



## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

REPORT #08/25

Meeting Date: February 24, 2025

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Approved for Agenda: CAO Barry

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**To:** CAO; for Regional Council  
**Re:** Greenhouse Gas and Energy Planning 2025 Project

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### For Discussion.

#### Issue:

The Northern Rockies Regional Municipality's (NRRM) existing climate and energy policies - the [2010 GHG Action Plan](#) and [2015 Community Energy Management Plan \(CEMP\)](#) - are outdated and do not align with British Columbia's current climate targets as outlined in [CleanBC Roadmap to 2030](#), and evolving federal and provincial policies/requirements.

The NRRM's current greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target (6% per capita reduction from 2007 levels by 2020) is significantly lower than provincial targets, which aim for a 40% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030, 60% by 2040, and 80% by 2050. Additionally, NRRM lacks a fulsome process for tracking corporate GHG emissions, making it difficult to measure progress, demonstrate accountability, or meet potential future funding reporting requirements.

#### Background:

The NRRM's climate planning efforts began with the development of the 2010 Greenhouse Gas Action Plan, which was created in response to Bill 27, which required local governments to establish emission reduction targets in their Official Community Plans (OCPs). The Community Energy Management Plan (CEMP) followed in 2015.

The NRRM has undertaken various sustainability initiatives that arose from the two plans, including but not limited to vermicomposting, regional partnerships with [NorthCAN](#) and the [Northeast Climate Resiliency Network](#), the development of the [Environmental Advisory Committee](#) (EAC), and ongoing community education initiatives. However, gaps remain in corporate emissions or initiatives tracking to fully identify the effects of these projects.

#### Analysis:

A project to develop a new **Northern Rockies Climate & Energy Action Plan** will aim to:

1. Update/combine both the GHG Action Plan and Community Energy Management Plan.
2. Meaningfully satisfy requirements in the [Local Government Act Section 473\(3\)](#) which states that an Official Community Plan (OCP) must include targets for the reduction of GHG emissions in the area covered by the OCP, and policies and actions of the local government proposed with respect to achieving those targets.
3. Review and update emission reduction targets to align with and/or support Provincial targets, ensuring the NRRM contributes meaningfully to emissions reductions and is prepared to meet potential future GHG emission requirements.
4. Develop clear and actionable recommendations for reducing emissions across key sectors such as transportation, buildings, waste, and industry.
5. Develop clear and actionable recommendations to integrate modern energy efficiency and renewable energy strategies.
6. Establish a corporate GHG emissions tracking system for NRRM to improve emissions monitoring and reporting (if/when required).

7. Engage public and industry/business to foster community participation in sustainability initiatives.
8. Demonstrate municipal leadership by modeling best practices in emissions reductions and achieve cost savings based on better energy efficiency.

This project was presented to the EAC on January 29, 2025 which resulted in good discussion. The committee was generally supportive of the project while discussion included:

- Utilize a community-wide or NRRM-wide approach, not just corporate NRRM.
- Preference seemed to be a Fort Nelson plan however, if an NRRM-wide approach was taken, policies and recommendations would need to be community specific recognizing differences in realities across the NRRM (e.g. Fort Nelson vs Toad River).
- Interest to ensure waste diversion, including vermicomposting, was covered in the plan.
- Interest by the EAC to take an active role in the development of the plan and implementation of recommendations – do not want a plan that will sit on the shelf.
- Concern around updating a plan now if the Provincial or Federal governments may require changes again in the future.
- Ideas on potential grant funding opportunities and best use of Local Government Climate Action Plan (LGCAP) funds that are intended to cover activities until March 2027.

This project is being proposed to allow the NRRM and community to have an actionable roadmap to help guide future initiatives and spending of LGCAP funds in a meaningful and intentional manner. This project also aims to have the NRRM working proactively instead of ad-hoc or reactively.

This project is included in the Regional Development & Planning department's 2025 budget request with a recommendation to utilize LGCAP funds allocated to complete projects between 2025-2027. This report is being provided for Regional Council's consideration, discussion, and comments in advance of budget deliberations.

**Strategic Priorities Impacted:**

- *The NRRM will make informed decisions to ensure the sustainability of our community services and programs by providing and maintaining the appropriate infrastructure to do so.*
  - *By reviewing and defining our services and service levels.*
  - *By developing comprehensive and effective risk reduction strategies to mitigate the impact of wildfires, floods, and severe heat and cold climates.*
- *The NRRM will safeguard the health and safety of the land and people through action and innovation while demonstrating leadership, accountability, and integrity.*
  - *By reducing the NRRM's environmental footprint by minimizing our organization's environmental impact through the implementation of initiatives and policies.*
  - *By promoting environmental literacy through engagement and empowerment, and raising awareness among residents, local non-profits, schools, and businesses.*

Respectfully submitted,



Krista Vandersteen, Regional Development Officer