

2. Climate Ready Ottawa Strategy

Stratégie Parés pour les changements climatiques Ottawa

Committee Recommendation(s) as amended

That Council:

- 1. Approve the Climate Ready Ottawa Strategy and Five-year Plan as outlined in this report and Documents 1 and 2; and,**
- 2. Delegate the authority to the General Manager, Strategic Initiatives, and the Director, Climate Change and Resiliency Service, individually, to approve, amend, execute, and extend agreements related to Climate Ready Ottawa within the Strategic Initiatives Department as further described in this report; and**
- 3. Approve, pending budget approval, that staff in 2026 provide one-time funding under the Climate Ready Ottawa strategy to expand targeted promotion, education, and access to air conditioners for low-income residents, through existing programs such as the Emergency Health and Social Supports (EHSS) program operated by the Community and Social Services Department; and**
- 4. Direct staff, under the Climate Ready Ottawa Cooling Strategy, to explore expanded access to air conditioners to heat-vulnerable populations at the greatest risk, informed by additional research, and bring forward recommended next steps in 2027.**

Recommandation(s) du Comité telles que modifiées

Que le Conseil :

- 1. Approuve la stratégie Parés pour les changements climatiques Ottawa et le plan quinquennal décrits dans le présent rapport et dans les documents 1 et 2;**

2. **Délègue le pouvoir à la directrice générale, Direction générale des initiatives stratégiques, et au directeur, Services des changements climatiques et de la résilience, individuellement, d'approuver, de modifier, d'exécuter et de prolonger les ententes liées à la stratégie Parés pour les changements climatiques Ottawa au sein de la Direction générale des initiatives stratégiques, comme décrit plus en détail dans le présent rapport; et**
3. **Approuve, sous réserve de l'approbation du budget, que le personnel fournisse en 2026 un financement ponctuel dans le cadre de la stratégie Parés pour les changements climatiques Ottawa afin d'étendre la promotion et l'éducation ciblées concernant la climatisation et à l'accès à cette dernière pour les résidents à faible revenu, par l'intermédiaire de programmes existants comme le programme SESSS géré par la Direction générale des services sociaux et communautaires;**
4. **Demande au personnel, dans le cadre de la stratégie de rafraîchissement Parés pour les changements climatiques Ottawa, d'explorer les possibilités d'élargir l'accès à la climatisation aux populations les plus vulnérables à la chaleur, en s'appuyant sur des recherches supplémentaires, et présente les prochaines étapes recommandées en 2027.**

FOR THE INFORMATION OF COUNCIL

Direction to staff (Councillor L. Johnson):

That staff be directed to explore a targeted private tree maintenance support program to provide assistance to eligible low-income older adults or persons with disabilities to the work plan for the next management period of the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) scheduled to be presented to Committee and Council as a part of the UFMP Update in Q2 2027.

Direction to staff (Councillor S. Devine):

That Staff be directed to explore:

1. Whether Climate Ready Ottawa aligns with the goals of the federal government's Defense Climate and Sustainability Strategy (DCSS);
2. Explore opportunities to collaborate where Ottawa's overall resiliency supports defense objectives given Ottawa is the Nation's Capital; and,
3. Explore opportunities for funding or shared funding on common priorities.

POUR L'INFORMATION DU CONSEIL MUNICIPAL

Instructions au personnel (conseillère L. Johnson) :

Le personnel des Travaux publics, avec le soutien de la Direction générale des initiatives stratégiques et de la Direction générale des services sociaux et communautaires, sera donc chargé d'étudier un programme ciblé d'aide à l'entretien des arbres privés destiné aux personnes âgées ou en situation de handicap à faible revenu admissibles, dans le cadre du plan de travail pour la prochaine période de gestion du Plan de gestion de la forêt urbaine (PGFU) qui doit être présenté au Comité et au Conseil pour la mise à jour du PGFU au T2 de 2027.

Instructions au personnel (conseiller S. Devine) :

Que l'on demande au personnel :

1. si Parés pour les changements climatiques Ottawa correspond aux objectifs de la Stratégie de la Défense sur le climat et la durabilité (SDCD) du gouvernement fédéral;
2. d'explorer les possibilités de collaboration dans le cadre desquelles la résilience globale d'Ottawa, la capitale nationale, soutiendrait les objectifs de défense;
3. d'explorer les possibilités de financement ou de financement partagé pour les priorités communes.

Documentation/Documentation

1. Extract of draft Minutes, Environment and Climate Change Committee, 21 October 2025.

Extrait de l'ébauche du procès-verbal, Comité de l'environnement et du changement climatique, le 21 octobre 2025.

2. General Manager's Report, Strategic Initiatives Department, dated 9 October 2025 (ACS2025-SI-CCR-0011).

Rapport de la Directrice Générale, Direction générale des initiatives stratégiques, daté le 9 octobre 2025 (ACS2025-SI-CCR-0011).

**Extract of Draft Minutes 20
Environment and Climate
Change Committee
21 October 2025**

**Extrait de l'ébauche du
procès-verbal 20
Comité de l'environnement et
du changement climatique
Le 21 octobre 2025**

Debbie Stewart, General Manager, Strategic Initiatives (SI), Nichole Hoover-Bienasz, Director, Climate Change and Resiliency (SI) and Julia Robinson, Program Manager, Climate Adaptation (SI) provided a presentation. A copy of the slide presentation is filed with the Office of the City Clerk.

The following members of the public spoke before the Committee and provided comments:

- Mackenze Blackburn
- Angela Keller-Herzog, Executive Director, CAFES
- William van Geest, Executive Director, Ecology Ottawa
- Jaqueline Wilson, Canadian Environmental Law Association
- Robb Barnes, Climate Program Director, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)
- Sharon Katz, ACORN
- Nicky Trudell

[* Individuals / groups marked with an asterisk above either provided comments in writing or by e-mail; all submissions and presentations are held on file with the Office of the City Clerk.]

The following also responded to questions:

- Debbie Stewart, General Manager, Strategic Initiatives (SI)
- Nichole Hoover-Bienasz, Director, Climate Change and Resiliency (SI)
- Julia Robinson, Program Manager, Climate Adaptation (SI)

Following discussion and questions of staff, the Committee carried the report as presented.

- Nichole Hoover-Bienasz, Director, Climate Change and Resiliency (SI)
- Susan Johns, Director, Asset Management Services, Infrastructure and Water Services Department (IWS)

- Julia Robinson, Program Manager, Climate Adaptation (SI)
- Nick Stow, Program Manager, Natural Systems (SI)
- Ryan Perrault, General Manager, Emergency and Protective Services Department

Following discussion and questions of staff, the Committee carried the Motion (Motion No. ECCC-20-01) with Councillor D. Hill dissenting then the Committee Carried the report as amended with 2 Directions to staff.

Climate Ready Ottawa Strategy

File No. ACS2025-SI-CCR-0011 – City-wide

Report recommendation(s)

That the Environment and Climate Change Committee recommend that Council:

- 1. Approve the Climate Ready Ottawa Strategy and Five-year Plan as outlined in this report and Documents 1 and 2; and,**
- 2. Delegate the authority to the General Manager, Strategic Initiatives, and the Director, Climate Change and Resiliency Service, individually, to approve, amend, execute, and extend agreements related to Climate Ready Ottawa within the Strategic Initiatives Department as further described in this report.**

Motion No. ECCC 2025-21-01

Moved by M. Carr

WHEREAS Climate Ready Ottawa identifies extreme heat as a top climate risk and emphasizes protecting heat-vulnerable populations from heat-related illness and mortality;

WHEREAS interest holders including the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA), the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE) and ACORN have advocated for measures to combat extreme heat, including expanding existing programs to support vulnerable individuals;

WHEREAS the Climate Ready Ottawa five-year action plan includes a Cooling Strategy that calls for expanding public cooling features,

supporting heat-vulnerable populations, and piloting innovative approaches, partnerships and policy tools to integrate cooling into housing and reduce heat risks for residents without access to air conditioning;

WHEREAS the [Extreme Heat Inquiry Response](#) provided to City Council on October 8, noted the City of Ottawa currently provides financial help with the cost of air conditioners through Ontario Works Discretionary Benefits for social assistance recipients and the 100% municipally funded Essential Health and Social Supports Program (EHSS) for low-income residents not receiving social assistance;

WHEREAS the City of Toronto recently launched the Air Conditioning Assistance Program providing 500 air conditioning units, including delivery and installation, at no cost to low-income older adults;

WHEREAS existing programs target certain heat-vulnerable populations, further research and data are needed to determine whether additional at-risk groups could benefit from financial support to purchase air conditioners as a means of reducing heat-related illness and mortality;

WHEREAS additional research under the proposed Climate Ready Ottawa Cooling Strategy is needed to identify key barriers and recommend solutions to support the greatest needs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, pending budget approval, staff in 2026 provide one-time funding under the Climate Ready Ottawa strategy to expand targeted promotion, education, and access to air conditioners for low-income residents, through existing programs such as the Emergency Health and Social Supports (EHSS) program operated by the Community and Social Services Department.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That staff, under the Climate Ready Ottawa Cooling Strategy, explore expanded access to air conditioners to heat-vulnerable populations at the greatest risk, informed by additional research, and bring forward recommended next steps in 2027.

Carried with Councillor D. Hill dissenting.

Carried

DIRECTION TO STAFF (Councillor L. Johnson)

Climate Ready Ottawa highlights the vital role of mature trees in providing cooling, stormwater management, ecological and health benefits. It also highlights the risks to the City's tree canopy from drought, disease, high winds and ice storms, and the risks to people and property from trees damaged in extreme weather.

Maintenance of privately-owned trees is the responsibility of the homeowner. However, low-income homeowners, especially older adults and people with disabilities, with mature trees on their properties may struggle to maintain them. If these trees are not properly cared for, they risk being removed, which would reduce the tree canopy and diminish its associated environmental and health benefits.

The five-year priorities for Climate Ready Ottawa focus on enhancing preventative tree maintenance for City trees, as well as support to homeowners to reduce the risks of flooding and extreme heat, as guided by the climate risk assessments. However, there may be benefits to exploring a program that supports low-income property owners in tree maintenance. This could be modelled on other targeted homeowner support programs, like the Snow Go Assist program that provides financial assistance to eligible low-income older adults or persons with disabilities to help with their snow removal costs.

Staff in Public Works with support from Strategic Initiatives and Community and Social Services departments shall therefore be directed to explore a targeted private tree maintenance support program to provide assistance to eligible low-income older adults or persons with disabilities to the work plan for the next management period of the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) scheduled to be presented to Committee and Council as a part of the UFMP Update in Q2 2027.

DIRECTION TO STAFF (Councillor Devine)

The federal government has pledged to increase defense spending to 5% of GDP by 2035. Concurrently, the City of Ottawa is advancing its "Climate Ready Ottawa" strategy to address the growing risks posed by climate change and has stated its intention to seek opportunities for additional sources of funding from upper levels of government. Given the increasing

recognition of climate resilience as a national security imperative and given Ottawa's strategic position and inherent security risks as the nation's capital, there may be strategic opportunities to align municipal climate adaptation initiatives with federal defense priorities. This could include identifying potential funding streams, partnership models, and policy frameworks that support municipal climate adaptation as a form of defense investment.

That staff be directed to explore:

1. Whether Climate Ready Ottawa aligns with the goals of the federal government's Defense Climate and Sustainability Strategy (DCSS);
2. Explore opportunities to collaborate where Ottawa's overall resiliency supports defense objectives given Ottawa is the Nation's Capital; and,
3. Explore opportunities for funding or shared funding on common priorities.