



Legislation Text

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Accelerating Climate Action in the Township of Langley in Response to the Climate Emergency

Whereas:

The Legislature of British Columbia and the House of Commons have acknowledged the growing urgency for further action based on current and predicted climate breakdown highlighted in the October 2018 “Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report” (IPCC);

The IPCC report underscored the need to limit global warming to

1.5 degrees celsius within a strategic framework designed to reduce global net CO2 emissions by between 94% and 107% below

2010 levels, in order to reach negative net emissions by 2050;

A recent “Canada’s Changing Climate Report” (CCCR) has stated that on average, Canada is experiencing warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world;

The world is currently on track for more than 3 degrees celsius warming based on existing policies and practices that do not meet any current benchmarks or targets outlined provincially, federally, or internationally in order to stave off the most catastrophic results of accelerated warming;

The cost incurred by climate change will be greater the less action we proactively take to mitigate and adapt to it. Among other things, climate change will test our diking systems, aquifers, and storm water and sewer systems. Some of the costs associated with climate inaction would be:

- 1) An estimated \$20+ billion in costs for the Lower Mainland to mitigate and rebuild affected areas subject to major coastal flooding,
- 2) Approximate cost of \$2 million a year to switch completely to GVRD water based on local aquifer depletion,
- 3) Economic costs related to the maintenance and replacement of sewer and water infrastructure with respect to storm water and other engineered structures affected by climate change,
- 4) Human and economic costs from heat waves and wildfires,
- 5) Healthcare costs associated with increased respiratory-related illnesses due to diminished air quality,

6) Increasing cost of dike construction and enhancement to protect personal property and infrastructure.

A growing list of cities across Canada, to now include Vancouver, Victoria, New Westminster, and Halifax have recently declared a “climate emergency” based on the scientific information and the moral imperative to enhance accelerated action on climate change; and

A growing legion of young people from across the globe, whose activities coalesced on March 15 as part of the newly declared “Fridays for Future” initiative, are demanding that their local governments take more immediate and aggressive action towards addressing and ameliorating this emergency;

Therefore be it resolved:

That Council acknowledge the climate emergency as evidenced by scientific studies and policy predictions that indicate dire consequences arising from the breakdown of a stable climate arising from unprecedented global warming;

That Council direct staff to establish a draft “carbon budget” for both corporate and community emissions related to planning and land development and to include a broader transportation analysis, which policies are aligned with limiting warming to the 1.5C predictive “safe” limit;

That staff report back annually as to the depletion of our remaining local carbon budget in order to facilitate “real time” policy decisions and potential trade-offs;

That staff prepare a presentation at a future CPC meeting further to the 2020 budget discussions in order to advance more prescriptive policies and initiatives across all departments, designed to accelerate actions in order to expeditiously adopt more policies under the on-going Climate Action Revenue Incentive Programme (CARIP), as well other carbon-related initiatives across the Township; and

That Council direct staff to undertake any actions, including research and investigation with respect to “best practices” as action items to meet these goals, in order to identify any and all opportunities that could be adopted to enhance climate mitigation and adaptation measures.