50% of its time on capital projects. By using our current practice of allocating staff time to the capital projects, combined with the funding being provided by the LSRCA for this position, there will be no net impact on the operating budgets for 2015 and 2016.

### **CONTACT**

For more information on this report, please contact Rachel Prudhomme, Director, Engineering Services, at 905-953-5300, press 2, then extension 2501.

Prepared by:



Rachel Prudhomme, M.Sc., P.Eng.,  
Director, Engineering Services

Reviewed by:



Peter Noehammer, P.Eng  
Commissioner, Development & Infrastructure Services

Attached: Letter of funding from the LSRCA



June 23, 2015

Ms. Rachel Prudhomme  
Director, Engineering Services  
Town of Newmarket  
395 Mulock Drive  
Newmarket, ON  
L3Y 4X7

Dear Rachel:

**Re: Pilot Project - Shared Position**  
**Senior Environmental Coordinator – Climate Change Adaptation**

This letter is to confirm our commitment and support for the Pilot Project, whereby LSRCA and the Town of Newmarket will share a position of Senior Environmental Coordinator – Climate Change Adaptation. This is an exciting pilot project utilizing a shared resource to further our collective goals for advanced stormwater management, climate change adaptation and overall program delivery.

LSRCA is committed to providing the following funding:

2015 – 50% of salary + benefits from start date to December 31, 2015  
2016 – 50% of salary + benefits to a maximum of \$50,000 for fiscal 2016

LSRCA and the Town will discuss further funding for 2017 and beyond in late 2016 as the annual budget process for both is undertaken.

The primary contact for the pilot project is Rob Baldwin, General Manager – Planning & Development.

On behalf of LSRCA, I would like to express my thanks as well as excitement in this innovative approach for mutual program delivery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Walters".

Michael Walters  
Chief Administrative Officer