

December 6, 2021

Dear Mayor and Executive Committee Members,

Re: EX28.1 Toronto Hydro Climate Action Plan and Next Steps

The climate crisis is the single most important issue that City Council will face in our, and our children's, lifetime. Climate change threatens our health, the food we eat, how we get around, our green spaces, our economy, and the planet that sustains our many species.

Toronto, and the rest of the world, is facing a global climate emergency and we need to act now. A key piece of climate-related action will come from Toronto Hydro and is detailed in the report before Executive Committee today.

While I acknowledge the enormity of the capital and electric costs outlined in the Toronto Hydro report, the City's TransformTO Net Zero Strategy predicts that the average energy costs for households under a Net Zero plan by 2040 will go *down* by 70% on average compared to the Do Nothing scenario (p.39). In addition, the air quality benefits of electrifying transportation *alone* will save \$750 million per year or \$7.5 billion between 2040 and 2050 once the recommendations are in place. Not only will this save governments money, but the environmental impact will save lives (p.40).

The billions in savings and thousands of lives saved by securing better health outcomes can largely be achieved by having less outdoor and indoor air pollution, but auxiliary health outcomes also include mental and physical health benefits from reduced noise and sleep disruption, improved cardiovascular and respiratory benefits from Active Transportation initiatives, and increased greenspaces for managing and controlling for extreme heat.

An aggressive climate crisis response not only protects people, the planet and economy from the most calamitous outcomes of climate breakdown, but also includes a wide range of benefits including better health outcomes as shared above, and building resilience into our infrastructure, and prosperity for residents.

Building resilience in our homes and buildings ensures we are better prepared for extreme weather and reduces the financial and social impacts of potential disruptions to utilities and services from natural disasters.

Climate action creates economic prosperity through the creation of jobs, and protects individuals and businesses from energy price volatility. By 2030, green industries are projected to employ 639,200 Canadians with the highest concentration in Ontario with aggressive climate actions adding a net 1.2 million person years of employment over the Do Nothing scenario, again as outlined in the TransformTO Net Zero Strategy (p44).

To achieve these benefits as quickly as possible, the responsible path is to act boldly and bravely without delay. We must use scientific targets as our guide and pursue creative solutions.

It's time for our governments, and all of its agencies and corporations, to lead the development of programs, just like we have in other times of crisis like the pandemic and war. We need to develop agencies to manufacture, finance, install, and bulk purchase heat pumps, net zero hot water heaters, solar panels, renewable energy technologies, and EVs and seek other municipal programs to do the same.

Our own City agency, The Atmospheric Fund, has submitted a series of recommendations to improve the plan shared by Toronto Hydro and I have worked to craft a series of motions and amendments which I hope you will support.

Recommendations

1. City Council request the Toronto Hydro Corporation to implement the Toronto Hydro Climate Action Plan, with the following additional requests concerning implementation:
 - a. that in modernizing and expanding the grid to enable electrification, Toronto Hydro maximize the use of distributed energy resources as non-wires alternatives, including in relation to b), c) and d) below;
 - b. that Toronto Hydro coordinate closely with the Environment and Energy Division and The Atmospheric Fund in the development and implementation of the proposed Climate Advisory Services, in order to maximize synergy and minimize duplication;
 - c. that Toronto Hydro move forward with the proposed LED street lighting conversion project, in partnership with the City, and work with the Vision Zero team to prioritize LED conversions in areas with high incidence of traffic-related injuries and fatalities;
 - d. that Toronto Hydro, as part of its proposed climate investment program, work with the Environment and Energy Division to develop and launch a large-scale solar and storage program that offers turnkey project delivery with no up-front costs to home and building owners;
 - e. that Toronto Hydro, as part of its proposed climate investment program, work with Transportation Services to expand on-street charging building on the success of the pilot completed in 2020; and
 - f. that Toronto Hydro provide the Environment and Energy Division with regular updates on the specific areas of the City where grid constraints prevent installation of distributed energy resources, and work with the Environment and Energy Division on resolving those constraints, including joint advocacy to the Provincial Government and the Ontario where necessary.
2. City Council request Toronto Hydro, to consider, as part of removing barriers to uptake of solar, PV and storage the removal of barriers to solar PV, EV, and storage, consider:
 - a. as part of their online portal, developing a live update on the progress of applications for solar PV or storage through stages of the approval process;
 - b. a one time courtesy disconnection fee waiver, and
 - c. Offering an annual hourly peak consumption report in excel format for customers applying to install EV chargers.

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3. City Council request that Toronto Hydro, as part of their Q2 2022 report to the City of Toronto, in consultation with the Energy and Environment Division and The Atmospheric Fund:
 - a. explore options to bulk purchasing heat pumps, net zero hot water heaters, solar panels, renewable energy technologies, and EV chargers, and partner with installers or other agencies or institutions for their deployment, and a strategy for implementation starting in 2022
 - b. make recommendations for requests to the provincial government, and their agencies, to support Toronto Hydro and the City of Toronto for implementing the TransformTO strategies and targets.

 4. Executive Committee amend recommendation 3 to add “including implementation plans starting in 2022.”

Thank you,

Councillor Mike Layton
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