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Date February 13, 2025 **Report No.** 2025-56

To Chair and Members
Environmental and Sustainability Policy Advisory Committee

From Gagan Batra
Manager, Business Support and Sustainability

1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item

Item For Consideration

2.0 Topic **Home Energy Savings Guide [Financial Impact: None]**

3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT Report 2025-56 “Home Energy Savings Guide” BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT the following comments from the Environmental and Sustainability Policy Advisory Committee regarding the Home Energy Savings Guide BE INCLUDED in the Home Energy Savings Guide:
 - a. _____;
 - b. _____; and
 - c. _____.

4.0 Background

As part of the Community Climate Change Action Plan, approved in July 2022 in [Report 2022-428](#), titled “Brantford Community Climate Change Action Plan”, City staff were directed to explore options to support residents in reducing their utility bills and reducing their energy consumption. At their City Council meeting held on March 26, 2024, City Council approved Resolution 12.6.13 titled Home Heating Sustainability that read:

WHEREAS 3.8 million households in Ontario currently use natural gas for home heating, representing about 70 percent of Ontario households; and

WHEREAS the carbon tax charged on heating bills is highly dependent on the amount of natural gas used and accounts for 20-25% of the utility bill; and

WHEREAS Canadians have no choice but to heat their homes throughout the winter....

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

B. THAT the Federal and Provincial Governments reinstate home energy retrofit rebate and grant programs to help Brantford residents retrofit their homes to be more energy efficient and provide barrier-free options for switching to less carbon-intensive fuel sources to lower their utility bills and avoid the carbon tax;

This report provides the outline of a Home Energy Savings Guide that aims to provide homeowners with an easy-to-follow guide to saving energy year-round.

5.0 Analysis

This vision and goal of the Home Energy Savings Guide is to provide a comprehensive list of energy efficiency measures, tools, and information that will help homeowners lower their utility bills and energy consumption. The Guide will outline a range of energy conservation measures from low/no cost measures to larger retrofit measures. Energy saving tips will be broken down into different categories such as heating and cooling, water heating, home appliances, home lighting, clean energy, and information for renters. The following is the proposed outline for the Guide:

- Understanding energy use
- What is a home energy retrofit
- Top 10 easiest money-saving tips

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- Heating and cooling measures – this will include adjusting space temperatures, thermostats, weatherstripping, sealing ductwork, sealing leaks, etc.
 - Water heating measures – this will include reducing water use, reducing water flow, water fixtures, insulating pipes, fixing leaks, etc.
 - Home appliances measures – this will include tips on using appliances more efficiently, new appliances, cleaning appliances, appliance settings, etc.
 - Home lighting measures – this will include types of lighting to install, using lighting, natural lighting, lighting sensors, etc.
 - Building envelope measures – this will include tips on improving the home’s envelope such as roof, windows, doors, insulation, walls, etc.
 - Clean energy measures – this will include measures that incorporate clean energy such as heat pumps, heat recovery systems, solar panels, etc.
 - Energy savings tips for renters – this will include lighting, device use, thermostat settings, sealing gaps, etc.
 - Funding and incentive opportunities

Staff have partnered with Clean Air Partnership and submitted an application to complete a Home Energy Retrofit Program Feasibility Study. This study will assess options for a local home energy upgrade financing program. The Home Energy Savings Guide proposed in this report will support the future Home Energy Retrofit Program as it will provide homeowners with measures they can implement as part of a home energy retrofit. The Home Energy Savings Guide will also support homeowners in the meantime with low/no cost measures they can implement now to start saving on their utility bills.

As the Home Energy Savings Guide is in the early stages of development, staff are looking for feedback from ESPAC on the approach and content to be included in the Guide. To give ESPAC an idea of what the Home Energy Savings Guide could look like, examples are provided from the [City of Edmonton](#), [City of Fredericton](#), [County of Huron](#), and [London Hydro](#).

6.0 Financial Implications

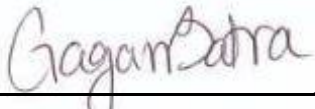
There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

7.0 Climate and Environmental Implications

Residential housing accounted for 142,563 T of CO₂e, or 35% of community building emissions in the 2022 Community Emissions Inventory. With the City of Brantford's goal to be net-zero by 2050, community buildings need to be retrofitted to become more energy efficient and reduce emissions. A Home Energy Savings Guide will help homeowners identify measures to reduce their energy consumption and therefore lower the greenhouse gas emissions from the residential sector.

8.0 Conclusion

This report provided an outline and a plan of approach for the Home Energy Savings Guide. Staff have asked ESPAC members to provide feedback on what should be included in the Guide.



Gagan Batra
Manager, Business Support and Sustainability

Prepared By:

Rebecca Szczepanowski, Climate Change Officer

Attachments (if applicable)

None.

Copy to:

N/A

In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required yes no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk yes no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? yes no