

# Report to Council



**Date:** October 16, 2017  
**File:** 0710-70  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** Danielle Noble-Brandt, Policy and Planning Department Manager  
**Subject:** Community Energy Specialist

Report Prepared by: Tracy Guidi, Sustainability Coordinator

---

## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Policy and Planning Department Manager, dated October 16, 2017 with respect to a FortisBC grant for a one-year Community Energy Specialist position;

AND THAT \$100,000 in funding from the FortisBC's Climate Action Partners Pilot program form part of the 2018 Financial Plan.

## **Purpose:**

To approve a one-year contract Community Energy Specialist position, funded through the FortisBC's Climate Action Partners Pilot program.

## **Background:**

One of the Official Community Plan objectives is to "improve energy efficiency and reduce community greenhouse gas emissions."<sup>1</sup> FortisBC recently approached City staff with an opportunity to participate in its Climate Action Partners Pilot program, as one way of helping achieve the OCP's objective.

FortisBC developed their Climate Action Partners pilot program as an opportunity to assist local governments and other organizations in developing, promoting and delivering FortisBC's low carbon energy solutions throughout BC. This pilot program provides a grant up to \$100,000, enough for a municipality to employ a "Community Energy Specialist"<sup>2</sup> contract position for one year.

---

<sup>1</sup> City of Kelowna 2030 Official Community Plan, Objective 6.2, page 6.1

<sup>2</sup> FortisBC refers to the Community Energy Specialist position as a Senior Energy Specialist

It is up to each pilot municipality to work with FortisBC to develop a work plan that suits the needs of the community. Staff have identified three primary areas for Community Energy Specialist to focus on:

1. **Energy Step Code Implementation Plan** - The BC Energy Step Code is a voluntary provincial standard that provides a consistent, incremental approach to achieving more energy-efficient buildings beyond the requirements of the base BC Building Code with a goal to construct net-zero energy ready buildings by 2032. It does so by establishing a series of measurable, performance-based energy-efficiency requirements for construction that builders can choose to build to, and communities may voluntarily choose to adopt in bylaws, policies or incentives.<sup>3</sup> The new editions of the BC Building Code will be introduced at least twice (possibly 3 times) for a five-year cycle change in addition to on-going revisions prior to 2032. It is anticipated the Province will move up the steps with each iteration. The City of Kelowna will therefore need to be proactive and develop a plan to implement the Energy Step Code, which will require consultation with staff, stakeholders, the Province and the community.
2. **Community Energy Retrofit Strategy** – It is estimated that the community’s cost of energy for existing residential and commercial buildings exceeded \$156 million and accounted for nearly 35% of all greenhouse gas emissions in 2012.<sup>4</sup> The Community Energy Specialist would investigate opportunities to encourage the efficiency of existing building stock, ultimately providing a financial savings to the community.
3. **Municipal touch points** – The Community Energy Specialist will look for municipal touch point opportunities to provide information and greater community awareness to encourage residents and businesses to participate in FortisBC conservation and energy management programs.
4. **Implementation of the Community Climate Action Plan update** – The Community Climate Action Plan update is slated for completion in Spring 2018 and the Community Energy Specialist can work on its implementation as time permits.

FortisBC has committed to fully fund up to \$100,000 for one Community Energy Specialist position for a 1-year contract. However, in order for the City to take full advantage of this unique opportunity, the City must commit to the FortisBC’s constrained timelines. A contract must be signed with FortisBC and the Community Energy Specialist position must be hired prior to the end of 2017 (note: the position start date would be in January 2018). Staff are currently working with Fortis and with the City’s Human Resources department to try to adhere to these deadlines. If the timeline is unable to be met, the grant opportunity for the position declines dramatically to \$50,000 and the City would have to find an alternate funding source for the remainder of the position.

It is noteworthy to distinguish this position as being independent and distinct from the Corporate Energy Manager. Notably, the Corporate Energy Manager position is responsible for developing and implementing a Sustainable Energy Management Program that is corporate focused. The proposed term contract position would be focused on ‘community’ activities for energy reduction, and adhere to a work plan that is focused on community impact initiatives.

---

<sup>3</sup> BC Energy Step Code: A Best Practices Guide for Local Governments, [http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/construction-industry/building-codes-and-standards/guides/bcenergystepcode\\_guide\\_v1.pdf](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/construction-industry/building-codes-and-standards/guides/bcenergystepcode_guide_v1.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Staff have worked with the Community Energy Association to estimate energy costs based on the provincial Community Energy and Emissions Inventories (CEEI)

**Existing Policy:**

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 6.2.1.1 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 community greenhouse gas emissions by 33% (from 2007 levels) by 2020.

**Financial/Budgetary Considerations:**

The \$100,000 to hire a one-year contract Community Energy Specialist Position will be included in the 2018 Financial Plan as an Operating request. The position will be funded entirely through a grant from FortisBC's Climate Action Pilot Program.

**Personnel Implications:**

A Community Energy Specialist position would be created as a one-year management exempt contract.

Submitted by:

Danielle Noble-Brandt, Policy and Planning Department Manager

**Approved for inclusion:**



D. Gilchrist, Divisional Director of CP & SI

cc:

Divisional Director, Community Planning and Strategic Investments

Development Services Director

Building Services Manager

Energy Program Manager

Human Resources Manager, Corporate Services

Financial Planning Manager