

Here are the highlights from the regular Lanark County Council meeting held Wednesday, April 14.

Council Supports Flood Mapping Technology: Council has authorized funding up to \$111,000 toward the acquisition of Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data for the county in partnership with local conservation authorities.

At the economic development committee meeting last month, CAO Kurt Greaves highlighted a November 2020 presentation by representatives of Rideau Valley and Mississippi Valley conservation authorities regarding the LiDAR project. After consulting local municipalities and county staff, it was determined the county would directly benefit from the conservation authorities having the information. The county uses Digital Raster Acquisition Project Eastern Ontario (DRAPE) imagery daily, but Greaves said LiDAR data is four times more detailed for elevation, which makes it ideal for watercourse and flood mapping.

The total cost for the project is \$358,000, with other possible funding from the Federal National Disaster Mitigation Program and the conservation authorities. The county portion would come from reserves. The data set has a 10- to 12-year life span.

LiDAR is a remote-sensing method that uses a pulsed laser to measure variable distances to Earth. It is described as an accurate and cost-effective alternative to traditional surveying. It is collected by plane and uploaded to GIS systems as a data layer that can be used by municipal and conservation authority staff from their computers.

Greaves said the data can be used for flood forecasting and warning, floodplain and hazard mapping, inundation mapping to show vulnerable areas, climate change impacts on local watersheds, development review, infrastructure planning, tourism and recreation amenities, and conservation restoration. For more information, contact Kurt Greaves, County CAO, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1101.

County Proceeds with Plastic Reduction Efforts: Council passed a motion to continue with an education and awareness campaign on costs and alternatives to single-use plastic, and to align the complete ban of single-use plastic bags and straws in Lanark County with the federal government's ban timeline.

Climate/Environment Intern Hillary Fleming updated the public works committee in March on activities as part of the plastics reduction campaign that began last year, including education about the impact of plastic waste on landfills, the scope of single-use plastic waste, costs and the value of alternatives.

Fleming noted a Lanark County Climate Action information page has been created on Facebook to share information and news of initiatives currently taking place in the county, including Climate Action Plan updates. An educational plastics reduction campaign was published throughout February and March that urged people to #breaktheplasticpattern and increase use of reusable items, such as bottles and bags. It also promoted the #SustainableLanark cause in the community by offering window stickers for businesses to remind people to bring reusable bags.

Fleming outlined the federal plan to ban bags, straws, stir sticks, six-pack rings, cutlery and plastic food ware by the end of 2021, which is part of the federal plan to reach zero plastic waste by 2030. She noted ban compliance in 2021 would be hindered by COVID-19 challenges and needs for disposable sterile supplies.

Strategies for the ban include continued targeted education and awareness, purchasing and distributing reusable grocery and produce bags, providing bring-your-reusable-bag stickers for businesses and providing support for local businesses through the Sustainably.eco program. For more information, contact Hillary Fleming, Climate/Environment Intern, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 3202.

County Renewing Mayors' Monarch Pledge: Council approved a motion confirming it plans to renew Lanark County's Mayors' Monarch Pledge for 2021 through the National Wildlife Federation.

Climate Environmental Coordinator Michelle Vala explained at the public works committee meeting last month that with the pledge, cities, municipalities and other communities commit to creating habitat for the monarch butterfly and pollinators, as well as educating residents about how they can make a difference at home and in their communities.

Lanark County took the pledge in 2019 and 2020 and achieved the "Leadership Circle," which means eight or more action items were completed. "The objectives of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge support the county's long-term goals for pollinators on roadsides through the Integrated Vegetation Management Plan," Vala noted.

Taking the pledge requires the county to commit to at least three of 24 actions and report on them at the end of the year. Eight actions are planned for 2021 related to communications and convening, program and demonstration gardens, and systems changes. For more information, contact Michelle Vala, Climate Environmental Coordinator, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 3114.

Upcoming Meetings: Special Community Services, April 28, 1 p.m. **County Council, Wednesday, April 28, 5 p.m.;** Public Works, April 28 (following County Council); Economic Development, April 28 (following Public Works). **County Council, Wednesday, May 12, 5 p.m.;** Community Services, May 12 (following County Council); Corporate Services, May 12 (following Community Services). Watch for details about public access to meetings on agendas and through online notifications. For more information, contact 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502. Like "LanarkCounty1" on Facebook and follow "@LanarkCounty1" on Twitter!

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