



Staff Report

Operations – Sustainability & Solid Waste

Report To: COW - Operations, Planning and Building Services
Meeting Date: July 7, 2025
Report Number: OPS.25.026
Title: Green Economy Hub Quarterly Update
Prepared by: Nicholas Cloet, Sustainability Coordinator

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report OPS.25.026, entitled “Green Economy Hub Quarterly Update”;

AND THAT Council direct staff to include a \$5,000 allocation to Collingwood Climate Action Team for the Green Economy Southern Georgian Bay project as an element of the 2026 Sustainability budget request.

B. Overview

In 2024, the Town provided a monetary contribution of \$5,000 to Collingwood Climate Action Team (CCAT) to support delivery of a regional Green Economy Hub pilot project, with Council direction for staff to attend Advisory Committee meetings for the initiative and to provide Council with quarterly update reports. In April 2025, Council received an updated scope for the initiative, now renamed Green Economy Southern Georgian Bay (Green Economy SGB), with Council reaffirming the Town’s support and directing staff to follow through on a provision of \$5,000 out of the Sustainability budget in 2025. CCAT is also seeking an additional \$5,000 out of the Sustainability budget in 2026. This staff report is the second quarterly report for 2025.

C. Background

The October 8, 2024 Staff Report, [CSOPS.24.069 Green Economy Hub Support](#), outlined the concept of a regional Green Economy Hub and how this aligns with Bold Action 13 in The Blue Mountains Future Story, as well as the anticipated services and benefits of a Green Economy Hub, and provided a high-level budget for the initiative to better substantiate the request for financial support. Council determined that an allocation of \$5,000 in 2024 and another \$5,000 allocation in 2025 would be appropriate.

In March of 2025, CCAT provided an update to Town staff indicating that due to several local and broader challenges facing the business community, which have also affected CCAT’s partner Green Economy Canada’s ability to support a new Green Economy Hub in the area, a

change in scope was necessary. This change of scope was presented in a deputation by Catherine Daw, Director of CCAT on April 29, and is summarized in the April 29 Staff Report [OPS.25.019 Green Economy Hub Update and Scope Change](#). Council received this staff report and reaffirmed the Town’s commitment of \$5,000 to CCAT for the Green Economy pilot project from the Town’s 2025 Sustainability budget. Staff were also directed to bring a report back to Council regarding the Green Economy project as a follow-up to the deputation by the Director of CCAT, which this Staff Report also addresses.

This quarterly update report summarizes outcomes of an Advisory Committee meeting dated May 8, 2025. The next Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for September, 2025.

Information on the Green Economy SGB initiative and how to participate continues to be available on the Collingwood Climate Action Team website at <https://www.collingwoodclimateaction.com/greeneconomy>.

D. Analysis

The changing scope of the Green Economy Hub – now named Green Economy Southern Georgian Bay (SGB) – means that the organizational support being provided by Green Economy Canada will only be provided to the first cohort of business and organizational participants. Going forward, as Green Economy Canada is moving away from supporting the formation of new hubs, it is necessary for Green Economy SGB to explore new organizational and service models, engage local and regional business and organizational representatives to learn about their current needs and priorities, and to demonstrate the utility and value of sustainable business practices with local stakeholders.

A five-step “Model of Change” has been adopted by CCAT to guide project planning and adaptation, and to help identify a locally-appropriate and sustainable business model. The steps are as follows:

- Awareness: Making community and people aware of the need for change and its benefits
- Desire: To build support and interest to take part in the change
- Knowledge: Building knowledge of how to make the change
- Ability: Have the prerequisite skills, behaviour, and support to make change possible
- Reinforcement: Anchoring and sustaining the change.

The following table includes the project scope description and changes as presented in Staff Report [OPS.25.019 Green Economy Hub Update and Scope Change](#) in the left column, with updates on each of these activity areas, where available, in the right column.

New or Continuing Direction for Green Economy SGB	Updates
CCAT will learn from a wide range of potential models, including the GEC Hub model as well as Green Step (currently used by RTO7) and other formal green economy network/organizational models that may exist.	Research will begin in-depth in July/August 2025.
Cohort 1 will continue to receive Green Economy Canada's services as this is under contract, but there will no longer be a Cohort 2 program.	No change.
Support the three Cohort 1 participants, celebrate successes, and develop case studies profiling these organizations' experiences.	No change.
Strengthen business relationships and expand the engaged business network with a focus on awareness and education.	Green Economy SGB will continue to attend events and build their list of business contacts. Work to create new events and workshops will begin in July/August 2025.
Host events, workshops, and collaborate with chambers and BIAs for deeper engagement.	See above.
Conduct a business needs assessment via surveys, meetings, and community engagement to better understand what area businesses want and need.	Green Economy SGB launched a survey seeking business and other organizational input in May 2025 with a goal of 100 responses. Advertisements were shared by Chambers of Commerce, Economics Development representatives in different communities, traditional and social media, and in a radio spot on Max 97.7. The Town assisted in promoting this survey opportunity with local organizations on socials and Business E-Newsletter recipients.

Identify, highlight and celebrate businesses already implementing sustainability practices.	Research into a green certificate or other recognition program model has begun, with the green certificate program in Wasaga Beach identified as a local example. Different models and levels of support for each will be evaluated, with anticipated launch in 2026.
Encourage local business support campaigns (e.g. sustainable business awards/recognition, shop local initiatives, case studies).	See above. Green Economy SGB will stay tuned to local business events and initiatives to support local purchasing and may identify opportunities for Green Economy SGB to participate or support these efforts for collective benefit.
Continue fundraising efforts based on a modified budget to align with adjusted project scope.	Fundraising efforts continue with municipal deputations planned in advance of the new budget season and also in seeking third-party grants and donations.

Town staff will help to promote the survey, and will connect interested local businesses with Green Economy SGB for opportunities to share stories and/or receive recognition. Staff will also attend future events and workshops, and will continue to offer advice and assistance as warranted in future Advisory Committee meetings.

With Council's direction, staff will also incorporate CCAT's request for continued support into 2026 with a \$5,000 allocation in the 2026 Sustainability budget request.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

F. Environmental Impacts

Green Economy Hubs help businesses and other organizations lessen their environmental impacts and pursue sustainability goals and targets. They can help organizations identify ambitious yet appropriate GHG emission reduction, water or waste reduction targets and best practices, support networking and peer learning to build a culture of sustainability and

knowledge-sharing, and provide a venue for recognition and celebration of participants working towards and eventually reaching their sustainability targets and milestones.

G. Financial Impacts

The Town provided \$5,000 in support to Collingwood Climate Action Team's Green Economy Hub pilot project in 2024 out of the sustainability budget. With Council's direction and continued support of the initiative with the revised scope, the Town provided an additional \$5,000 to CCAT in 2025, also from the sustainability budget. A future request for \$5,000 in support for CCAT's Green Economy SGB initiative will be included in the 2026 budget process.

H. In Consultation With

N/A

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Nicholas Cloet, Sustainability Coordinator sustainability@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

No attachments.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicholas Cloet
Sustainability Coordinator

Jeffery Fletcher,
Manager of Sustainability & Solid Waste

Alan Pacheco
Director of Operations

For more information, please contact:
Nicholas Cloet, Sustainability Coordinator
sustainability@thebluemountains.ca
519-599-3131 extension 235

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	OPS.25.026 Green Economy Hub Quarterly Update.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Jun 3, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Jeff Fletcher - May 30, 2025 - 2:21 PM

Alan Pacheco - Jun 3, 2025 - 12:20 PM