



January 21, 2026

Dear Chair and members of the Budget Committee,

I'm writing as a Co-Chair of ClimateFast. I'm also Co-Chair of the Climate Advisory Group that the City of Toronto set up in 2022, working with Environment Climate and Forestry staff to help in the implementation of Toronto's award winning climate plan.

This climate plan is essential because we are in a global climate crisis. 2025 was the 3rd hottest year in human history and we are reaching dangerous tipping points. As Canada's largest city, we need to do our part to reduce emissions and to help residents adapt to the changing climate in our city. Our climate plan is set up to reach NetZero by 2040 but needs full implementation. The current plan to 2030 will fall short.

We could do more with incentives and support from other levels of government but we also need to do what we can with our city finances.

We need much more communication with the public about both need for action and opportunities in responding to the climate crisis. We urge you to include a dedicated climate communication staff person with a marketing budget. This would encourage more uptake of the climate programs offered by the City and other levels of government and Improve public understanding of the co-benefits of climate-related projects, eg. to health, affordability, and jobs. We can make use of the City's own information infrastructure – libraries, community centres, settlement houses etc. to reach more communities across the city. As well we could ensure that a messaging component is integrated into all TransformTO initiatives on across sectors. Eg signs on renewable energy projects and nformation on how much is being saved on retrofitted buildings. Ensure that education and opportunities for feedback are included in climate action grants.

I want to thank the committee, the budget chief, Shelley Carroll, and the dedicated staff who have worked so hard to find savings without cutting needed programs, and with some important improvements. Adding revenue is important and I am glad to see the increase in the land transfer tax for luxury homes. Please continue to develop additional sources of revenue such as a stormwater charge, parking lot levy and congestion tax which would add to the city's resources. The congestion tax has been very successful in New York City.

Affordability is key in the budget, and for Toronto residents.

Climate action is key to affordability in the future. Rising temperatures bring extreme weather, like droughts and floods, which cost both individuals and the city budget, cause rising food prices, and make it difficult and more expensive to get home insurance. If we are able to pursue expansion of renewable energy, effective use of battery storage, and other conservation measures, including home retrofits, this will help reduce emissions - and save residents money.

To have a livable future we have to greatly reduce our emissions. That means reducing the burning of fossil fuels, which is the main source of emissions. So, electrification in place of gas heating in buildings and using transit, walking, cycling, e-bikes, EVs in place of cars.

Steps that the city has taken like the HELP program for financing retrofits, freezing fares and fare capping for transit, are positive investments that will help to shift people in the direction of lower emissions – and will help them save money. I note that installation of heat pumps will both heat and cool buildings, so it can be a good way to add air conditioning where buildings do not have this. A win-win solution.

A family that can manage without a car will save thousands of dollars each year, and affordable reliable transit can help. While there has been a start to the rapid bus lanes, I was disappointed to see expansion of these lanes is not in the plan for this year. The Eglinton East rapid busway has led to savings of \$2.5M annually in operating costs and provides more efficient and reliable transit. The council stepped back from implementing them in time for FIFA. Bold measures are needed.

We need to encourage enrollment in the Toronto Hydro Peak Perks program to save energy and save money. Only 10% of customers are enrolled. To achieve a 90% enrollment, **a marketing plan is needed**. High enrollment in this plan would achieve a major reduction in gas-fired emissions at the Portlands Energy Centre. Expanded use of rooftop solar would also assist. Let's get creative and reduce!

We are advancing our TransformTO climate strategy – which is good - but not yet at the speed or scale to truly meet the crisis bearing down on us. Let's do more by engaging the public in the most effective way. Please add to climate communication staffing and resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lyn', followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

Lyn Adamson

Co-Chair, ClimateFast

60 Lowther Ave, Toronto, M5R 1C7