

# Report to Council



**Date:** November 19, 2018  
**File:** 0710-70  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** Tracy Guidi, Sustainability Coordinator  
**Subject:** Community Energy Specialist 2 Year Term Opportunity

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Policy and Planning Department, dated November 19, 2018 with respect to a Community Energy Specialist two-year term opportunity;

AND THAT the 2018 Financial Plan be amended to include up to \$154,000 in grant funding from the FortisBC's Climate Action Partners Program.

## **Purpose:**

To approve a two-year term Community Energy Specialist position, funded through FortisBC's Climate Action Partners Program.

## **Background:**

FortisBC's Climate Action Partners Program is designed to assist BC's local governments and other organizations in developing, promoting and delivering low carbon energy solutions throughout BC. The program provides funding to support a staff resource within an organization to act as a champion and project manager to lead energy policy development, energy efficiency and conservation program implementation and to raise awareness of FortisBC's programs and available incentives through the community.<sup>1</sup>

Over the past year, the City of Kelowna has piloted a Community Energy Specialist (CES) position, funded through FortisBC's Climate Action Program. During the pilot, the CES researched, developed and engaged on an Energy Step Code Strategy; supported the development of Kelowna's Community Climate Action Plan; coordinated with staff on FortisBC's electric vehicle charging infrastructure grant application including up to 3 locations in Kelowna; and promoted conservation and energy efficiency programs in the community.

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<sup>1</sup> FortisBC, 2018. Climate Action Partners: Senior Energy Specialist Program Guide.

Due to the success of the pilot for the City of Kelowna, FortisBC has committed to fully fund a Community Energy Specialist (CES) position for a two-year term. This is a unique opportunity for the City as Fortis' Climate Action Partners Program typically only funds 50 per cent of the salary to a maximum of \$50,000 annually for two years. However, in order for the City to take advantage of this offer, the City must commit to FortisBC's constrained timelines. A contract must be signed with FortisBC and the CES position must be hired prior to the end of 2018. Staff are currently working with Fortis and the City's Human Resources department to try and adhere to these deadlines.

It is up to each municipality to work with FortisBC to develop a work plan that suits the needs of the community. Over the next two years, the Community Energy Specialist position would focus on:

1. **Reducing energy use in buildings.** Buildings and the energy they use are responsible for 49 per cent of community energy expenditures. Kelowna's Community Climate Action Plan identifies a number of actions to reduce energy use (and consequently greenhouse gas emissions) in new and existing buildings that the CES would focus on including:
  - Developing policy, implementing, and educating on the Energy Step Code;
  - Reviewing and developing energy policy for the Official Community Plan update;
  - Developing a community energy retrofit strategy; and
  - Leveraging municipal touch points to encourage energy efficiency in the community.
2. **Reduce energy use in transportation.** The CES will research and compile information for a community electric vehicle (EV) strategy including researching and developing policy and incentives for standards for City infrastructure and research best practices to expand the private EV network.
3. **Renewable natural gas (RNG).** The CES will support the Utility Planning Manager in reviewing options and potential for RNG production as part of a potential food waste digester project being proposed for the Brandt's Creek Trade Waste Treatment facility.

It is noteworthy to distinguish this position as being independent and distinct from the Energy Program Manager, also partially funded through FortisBC, whose position focuses on developing and implementing a sustainable energy management program that is corporately focused. The proposed two-year term CES position would be focused on community activities for energy reduction.

In summary, there are numerous benefits to taking advantage of this opportunity. It allows for the advancement of several actions identified in recently endorsed plans such as the Community Climate Action Plan and the Healthy Housing Strategy. Hiring a position with specialized skills will ensure successful implementation of several work plan items over multiple departments including Planning, Building and Permitting, and Parking Services. Finally, this can all be accomplished with zero impact to taxation.

#### **Existing Policy:**

- OCP Goal 4: **Improve Energy Efficiency and Performance of Buildings.** Improve the energy efficiency and environmental performance of buildings and infrastructure by embracing sustainable solutions, such as district energy systems, and by providing clear guidelines and incentives for green components for developers.
- OCP Objective 5.16 Improve the energy efficiency and environmental performance of new buildings.

- OCP Objective 6.2 Improve energy efficiency and reduce community greenhouse gas emissions.
- OCP Policy 6.2.1 **GHG Reduction Target and Actions**. The City of Kelowna will, in partnership with: senior governments; local residents and businesses; NGOs; external agencies; and utility providers, work towards reducing absolute community greenhouse gas emissions by:
  - 4% below 2007 levels by 2023;
  - 25% below 2007 levels by 2033; and
  - 80% below 2007 levels by 2050
- Our Kelowna as We Take Action: Kelowna’s Community Climate Action Plan outlines actions the City can take a lead role in to improve the energy performance and reduce GHG emissions in new and existing buildings. Further, it also outlines actions to encourage renewable energy and to develop policy to expand electric vehicle infrastructure.

**Financial/Budgetary Considerations:**

FortisBC has committed to fully fund a Community Energy Specialist CES position for a two-year term through a grant from FortisBC’s Climate Action Partners Program. The City’s 2018 Financial Plan will need to be amended to include up to \$154,000 in grant funding to cover the two-year term position starting in Q4 of 2018.

**Personnel Implications:**

A Community Energy Specialist two-year term management exempt contract would be created.

Submitted by:

Danielle Noble-Brandt, Policy and Planning Department Manager

**Approved for inclusion:**  D. Edstrom, Divisional Director of CP & SI

cc:

- Divisional Director, Community Planning and Strategic Investments
- Development Services Director
- Energy Program Manager
- Human Resources Manager, Corporate Services
- Financial Planning Manager
- Utility Planning Manager
- Parking Services Manager
- Grants & Special Projects Manager