



January 8, 2015

Dear Parks and Environment Committee Chair and Members,

Re: Establishing a Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Subcommittee

Our world is facing a global crisis - climate change. Climate change is not only an environmental crisis, it is a human crisis, a health crisis, a social crisis and a financial crisis. Changing temperatures, precipitation levels, devastating severe weather events, changing sea and lake levels will together have huge implications on disease, drought, air and water quality, food production, migration, transportation and every aspect of the global and local economy.

Cities around the world are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Toronto is no exception. We have already felt the ecological, health and financial toll of climate change in the form of ice storms, severe rain, flooding, heat waves and invasive species. This is only the tip of the iceberg. Toronto must do its part to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions fueling climate change while we do our best to prepare for climate change in whatever form it takes.

Toronto has historically taken important steps to fight the causes of climate change and invested in plans to adapt to its impacts. We have been a global leader.

In 2007, Toronto City Council adopted the Climate Change Action Plan, which outlines many ways that the City of Toronto and its residents, businesses and communities are taking action to cut greenhouse gas emissions, clean the air and create a sustainable energy future. This was followed by the 2008 report, *Ahead of the Storm: Preparing Toronto for Climate Change*, which outlined a number of actions that will improve the City's resilience to climate change and extreme weather events. The more recent reports, *Resilient City: Preparing for Extreme Weather Events* and *Resilient City: Preparing for a Changing Climate*, have furthered our efforts to be prepared for climate change. Our 2009 Sustainable Energy Strategy has also guided us over the last 6 years.

Unfortunately, over the past several years, Toronto has fallen behind and is no longer a global leader and innovator in mitigation and adaptation policies, practices and technologies. We can change that.

To take focused and decisive action to address this critical issue facing municipalities around the world, I ask that the Committee move the following motion:

That the Parks and Environment Committee:

1. Establish a subcommittee on Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation as it relates to the mandate of the Parks and Environment Committee, with an interim terms of reference as follows:

The subcommittee:

- a. is made up of all interested members of the Parks and Environment Committee.
- b. members serve until December 31, 2016.
- c. is chaired by Councillor Gord Perks.
- d. makes recommendations to, and reports through, the Parks and Environment Committee.
- e. will determine and report back on its terms of reference, which are to include a review of City policies, expert advice and international best practices to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Request the subcommittee convene its first meeting in February 2015 and report to the Parks and Environment Committee on April 15, 2015, with any proposed changes to the terms of reference and any resources needed to support its work.

The City Clerk's office has been consulted on the establishment of this subcommittee and has advised that resources are available to support its work.

Sincerely,

Mike Layton
City Councillor
Ward 19, Trinity-Spadina