

E-mail to: buc@toronto.ca

January 23rd, 2023

Dear Budget Committee Members,

The Atmospheric Fund (TAF) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the City of Toronto's 2023 budget. TAF is a regional climate agency that serves the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area, supporting a net-zero future. We are providing feedback on the City's budget to help the City of Toronto achieve its climate reduction targets.

We encourage the City to consider the following points as it implements the 2023 budget:

1. TAF supports the Toronto Environmental Alliance (TEA) in their recommendation to explore a commercial parking levy to fund the TTC by:
 - Requesting a staff report to explore the potential and usefulness of a commercial parking levy across the city, and how such a levy could be done responsibly and equitably.
2. TAF supports the [budget committee's request](#) to the Executive Director of Corporate Real Estate Management (CREM) to:
 - "Provide a briefing note on the details regarding the additional expected long-term cost resulting from pushing back implementation of emissions-reducing programs associated with reaching the City's Net Zero targets such as, but not limited to, the work currently highlighted within Capital Needs Constraints."

Firstly, we support TEA's request for a staff report to investigate how to equitably apply a commercial parking levy across the city. This is necessary as a commercial parking levy could help answer the existing funding gap that the TTC is experiencing. Restoring transit ridership to pre-pandemic levels and beyond is key to achieving the City's net-zero target. This cannot be achieved without further investment and funding for the TTC. We echo TEA's comments that this levy, if adopted, should be earmarked for the TTC in an effort to maintain and enhance TTC services. Consideration should also be given to how a parking levy could be designed to support other City objectives. For example, a parking levy with exemptions or discounts for parking spaces covered by solar PV, or served by electric vehicle chargers, could incentivize private investment in low carbon infrastructure while raising funds to support transit.

Secondly, we strongly support the budget committee's request to the Executive Director of CREM. The 'Capital Needs Constraints' being referred to in this request are the unfunded \$349.9 million needed for the Net-Zero Carbon Plan, to transition City buildings to net-zero emissions over the next ten years. With the price of natural gas set to increase substantially over the next decade, the cost of keeping city-owned buildings reliant on it rather than

prioritizing energy retrofits will be expensive for the City. As such we support the Finance Committee's request for a report and suggest that a component of the report include how the City plans to close this financing gap. Particular attention should be given to the opportunity of accessing federal funds dedicated to decarbonization, such as the Canada Infrastructure Bank's Building Retrofit Initiative and Infrastructure Canada's Green and Inclusive Community Building's program.

Toronto has taken strong leadership on climate action, setting an example for municipalities across Ontario and Canada. Toronto should continue to lead by example through prioritizing city-owned building energy retrofits and help the city stay on track for net-zero by 2040.

Please refer to TEA's submission for a detailed rationale on point 1.

Thank you for your consideration in reviewing TAF's comments.

Sincerely yours,

Bryan Purcell



VP Policy & Programs,
The Atmospheric Fund

The Atmospheric Fund (TAF) is a regional climate agency that invests in low-carbon solutions for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) and helps scale them up for broad implementation. Please note that the views expressed in this submission do not necessarily represent those of the City of Toronto or other GTHA stakeholders. We are experienced leaders and collaborate with stakeholders in the private, public and non-profit sectors who have ideas and opportunities for reducing carbon emissions. Supported by endowment funds, we advance the most promising concepts by investing, providing grants, influencing policies, and running programs. We're particularly interested in ideas that offer benefits in addition to carbon reduction such as improving people's health, creating local jobs, boosting urban resiliency, and contributing to a fair society