



Jan 25, 2022

Dear Chair Crawford and Councillors,

I'm a resident of Toronto-St. Paul's and I'm here representing the citizens' climate group ClimateFast.

I'm going to start by emphasizing that we do need to act on climate – fast. And for that reason we are really pleased that council has adopted the Net Zero by 2040 target. This is leadership – however so far it is aspirational. The plan is more of a plan for a plan than it is actual implementation of the programs we need right now in order to reach 65% reduction by 2030.

We need to do EVERYTHING in the plan to get there. And right now many things are not sufficiently staffed and funded for this accelerated goal. If you follow climate news you know how urgent climate action is. Earth's temperature is rising in ways that destabilize the climate, causing drought, floods, and threatening coastal communities with devastating sea rise, and in the urban environment heat domes and food scarcity.

We only have these few years to drastically reduce emissions to give us a chance to stay under a 1.5 degree rise. If we think COVID is an emergency, and it is, we will be facing an even greater emergency if we do not slash our emissions. This is a global challenge, not only local, and I am proud that Toronto is leading other cities in this. Only three cities in N. America have this goal or a stronger one, and ours is the first city in Canada. Let's make sure we succeed. The future of the city is too important for all of us and for the coming generations not to do so. They won't have the chance to repair our slow action. We know that investing now will save us money later on. It's worth it.

So here are two areas we need council to look at specifically.

- 1) Transportation – how are we going to achieve the modal shift to transit, and how will we ensure that the emissions reduction targets are met? We are going to need electric buses, and we are going to need bus-only lanes. But we don't have the allocation of funds needed not only for the buses – but for the bus bays required to accommodate them.
- 2) Retrofits –in November's **Transform TO: Critical Steps for Net Zero by 2040 Report** the 2nd target presented in the **Existing Buildings Strategy** reads that we need a "50 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from existing

buildings from 2008 levels: this means 100,000 buildings must be retrofitted in the next 8 years approximately 12,500 buildings per year.“

There are many barriers to the quick uptake of retrofits; and one of them is having enough staff, plus funding for community initiatives. Supporting climate education and community mobilizing is essential. There is a crucial need to get the average person on board. That involves linking climate mitigation and adaptation to equity and includes marshaling the advertising resources of the city to get the word out everywhere.

There are many important initiatives that require staff time that will contribute to reducing our emissions including regulation of low emissions refrigerants and anesthetics, reduction of food waste, provision for composting in every building, community gardens, tree planting and ravine protection – and these should all be funded.

But the heavy lifters for emissions reductions are in transportation and buildings. We need the quick electrification conversion of transport and low emissions trips including e bikes, and active transportation is essential. We need to make it easy and quick to walk, cycle and take transit.

And for buildings: we need to facilitate, that is make easy, the deep retrofit of buildings including fuel switching to heat pumps for heating and hot water.

To do so the city needs the revenue to fund the necessary staffing to make this easy – to provide support – and we need the investment in infrastructure, such as the electric buses, and bus bays. – to make this happen.

I would like to register an additional concern about the budget with regards to climate action. It looks like the total cost of an expenditure is allocated to the TransformTO budget figures rather than the climate component. And we'd like to state how important it is that the climate lens be applied across all departments and expenditures and are pleased to see that in the plans. This needs to happen as soon as possible.

That's my submission as Co-Chair of ClimateFast however as a citizen of Toronto I need to point out another reason for finding new revenue tools for our city and shifting spending priorities. I am ashamed of the way we treat our most vulnerable citizens, those without housing. I just cannot be proud of a city that does not provide for those with the least among us. At least a safe and supportive shelter bed, but much better, actual housing with support services. There is much wealth in this city and we need ways to bring more of it into our budget to care for the vulnerable, as well as to fund our much needed Net Zero climate action plan of which we are indeed proud.

For the future,

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