



**Re IE 22.9 TransformTO Net Zero Strategy - 2024 Annual Report on Implementation Progress**

June 11, 2025

Dear Chair, and councillors,

I am writing on behalf of ClimateFast to support the **TransformTO Net Zero Strategy - 2024 Annual Report on Implementation Progress** and to underline the urgency of acting on climate.

We commend the staff for an excellent and encouraging report on the 2024 activities. We recognize the importance of the four strategies noted in the report summary:

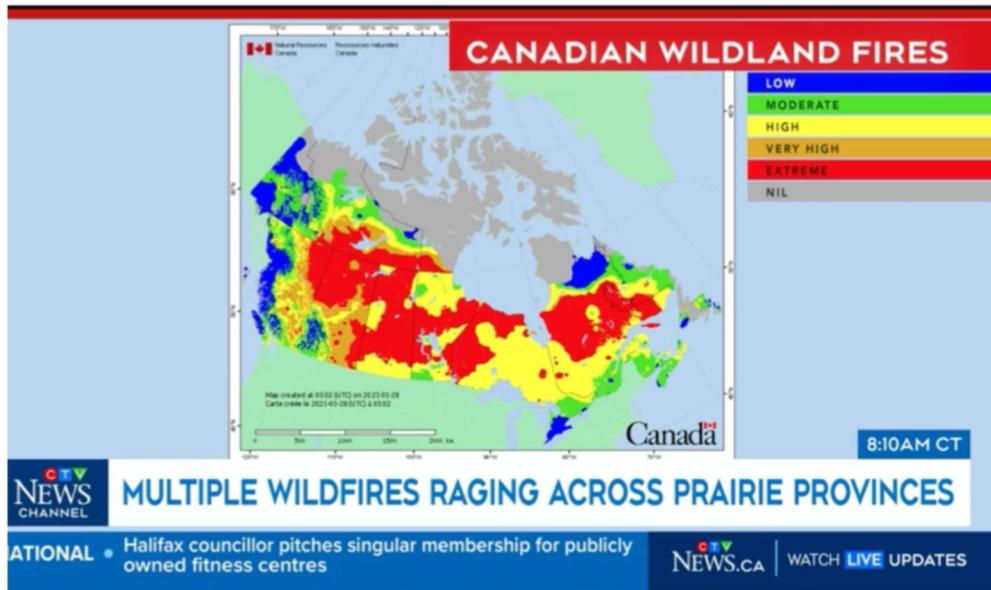
- **Establish a carbon budget:**
- **Accelerate rapid and significant reduction in fossil (natural) gas use in building**
- **Increase access to low carbon transportation options**
- **Increase local renewable energy to contribute to a carbon-free grid**

These are among the actions that will really make a difference for our city's climate future. However we must recognize that we are not yet achieving the results we need to see.

This summer, as in 2023, we are experiencing wildfire smoke in our city. Those with any respiratory conditions, are advised to stay indoors, and, to protect our youth, many schools have opted to have students stay indoors and have deferred planned field activities, due to the many health impacts of wildfire smoke.

Canada is once again facing a massive fire season, with burned areas already exceeding year-to-date averages from recent years.

At one point more than 220 active fires were burning across the country with half of them considered out of control. More than 3.3 million hectares (12,700 square miles) have already been consumed by flames—an area equivalent to the country of Belgium.



Smoke in our city is exacerbated by the expected increase in the number of ‘heat days’. The rise in temperatures has a huge impact on Toronto residents, one that disproportionately impacts low and moderate income residents in multi-unit residences where air conditioning is not available.

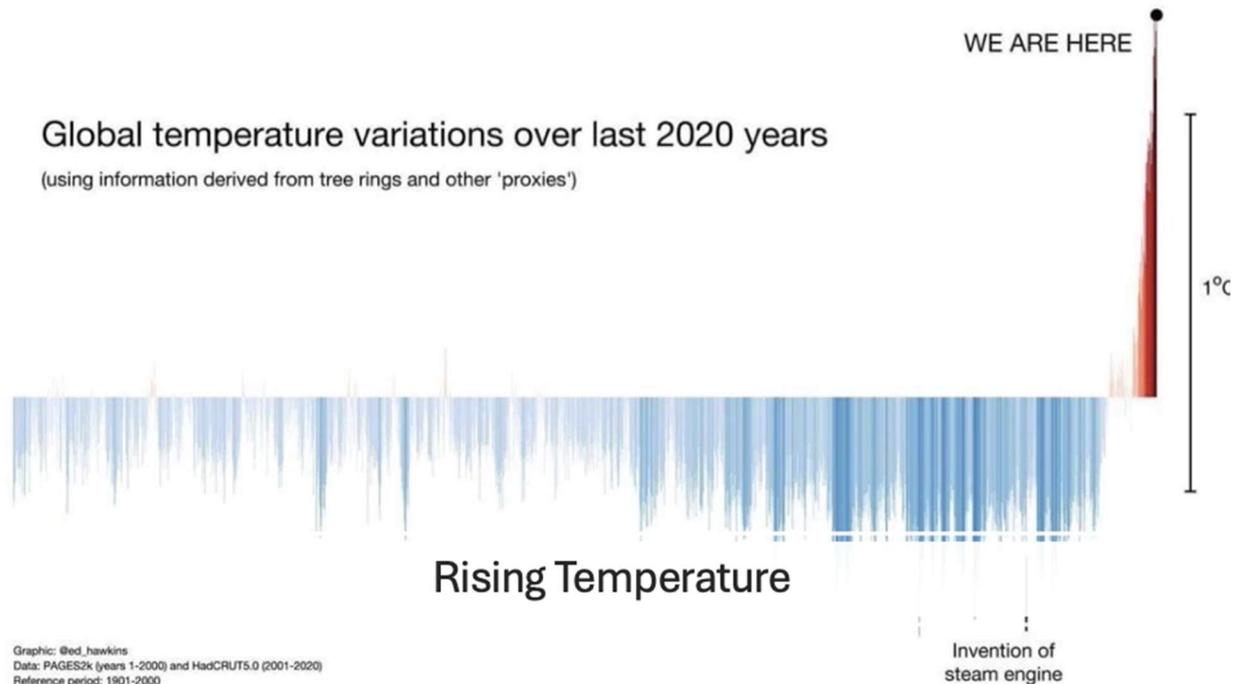
Globally, atmospheric CO2 continues to rise with newest reports indicating it has reached 430 ppm. This is far in excess of the 350 ppm that was proposed as the possibly ‘safe level’ identified by James Hansen, and incorporated in the name of the group [350.org](http://350.org), and far in exceeds the pre-industrial level of 270 PPM.

Temperature continues to rise faster than expected. We have crossed the 1.5C that was the goal of the Paris accord in 2015 and we are expected to cross the 2 degree mark in the coming decade.

Crossing the 2-degree Celsius warming threshold means a world where climate change impacts become significantly more severe and widespread, with dangerous and cascading effects. This includes more frequent and intense extreme weather events, rising sea levels, disruptions to ecosystems, and increased health risks.

## Global temperature variations over last 2020 years

(using information derived from tree rings and other 'proxies')



Globally this could lead to a billion deaths.

In Toronto we will all suffer from higher food prices due to unstable climatic conditions due to floods and drought in addition to the risks of excess heat, flooding and other climate-related impacts.

We do need to adapt - but we also need to make sure we are doing our part to decrease emissions and as the 5th largest city in North America, we need to show leadership nationally and internationally.

In the fall you will have the Net Zero TransformTO plan for 2026- 2030 in front of you. To achieve a further 20% reduction in emissions between 2026 and 2030 will require an ambitious plan, as **there is a very large projected gap between what existing strategies can be expected to accomplish and the target for emissions reduction. It's extremely important that this includes bold measures that will make a difference.**

Buildings are the major emitters and therefore a key element in our strategy must be emissions performance standards. To achieve the scale and pace required, these standards this will need to include mandatory measures.

Transportation is the next major source of emissions. We need to keep making it easier and safer to walk, cycle and take transit in our city. We need new protected bike lanes, and we need to keep the ones we have. They are wonderful, but we only have 100 km of protected bike lanes in 5600 km of roads.

We need pedestrian safety measures, as are before you in the Vision Zero report today. And we need reliable and affordable transit, including rapid bus lanes. These measures will encourage more people to leave their cars at home, improve the air quality in the city, reduce congestion, and improve health outcomes. This modal shift is a critical part of achieving our 2040 emissions reductions target and to achieve 65% below by 2030.

Our accelerated plan was adopted after the city declared a climate emergency following the 2019 climate strike. We owe it to the youth of our city to keep moving forward to achieve our target.

Sincerely,



Lyn Adamson  
Co-Chair, ClimateFast

## REFERENCES

<https://www.wri.org/insights/half-degree-and-world-apart-difference-climate-impacts-between-15c-and-2c-warming>

<https://climate.nasa.gov/news/3278/nasa-study-reveals-compounding-climate-risks-at-two-degrees-of-warming/>

<https://phys.org/news/2025-06-experts-canada-wildfire-season-massive.html>

<https://news.westernu.ca/2023/08/climate-change-human-deaths/>

### **Climate-changing human activity may cause 1 billion deaths**

Aggressive energy policies needed to decrease carbon emissions and minimize loss of lives, says new study - By [Jeff Renaud](#), August 28, 2023

Here's a more detailed look at the potential impacts of a 2 degree rise  
Extreme Weather:

- **Increased frequency and intensity of heatwaves:**  
More people will experience more intense and longer-lasting heatwaves, leading to heat-related illnesses and deaths.
- **More severe storms:**  
Hurricanes and other tropical cyclones could become stronger and more destructive.

- **More frequent and intense flooding:**  
Coastal regions and areas prone to heavy rainfall will experience more devastating floods.
- **Increased risk of wildfires:**  
Drier conditions and hotter temperatures will make wildfires more common and harder to control.
- **Droughts:**  
Some regions may experience more frequent and severe droughts, leading to water shortages and crop failures.

### Ecosystem Impacts:

- **Coral reef destruction:**  
A 2-degree warming could lead to the nearly total destruction of coral reefs, which are crucial for biodiversity and coastal protection.
- **Habitat loss:**  
Species will face increased habitat loss and difficulty adapting to changing conditions.
- **Changes in plant and animal distribution:**  
The range and distribution of many species will be altered, potentially leading to extinctions.

### Other Impacts:

- **Rising sea levels:**  
Global average sea levels are expected to rise, impacting coastal communities and leading to displacement.
- **Increased health risks:**  
The spread of vector-borne diseases like malaria and dengue fever may increase, and heat-related illnesses will become more common.

### **Social and economic instability:**

Climate change impacts can lead to food insecurity, economic losses, and displacement, contributing to social unrest.