

Town of Aurora Community Energy Plan

Stakeholder Working Group Meeting #1

June 27, 2019, 4:00pm to 6:00pm

Introduction

The Town of Aurora is undertaking this Community Energy Plan (CEP) – a comprehensive long-term plan to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas production. The CEP will result in a comprehensive plan that fosters a culture of conservation, considers the impact of future growth and options for local clean energy generation and supports economic development by better meeting local energy needs.

A Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) has been established to provide an ongoing mechanism for input and advice to the Project Team on key points in the development of the Community Energy Plan.

Session Objectives

The first Stakeholder Working Group Meeting was held on June 27, 2019. The objectives of the meeting were the following:

- Introduce the project including the importance of energy planning, the local planning context, and the current emissions profile of Aurora;
- Review the Terms of Reference;
- Discuss the approach to the baseline energy assessment, analysis and community engagement; and,
- Engage in discussion regarding issues, opportunities, potential alignment with existing initiatives and desired outcomes for the Plan.

Presentation and Project Introduction

The meeting began with welcome remarks and introductions conducted by Anca Mihail, Town of Aurora, and Susan Hall, LURA Consulting. The presentation included an overview of community energy planning and project milestones. Susan also reviewed the proposed framework for the plan, which includes a vision statement, goals, strategies and targets. Sarah Shenstone-Harris, ICLEI Canada, provided participants with an overview of Aurora's planning context, examples from other CEPs and reviewed the methods for determining energy and emission reductions scenarios.

Discussion – Opportunities and Potential Alignment with Existing Initiatives

Following the presentation, participants discussed opportunities to be explored as well as existing initiatives to consider through the development of the plan. The following list summarizes the key points.

Opportunities

- Energy consumption is not currently on the radar for most people, other than the cost of energy
 - Education will be important
- There is a large potential for retrofitting (Century Homes)
 - Need incentives and examples

- There is an opportunity to scale the one-off initiatives that are already happening
- Consider alternative financing options for retrofits
- Infrastructure for the adoption for electric vehicles is needed (e.g., distributed energy)
- Explore district energy
- There are opportunities to address traffic and sustainable transportation, particularly the first-last mile piece that is being left to the Town
- Waste diversion, plastic ban has been top-of-mind for residents
- Building and land development standards for new builds
 - Encourage developers to take advantage of the regional programs

Alignment with Existing Initiatives

- IESO is starting a regional planning initiative, long-term electricity needs for the region over the next 20 years.
 - This considers non-wire solutions
 - Plan will be updated by February 2020
- Ontario Climate Consortium (OCC) is completing a feasibility study that explores Local Improvement Charges (LIC) for energy efficiency occurring in Vaughan, Richmond Hill
 - Will be presented to Council in December 2019
- OCC is also studying land-based generation (i.e. solar) in York Region (however outside of Aurora)
- York Region Climate Change Action Plan is going to Council in November 2019
 - An Implementation Stakeholder Group will be developed
- York Region Community Energy Plan is underway and will be completed in 2020
- Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority is developing a Climate Change Mitigation Strategy
 - Developing baseline, anticipated to be completed in 2020
- Green Economy Canada can assist across the province to help businesses set baselines
 - Possibility for alignment with baseline years, etc.
- School boards can provide support about what can be done
 - Opportunities to educate
- Enbridge Gas is looking to green the overall system (e.g., green natural gas from waste)
 - Not directly in the study area
 - Promoting natural gas an alternative to diesel for trucks
 - Moving towards the low-carbon future – logical partner going forward
- Alectra Utilities has lots of interest in renewable energy, electrification, distributed energy solutions – people do not know how it can be done at the community level
 - Need municipalities to be involved with the utilities - drive is coming from constituents
 - Looking at how to reduce electricity costs to rate payers
- Aurora is the terminus of the all-day to way GO service – electrification of the line

Discussion – Desired Outcomes

The following list captures the desired outcomes for the community energy plan input:

- Security of supply
- Efficiency

- Innovation
- Clean
- Empowered
- Reliability
- Resilient
- Make it easier for individuals to make a change
- Sustainable
- Keeping below 1.5 degree C limit (IPCC)
- Ambitious and achievable
- Step-by-step instructions for residents
- Grassroots
- Commitment from leadership
- Attracting greener commercial and industrial businesses
- Keeping energy dollars local

Discussion – Project Goal Categories

Participants were asked to review a suggested list of potential goal areas for the CEP. The group agreed that the list covered the main areas. One participant suggested consideration be given to addressing food, consumption and travel. Goals will be discussed in further detail at the next meeting.

Discussion – Early Thoughts on Target Setting

Building on the earlier discussion on target setting approaches, participants provided the following thoughts, recognizing it is early in the process.

- Consider what is the right fit for Aurora
- Need to align with other municipalities in York Region
- Set targets that are achievable
- Might want to align with term of Council, build into workplans and accountability
- Include both interim target setting, and longer-term aspirational vision

Next Steps

Anca and Susan thanked participants for their time and contributions. Susan noted that the finalized Terms of Reference, meeting summary, and proposed schedule of meetings would be distributed. Over the summer, the project team will work on baseline data analysis and will begin community engagement. The next meeting is anticipated for October 2019 and will focus on the baseline, vision, principles and goals.