



January 22, 2025

Dear Councillors,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I'm speaking both as a resident of Toronto St. Paul's and as Co-Chair of ClimateFast, a community group advocating for climate action – fast – since 2012. I'm also Co-Chair of the City's Climate Advisory Group.

I have lived in Toronto since 1978 and have followed city politics for decades. I have seen so many programs downloaded on Toronto without the funding needed for them. This has resulted in so many homeless people - which was not the case in 1978, I don't remember seeing anyone living on the street then, there were rooming houses, and provincial welfare allocation was enough for a room as well as for food. There were no food banks! Underfunding by the province had led to this crisis. I'm ashamed to live in a city that is ok with thousands of people surviving in tents, regularly hounded out of them with all their belongings trashed. This is absolutely inhumane in a city that has so much wealth.

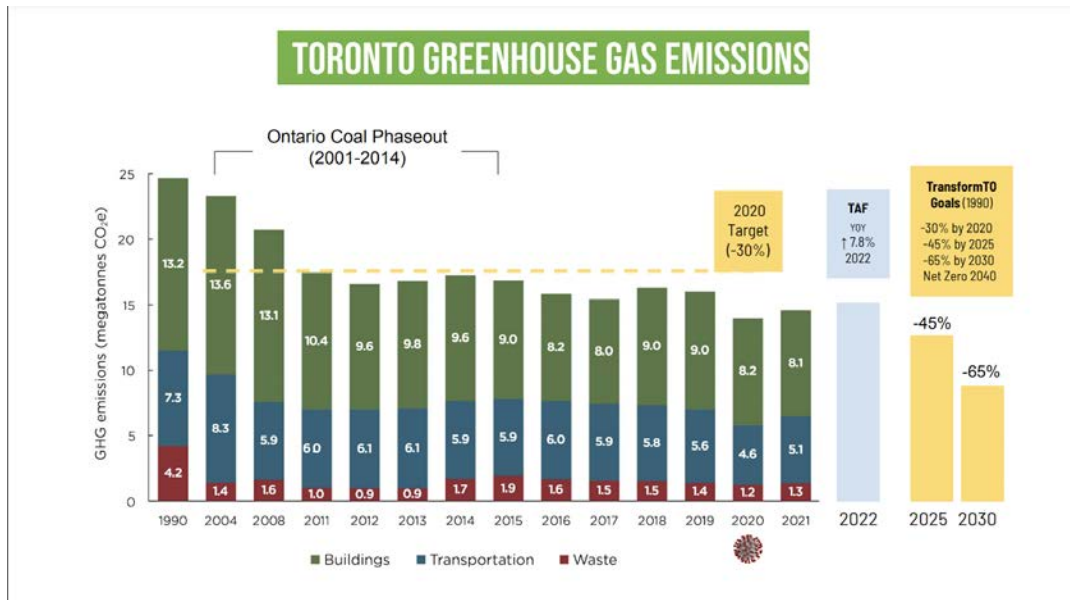
Some voters may not be happy about the property tax increase, but I am not one of them. I'm happy with the increase because the budget does start to address homelessness, and it also starts to deal with the backlog of a state of good repair. We need the 1.5% for city building fund and we also need the 5.4% operating budget increase. We need to be building housing, and improving transit, and those are expensive.

Many voters may be unaware that 26% (\$1.5 billion) of property tax funding supports extensions of federal and provincial responsibilities including housing, social services and health services.

Regarding revenue, if the council adopts the 6.9% increase this year, we will have set an improved foundation for our budget going forward. Next year we may not need such an increase if we bring in the corporate parking lot levy. This will bring in \$150 million to assist with the costs of improving transit. We need to look to additional sources of revenue including a stormwater fee, and congestion pricing, to fund the changes we need in our city.

Since 2010 I have focused on addressing the climate crisis. In 2019 the city declared a climate emergency and in 2021 adopted the award-winning Net Zero by 2040 plan. I find it concerning that we are falling behind in meeting our target of 45% below 1990 emissions by 2025 and I

know that we will need to adopt some big bold measures to then meet our target of 65% below by 2030.



We need to invest what's in the budget and we need to find other funding mechanisms to move the plan forward - community, business, foundation and other funding.

One of the key recommendations is to get those who drive to shift to transit walking and cycling. This requires keeping transit fares low and improving service, implementing rapid bus routes,

We need to get off gas in our buildings so we need a high rate of conversions to heat pumps which provide air conditioning as well as heat at a fraction of the cost This will be helped by implementation of mandatory Emissions Performance Standards.

We need to green our city, protect nature, plant and water trees, restore ravines, and promote community gardens. We need to educate and mobilize public engagement to meet our target. We need to work with youth.

Why is it so urgent to fund what we need to reduce our emissions?

We should be very alarmed that last year we crossed the 1.5 C limit set by the 2015 Paris climate summit and according to the [2024 report](#) by the Copernicus Climate Change Service we are headed to a 3 degree rise by 2050 with dire consequences where large parts of the world are unlivable.

Canada's temperature is rising at double the global rate, so that means a 6 degree rise in Canada. The National Farmers' Union tells us this will lead to food shortages and high prices. We need to be proactive in reducing our emissions.

You can see the trend in this chart, and inset is a photo of the Palisades fire in Los Angeles. The planet is burning and in Toronto we need to do our part and keep our commitment to reducing our emissions.

What does this mean for Toronto if we don't act? See the chart below.

Let's act – make the investments now for a healthy climate future for our kids and grandkids.

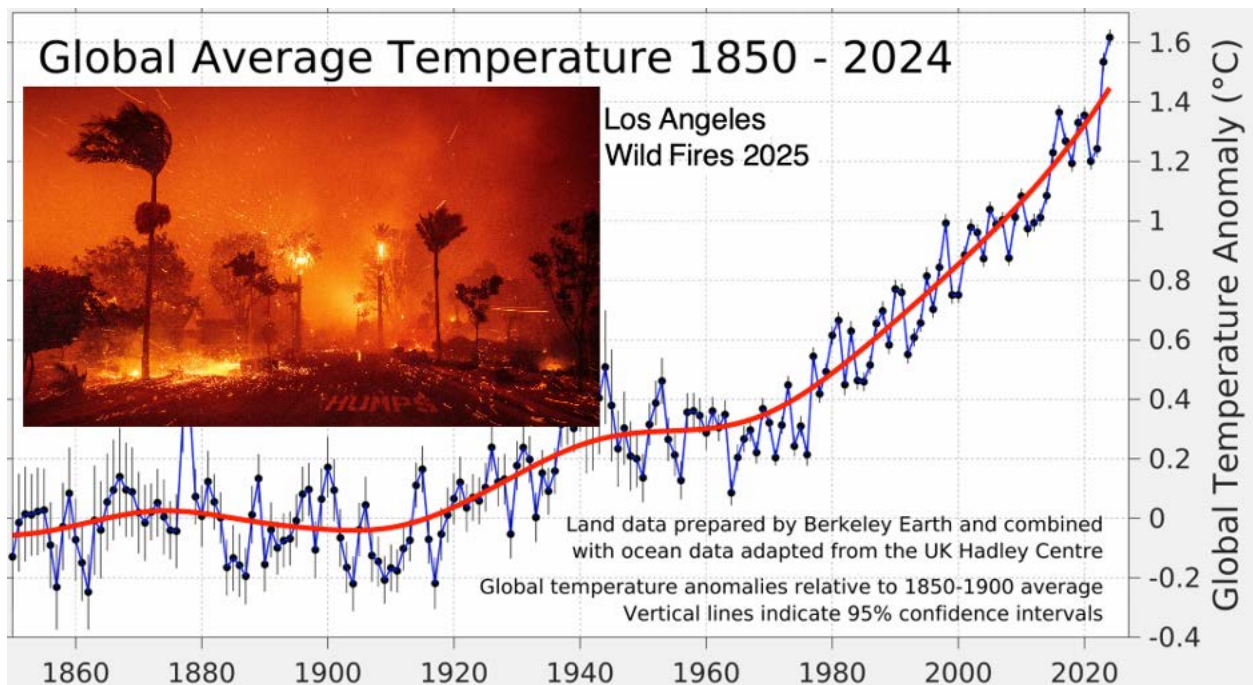
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DAILY
TEMPERATURE
MAXIMUM

44°

celsius

2040-50

37°

2000-09



HOT DAYS

66

above 30°

2040-50

20

2000-09



EXTENDED
HEAT WAVES

2.5

per year

2040-50

0.6

2000-09



DAILY
RAINFALL
MAXIMUM

166

millimeters

2040-50

66

2000-09



