

## Corporate Climate Leaders Program Information Sheet

### Program Purpose

Edmonton's *Corporate Climate Leaders Program* is a City of Edmonton led program, designed to support the growing number of Edmonton corporations (profit and non-profit)<sup>1</sup> that are concerned about climate change and want to take action. As members of the program, participating corporations have made specific commitments to pursue climate action. In addition to assisting members to build the expertise they need to meet these commitments, the program will network members to share best practices and lessons learned (with respect to greenhouse gas [GHG] emissions reduction strategies), explore emerging business opportunities related to the low carbon economy, mentor newcomers and celebrate success. An important co-benefit of the program is that the successes of participating corporations will be communicated widely -- serving to inspire all Edmontonians to take climate action.

In short, the purpose of Edmonton's *Corporate Climate Leaders Program* is:

- To encourage, support and empower Edmonton corporations to reduce their GHG emissions and increase their climate resilience,
- To promote the collaboration of Edmonton corporations in sharing best practices (re: climate action) and advancing low carbon business opportunities,
- To fast-track the transition to a green economy by building industry capacity, and
- To showcase the climate actions of member corporations as a way of inspiring action on the part of all Edmontonians.

In addition to climate mitigation, businesses and organizations can improve their resilience by exploring how they can adapt to an already changing climate. The program will provide capacity building opportunities to help members understand how to prepare for and respond to anticipated climate change impacts locally and globally.

Research conducted by the City of Edmonton in 2019 showed that 74% of Edmontonians are concerned about climate change and 75% of Edmontonians feel that immediate actions are required to address climate change. By showcasing the commitments and success of local climate champions, the Corporate Climate Leaders Program will help local Edmonton businesses to implement immediate climate actions that they are most concerned about and have influence over.

### What's driving the program?

Increasingly, climate change is being recognized as one of the greatest threats facing the world. Reducing global GHG emissions to safe levels will require extraordinary efforts on the part of every nation, community, organization and individual. Edmonton is no exception. If left unchecked, climate

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<sup>1</sup> The term corporate/corporation (as referred to in this program) includes all legally established organizations operating in Edmonton (including for-profit corporations, non-profit organizations, government organizations and public/private institutions).

change will erode our quality of life too. Edmonton's *Corporate Climate Leaders Program* is founded on a belief that a significant community effort is needed to make Edmonton a low carbon city – including a concerted effort from Edmonton corporations.

The importance of corporations is particularly significant, given that approximately 70% of emissions are a result of organizational/corporate efforts, as opposed to 30% of emissions that are the result of individual citizen activities (e.g., homes, personal travel, personal consumption).

## How does the program work?

All Edmonton corporations are invited to be members of the *Corporate Climate Leaders Program* (ranging from corporations that are located and operate solely in Edmonton to ones that operate worldwide with operations in Edmonton). All organizations, no matter what size, are encouraged to join.

Membership in the *Corporate Climate Leaders Program* signifies a corporation is concerned about climate change and is advancing climate action within its operations (or soon will be). Membership calls on corporations to make three commitments:

### 1. To establish and maintain a corporate GHG inventory:

- Members are expected to maintain a GHG inventory in accordance with the World Resource Institute (WRI) Greenhouse Gas Protocol, ISO 14064-1, or other internationally recognized standards. Members are also expected to update these inventories annually.

### 2. To develop plans and targets for reducing GHG emissions:

- Members are expected to set absolute GHG reduction targets for the years 2025 and 2035. These targets will be expressed as tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (equivalent) reduction, compared to either: (a) the annual emissions in a historic, baseline year the corporation is currently referencing, or (b) their average annual emissions over the most recent three-year period.
- Alternatively, members may choose to set GHG intensity targets that are expressed in terms of tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (equivalent) per unit of output, with a target to reduce these *intensities* by a defined percentage compared to either: (a) the intensity that existed in a baseline year the organization is currently referencing, or (b) their average annual GHG intensity in the most recent three-year period.
- It is expected that the targets set by corporations will represent a significant *stretch* as determined by each corporation. It is expected that targets will vary by industry and by corporation.
- Members are expected to establish evidence-based GHG reduction plans detailing the actions they intend to take and explaining how these actions will achieve targets.
- It is expected that targets and reduction plans will be formally approved by the corporation's senior management team and/or board of directors.
- It is expected that targets and reduction plans will be actively monitored, progress reported to senior management, and action taken to address any unfavorable performance.

### 3. To share these commitments publicly:

- It is expected that members will publicly share their commitments and success stories through the official program website and other City of Edmonton communication channels established for the program. Certain high-level details will be collected annually from all

members including total tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (equivalent) emissions produced, boundaries set, baseline year. Targets will be collected 18 months after registration.

- Optionally, members will be encouraged to share certain details of their targets, plans and results, to the extent that such disclosures do not jeopardize their competitive position or privacy.
- A detailed description of the data to be shared with the City and the public can be found within the program registration and consent form.

## Who leads and administers this program?

As a critical component of the Council Initiative on Energy Transition and Climate Change, Edmonton's *Corporate Climate Leaders Program* is being co-sponsored by Councillors Ben Henderson and Michael Walters. Coordinated by the City of Edmonton's Energy Transition Unit and Green Economy Canada, Councillors Henderson and Walters will play a critical role in recruiting members and hosting Edmonton's annual Corporate Climate Leaders Summit. All efforts are supported by a team of Founding Member corporations who will contribute to the program's evolution, member recruitment and mentorship on an ongoing basis. The Founding Members are listed online at [edmonton.ca/climateleaders](http://edmonton.ca/climateleaders).

## What are the benefits of membership?

Key benefits of this program include:

- **Opportunity for corporations to save money:** In most situations, member corporations will pursue their GHG reduction targets through energy conservation and efficiency measures. In doing so, they will not only save money from reduced utility consumption but also from potential carbon levy costs. The program will help point members to initiatives that will deliver the best return on investment. As well, it is expected that the program's learning, collaboration and networking opportunities will expose members to a variety of operational efficiency (cost savings) opportunities.
- **Opportunity to learn about sector-specific best practices for operational efficiency and emerging business opportunities:** While the program will focus on helping corporations to understand their GHG emissions and make commitments to reduce them, it will also provide learning and networking opportunities where members can learn about: (1) successful GHG reduction strategies that are being applied by other members, and (2) emerging green economy business opportunities they could take advantage of.
- **Opportunity for corporations to be publicly recognized:** The program will profile and celebrate its members, including: (a) through the program website that will showcase commitments and success stories, (b) an annual, high-profile Corporate Climate Leaders Summit that will bring together senior executives from member organizations to share their learnings and success stories with the media, public and potential new members, and (c) a regular flow of good news stories to share member success stories.
- **Opportunity for professional development and capacity building:** For corporations lacking GHG management experience, the program will help build capacity – providing tools and training that will allow corporations to calculate their GHG inventories, identify most cost effective ways of reducing GHG emissions and energy consumption, and develop corresponding plans and targets.

As well, participation in the program will offer a range of capacity building and networking opportunities that will allow corporations to learn from other experts and champions.

- **Opportunity for corporations to make a difference:** As the world comes to understand the serious threat of climate change, corporate leaders are increasingly concerned and looking for ways to make a difference. Edmonton's *Corporate Climate Leaders Program* will give concerned corporate leaders a chance to lead and collaborate with other like-minded leaders.
- **Opportunity to prepare for more stringent carbon regulations:** The trend is clear. National and subnational governments around the world are becoming more stringent in their effort to regulate and reduce GHG emissions. The program will help to prepare Edmonton corporations for carbon pricing mechanisms, reporting requirements and regulations that are being implemented.

## How can a corporation become a member?

Becoming a member of Edmonton's *Corporate Climate Leaders Program* is simple. To register, just go to [edmonton.ca/climateleaders](http://edmonton.ca/climateleaders) and complete the Registration and Consent Form.

As part of the registration process, you will be asked to:

- Indicate the name of your corporation, the name of the senior executive sponsor(s) who has approved participation and the name and contact for a primary contact who will represent your corporation in this program,
- Include a short profile of your corporation (<200 words) indicating the nature of your business, size, number of employees and Edmonton locations,
- Confirm your corporation's commitments to: (1) establish and maintain a corporate GHG inventory for your corporation compliant to international protocol, (2) develop plans and targets for reducing GHG emissions, and (3) share these commitments publicly,
- Indicate whether your corporation is: (1) currently meeting these requirements, or (2) currently not meeting these requirements but will take steps in the next 12-18 months<sup>2</sup> (as part of the program) to meet them fully, and
- Indicate whether you require additional support through the program to meet the commitments (e.g. Green Economy Canada training and support services or other).

Within a few working days, the primary contact you identified will be contacted by the City of Edmonton to:

- Confirm registration information,
- Discuss additional training/education support your corporation may wish to receive through the program, and
- Obtain additional information on your corporation for inclusion in the program website which may include logos, photos and content for success stories.

## What can a corporation expect as a member?

Member experiences will differ slightly, depending on whether a corporation is currently meeting all three commitments or whether they are just starting out.

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<sup>2</sup> Member's GHG inventory and reduction plan must be completed within 12 months after registration, while targets are due within 18 months. Extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Those corporations who currently **are** meeting the commitments can expect to be:

- Invited to attend Edmonton's annual Corporate Climate Leaders Summit, along with all other senior executives from member corporations,
- Invited to participate in the Corporate Climate Leaders Summit as a presenter, storyteller or proponent for climate action,
- Invited to be featured in communication materials produced for the program (e.g., annual magazine profiles and social media campaigns),
- Featured on the program website – including company profile, climate commitments and good news stories.

Those corporations who currently **are not** meeting the three commitments can expect to be:

- Busy developing GHG inventories and emissions reduction plans
- Showcased in the program website – including company profile, climate commitments and good news stories, as they become available)
- Invited to attend Edmonton's annual Corporate Climate Leaders Summit, along with other senior executives from member corporations,
- Possibly invited to participate in the Summit as a presenter, storyteller or proponent for climate action,
- Possibly invited to be featured in communications materials produced for the program (e.g., magazines and social media).

**All** corporations can expect to be:

- Invited to share their GHG reduction success stories with other members
- Invited to attend workshops and networking events that build industry capacity and explore emerging business opportunities related to climate action, energy transition, clean energy, energy efficiency, energy conservation,
- Invited to help mentor and recruit new members from their supply chain, and
- Given decals and electronic logos indicating they are a member of Edmonton's *Corporate Climate Leaders Program* (along with instruction on their use).

## Where can member corporations find support services?

Some member organizations will require expert external support and tools in order to develop their GHG inventories and reduction plans. Others will want to maximize the potential benefits of a deeper commitment to sustainability. **In finding this support, members are free to choose from any service providers that serve the Edmonton market (e.g., including various engineering, energy management and energy advisory firms).**

To facilitate the process, the City of Edmonton has arranged for Green Economy Canada to support interested member organizations in building the skills and capacity to set and achieve their GHG reduction targets. With a decade of experience working with businesses of all sectors and sizes on emissions reductions, this award-winning not-for-profit provides comprehensive, tailored one-on-one support to help you complete the CCLP requirements and leverage your sustainability work to drive business value.

Green Economy Canada provides:

- Small group training sessions and direct tailored one on one support to help members:

- Understand the basics of GHG accounting and measure your footprint
- Set an ambitious but achievable GHG reduction target
- Develop and implement an emissions reduction plan
- Guidance to help members sustain action and maximize business value through:
  - Engaging staff
  - Forming and managing Green Teams
  - Incorporating sustainability efforts into brand and stakeholder communications.

Annual support fees depend on organizational size and your operations, but typically range from \$1500 - \$6400. Please contact [joshua@greeneconomy.ca](mailto:joshua@greeneconomy.ca) or visit [greeneconomycanada.ca/edmonton](http://greeneconomycanada.ca/edmonton) for more information.

**Small Business & Non-Profit Rebate:** Organizations who participate in the Corporate Climate Leaders Program may be eligible to apply for a City of Edmonton 50% rebate of upto \$3,000 per year of continued participation in the Corporate Climate Leaders Program for a maximum of 3 years to offset the costs of hiring support services. Please find more details at <http://change4climate.ca/business>

## How do corporations demonstrate their commitments are met?

In order for the program to have rigor, members will provide evidence of commitment follow through, including: (1) evidence that a GHG inventory has been established and maintained, (2) evidence that significant targets and a reduction plan have been developed and approved by senior management, and (3) evidence that performance is being actively monitored, measured and reported to senior management. This evidence will be provided to the City of Edmonton.

In order to be as efficient as possible, evidence must be either:

1. Formal verification or certifications awarded through third-party training/education programs, or
2. Letters from qualified third-party engineering or energy management firms attesting to the criteria being met (letter would be provided at least once every three years).

## Next steps?

If you're ready to register as a member of Edmonton's *Corporate Climate Leaders Program* visit <http://change4climate.ca/business> to complete the Registration and Consent Form.

If you still have questions regarding CCLP program, please contact:

- Abhishek Chakraborti, Sr Environmental Project Manager, [abhishek.chakraborti@edmonton.ca](mailto:abhishek.chakraborti@edmonton.ca), 780-722-6803