

REPORT TO: Committee of the Whole

DATE OF MEETING: April 28, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Anna Marie Cipriani, Corporate Sustainability Officer, 519-783-8970

PREPARED BY: Anna Marie Cipriani, Corporate Sustainability Officer, 519-783-8970

WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward(s)

DATE OF REPORT: March 5, 2025

REPORT NO.: DSD-2025-106

SUBJECT: Waterloo Region Community Energy (WRCE) 2024 Progress Report

RECOMMENDATION:

For information

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a 2024 WR Community Energy progress report
- This report supports **Cultivating a Green City Together: Focuses a sustainable path to a greener, healthier city; enhancing & protecting parks & natural environment while transitioning to a low-carbon future; supporting businesses & residents to make climate-positive choices.**

BACKGROUND:

The energy transition is a critical priority related to community resilience and affordability. WR Community Energy (WRCE) is a collaboration between the Region of Waterloo; the Cities of Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo; Enova Power Corp., GrandBridge Energy, and Kitchener Utilities. WRCE plays an important role in coordinating strategic energy investments in Waterloo region. In 2024, as its role as an independent voice and energy transition facilitator became clearer, WRCE incorporated as a non-profit. This new structure allows a focus on deepening partnerships, evaluating systems-wide benefits, and ultimately driving investments. Senior municipal and utility leadership in the collaboration's governance; and strategic participation and investment from other sectors is key to navigating the complexities of a successful energy transition and responding to innovation and the need for community affordability. WRCE is in its fifth year as an organization. It is currently focusing on local thermal energy development.

REPORT:

This 2024 WR Community Energy information report focuses on:

1. Sharing a vision of generating half of distributed energy from local, clean, and equitable sources (based in several years of studies, discussions, and analysis).

2. Demonstrating how to align local energy supply with demand
3. Highlighting two local projects:
 - A. High Performance Development Standards (HPDS) and
 - B. Low-Carbon Thermal Strategy

By leveraging existing technologies, scaling them across the community, and aligning with economic development trends, this region's collaborative and innovative spirit can make this vision a reality and help our community meet its 2050 climate targets.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports **Cultivating a Green City Together: Focuses a sustainable path to a greener, healthier city; enhancing & protecting parks & natural environment while transitioning to a low-carbon future; supporting businesses & residents to make climate-positive choices.**

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report has no financial impact at this time.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

none

APPROVED BY: Justin Readman, General Manager of Development Services