



Town of New Tecumseth

Green Plan

January 2010

"Doing Our Part" TM



" On behalf of Council, I would like to thank the members of the Environmental Issues Task Force who have worked hard to develop this Green Plan demonstrating our strong commitment to the environment.

The residents of New Tecumseth have embraced energy conservation and, as the Plan notes, many green initiatives have been in the works throughout the town for a number of years. Programs such as the Spring and Fall leaf pick up and curbside collections of recyclable materials have resulted in diverting significant amounts of waste from landfill. Initiatives such as cleaning up the Boyne River, Pitch-In Week and our residents' active involvement in Earth Day activities demonstrate a sincere dedication to environmental preservation.

I am proud of the ongoing work of the environmental leaders in our community. The Green Plan is very important step in demonstrating the Town's support and involvement in the continuous improvement of our environment."

Mayor Mike MacEachern



Back Row- Left to Right Councilors ~ Dennis Egan, Deputy Mayor Rick Milne,
Mayor Mike MacEachern, Richard Norcross, Jim Stone
Seated from Left to Right Councilors ~ Jess Prothero, Barbara Huson, Jamie Smith,
Christine Brayford

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New Tecumseth is named after the great Shawnee Indian Chief Tecumseth, architect of the first nations confederacy, which allied with the British to defend Canada.

At the turn of the 19th century the fair lands we call home were occupied by our first nations whose knowledge of and interaction with their environment led to sustainable communities.

From the agricultural revolution to the modern computer age we have become more separated from nature and neglected to consider the tremendous impact of our activities on the ecosystems that support us.

We acknowledge that the way we interact with our surroundings must change in a way that allows us to grow and thrive while not endangering the ability of future generations to do the same.

The New Tecumseth Green Plan is the first step and the solid foundation that we need to achieve a sustainable community. It represents our commitment, and responsibility to the air, water and soil that keep us alive.

The Town Of New Tecumseth Environmental Task Force



Overview

We Live In An Ever Changing World

Our daily lives are challenged with changing weather and the severity in which Mother Nature herself challenges us. Global temperatures are increasing and our all-important ice caps are melting. We are at least partially to blame with our careless ways and our own naivety playing a large part in the ecological balance being upset with what we are doing. Wildlife habitats are being significantly altered. Our planets resources are finite and we have to strive to conserve what we have left.

We Live In Challenging Times Now

We have finally come to the realization that the earth can go on without us, but we cannot go on without the earth. We need to co-exist in harmony.

Section 1

The Green Plan Vision

Mayor Mike MacEachern and council identified the need to develop a long-term environmental program that would set The Town Of New Tecumseth apart from other communities so that we would be viewed as Leaders on the Environmental front. With this vision in mind an Environmental Task Force was formed with the intent to develop a cost effective plan that would include programs, which would reduce our impact on the environment while enhancing our community. Our plan would be open for changes and expansion of ideas as time passes which will allow us to address our community's ever changing needs. A plan that encompasses all of our community's residents and industries, and which continues to educate our community as to the who, what, when, where's and why's of our plan. A plan that will bring together everybody in the community to achieve our common goal which is to make our community an even better place to live, work, play and grow in.

An admirable challenge for all of us.

Section 2

Building The Foundation

Much of the foundation of the community's unofficial green plan has been in the works for many years.

Our municipality's forward looking programs, such as, fall yard waste pickup, curbside pickup of recyclable materials and composting programs has resulted in a marked reduction in materials that would have gone directly to the local dumpsite.

Many dedicated service groups and volunteers have worked diligently to clean up the Boyne River and other area green belts. Their unyielding commitment to our communities and the environment is an often overlooked yet crucial facet in the Town's overall Environmental strategy.

The continuing efforts of local volunteers, community service groups and, on a personal scale, each and every area resident who cares for their environment local and abroad, has a tremendous cumulative effect on the quality of environmental life. It's with optimism and positive expectation of a better environment for all that we continue to move forward in our efforts. The Town's unofficial green Plan is one important step in achieving our goal.

Section 3

The Town Of New Tecumseth Environmental Task Force Recommendations to Council

The Town of New Tecumseth Environmental Task Force submitted the following as best recommendations in environmental strategies and sustainability programs.

- Use existing programs as our base for creating future programs with measurable results.
- It cannot be done alone - relationships with community groups and clubs must be formed and encouraged.
- Less is more - start small and build momentum.
- Assume the plan is a starting point and will need to be reassessed annually.
- Education is a key component; if people understand the 5 W's (who, what, when, where and why) then you will achieve understanding of the need and enthusiasm for the plan.
- Progress takes time – have patience and set realistic goals.

Section 4

The Challenge Going Forward

The challenge going forward is to meet the challenges of today's educational needs and tomorrow's strategic requirements.

The proposed actions which follow represent: Ways in which The Town Of New Tecumseth can continue to embrace new practices and concepts that will improve the community in which we live, work, play, learn and grow.

- The need to work with our neighbours, local environmental champions and other levels of government in order to create a synergy for change.
- The desire to partner, inspire, share and motivate those individuals who exist within, and/or influence the quality of our New Tecumseth environment.

With respect to schools, businesses & local groups....

- Communicate and work together with students and school boards in our area to implement an "Environmental Mentor Program" to raise awareness, expand the "Eco School" programs and encourage continued participation as programs evolve.
- Create an incentive program for Environmental Groups/Business/Individual Champion Award to be given out on a regular

basis. Utilize press releases, mail outs, websites to recognize efforts put forth in hopes of inspiring others and offer “Lunch and Learn” sessions with an environmental focus.

- Encourage the expansion of any Farmers Market to a year round status in addition to finding ways to promote shop local initiatives in order to help reduce the communities carbon footprint.
- Partner with local service clubs, groups and other municipalities to support local businesses by hosting special environmentally focused events for education and community involvement purposes.
- Partner with the County to establish “depots” whereby each town has fast and accessible drop locations for hazardous materials (for example batteries, thermostats and CFL’s.).

With respect to the Town of New Tecumseth...

- Create policies to encourage energy efficient appliances, light fixtures, bulbs and water saving devices for the construction of new homes.
- Widely publicize the Town of New Tecumseth’s environmental Initiatives, so that residents are kept aware of these initiatives and that the Town is being proactive regarding these issues.
- Adopt an anti idling policy for Town vehicles, business and residents. Talk to school boards about anti idling signage.
- In conjunction with the above, establish a “Rain Barrel Incentive Program” such that a specified rebate would be provided to Town residents upon purchase, to encourage the use of rain barrel water collection.
- Implement minimum LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards for all future capital projects.

- Develop a policy whereby Town Staff will give preference to green products whenever possible.
- Encourage youth and community involvement in environmentally friendly sports activities.
- Ensure that New Tecumseth contributes to the cycling initiative by investigating retro fitting roads to better accommodate cycling, and provide better signage. Perhaps bicycle racks and shower facilities should be required for future industrial/commercial buildings, and retro fits for existing buildings.
- Introduce motion sensors on all washroom and change room lights in Town owned facilities and as a standard in new buildings.
- Increase the number of bike racks in the downtown to encourage cycling more as a mode of transportation rather than simply recreation.
- Reduce the use of paper towel dispensers in all Town facility washrooms- all public washrooms should give the option for people to use hand dryers or paper towels. To reduce the amount of garbage generated, separate bins for the used paper towels should be introduced to collect them separately from other garbage so that it can be recycled with other paper wastes.
- Use of low emission windows in all town-owned buildings as windows need to be replaced or in new builds.
- Explore the planting of boulevards and town owned lands with low maintenance native ground covers or wildflowers instead of grass.
- Encourage community involvement in astronomy appreciation nights in conjunction with Earth Hour.
- Explore opportunities for solar energy development.

With respect to the residents of New Tecumseth...

The following pages switch to a focus on the New Tecumseth resident. Information, tips, and advice are provided for living a “green” lifestyle. This information has been assembled from more than 100 documents prepared and published by government and non-government agencies, companies and individuals. The information is presented in a convenient annual checklist format. These hints and suggestions are arranged and presented here to educate, inspire and motivate individual residents of New Tecumseth to be more environmentally conscious and greener in their daily activities. Most residents are already aware of many of these individual green actions. Many residents have already adopted the “greener way” and are already benefiting. We hope this will inspire you to consider the merits of all these greening activities more tips will be added to the town website as time permits. Listed is a small sampling of what we would like included on the website.

January

Minimizing Energy Use—Lighting & Heating

- Change incandescent bulbs for compact fluorescents
- Don't leave the lights on when no one's in the room
- Install an insulation jacket on your hot water heater
- Reduce hot water consumption in the bathroom
- Turn down the thermostat by just 3 degrees
- Invest in “good” power- join a renewable energy program

February

Attacking the “Phantom Load “

Look for ways to minimize the “Phantom Load”. Computer peripherals (e.g. printers, scanners, modems, speakers etc.) TVs, cable boxes and other new devices remain on in a powered mode so that they can be turned on remotely or “spring into life” when needed. Chargers for battery powered devices such as cordless phones; cell phones and personal music players consume energy even when they aren't charging the appropriate unit. In most instances this is an unnecessary use of energy. A convenient way to manage such energy consumption includes transferring transformers to

power bars which allows you to turn off these devices when not in use or their work is done i.e. units are charged.

Section 5

Community Spirit and Involvement

The Town of New Tecumseth is committed to assuming its leadership in the preservation of the local environment.

Like explorers, we may not know the exact path to take, but we know that with boldness and dedication we will get to where we know we must be.

- **Practical** suggestions for future works have been assembled.
- **Affordable** options for a future implementation strategy have been identified.
- A **Realistic** perspective increases the opportunity to act quickly on the recommendations listed and when need be, will allow appropriate enforcement of required new behaviors.
- An **Educational** component which continues the message that we must take action. Vision and Action are the next steps.

The Environmental Task Force was determined to be a productive team. Hence this report goes to great lengths to identify activities for future consideration.

Section Six

Leading The Way and Doing Our Part

Goal Setting

Milestone One

To complete a baseline from which to track our progress.

Milestone Two

To establish reduction targets and time frames in which to meet them.

Milestone Three

To develop and finalize a local and specific action plan to reduce emissions and energy use in municipal operations and the community.

Milestone Four

To educate and rally the community to implement the local plans of action.

Milestone Five

To monitor, measure, verify and report our progress.

For example, goals could be developed in areas such as:

- Calculate the New Tecumseth carbon footprint with associated actions for moving towards a defined goal for carbon use/ green house gas emission reduction.
- Set a goal to live within the carrying capacity of the area – i.e. water use.

- Set a goal for water use reduction with a clear idea of what we would use the water for that was saved and what it would not be used for.

The plan as it stands does not explore all areas of interest. The following list of potential directions represents suggestions that have been identified by the Task Force, for full investigation at some future point.

- Determine ways in which baseline data can be collected which documents the existing situation in New Tecumseth. This information would be utilized for setting targets for improvement and measuring future progress of local environmental initiatives.
- Creating an annual report on the Town's progress with respect to environmental initiatives.
- Build on the knowledge gained through working with other proactive organizations such as the GTA—Clean Air Council.
- Develop relationships with local New Tecumseth groups and broader agencies/programs such as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM).
- At the municipal level, develop full scale Energy Management and Green Procurement Programs, as well as operational policies – to govern the corporation's activities, as well as, set an example for local residents and businesses.
- Find ways to inspire and energize the residents of New Tecumseth to embrace new environmentally sound practices
- Preparation of an Environmental Strategic Plan. Such a plan would map out a course of action for the protection, preservation and enhancement of New Tecumseth environmentally sensitive areas.
- Investigate Sustainability Framework options – adopting a sustainability approach to decision making throughout New Tecumseth that would better

integrate the economic, environmental and social aspects of our community.

The Town of New Tecumseth recognizes that the work ahead will require partnering and collaboration with a number of groups.

We look forward to joining forces with all like minded groups clubs and organizations so that we can bring before Council an Implementation Plan that will identify the “who, how and when” that will advance recommendations and projects identified in the Green Plan.

The Town of New Tecumseth is committed to creating an awareness of environmental initiatives in order to maintain and enhance the beauty and quality of life of this municipality. This will ensure that residents and visitors will be able to enjoy the benefits of a clean and natural environment for years to come.

Our Community Is Ready For The Challenge