

City of Burlington Climate Emergency Declaration

Approved by Council on April 23rd, 2019

Whereas, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has determined the need for a significant and structural reduction in carbon emissions in the next 11 years to avoid further economic, ecological, and societal loss; and

Whereas, Canada is, according to the Government of Canada's April 2019 Changing Climate Report, experiencing warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world, with Northern Canada heating up at almost three times the global average; and

Whereas, infrastructure failures linked to climate change could cost Canada \$300 billion over the next decade unless we change the way we build; and

Whereas, local governments are at the frontline of taking actions to manage the worst impacts of climate change, creating low carbon communities and calling on senior levels of government for a more urgent response; and

Whereas, the City of Burlington has already experienced consequences attributed to climate change such as the ice storm of December 2013, the flood of 2014, winter storm volatility in 2019, and the effects of invasive species; and

Whereas, climate change is currently ranked as the number three risk on the City of Burlington's Enterprise Risk Register; and

Whereas, the City of Burlington understands that climate action and the low carbon transition also represents an opportunity for economic stimulation and job development opportunities in a new low-carbon economy; and

Whereas, the City of Burlington recognizes many local community groups and organizations are already taking collective action on climate change; and

Whereas, the City of Burlington recognizes that climate change is a significant issue with a goal for city operations to be net carbon neutral by 2040 and working towards the community becoming net carbon neutral by working collectively with community stakeholders and senior levels of government, and that more action is necessary.

Now therefore be it resolved:

That the City of Burlington declare a climate emergency for the purposes of deepening our commitment to protecting our economy, environment and community from climate change; and

That Council and staff immediately increase the priority of the fight against climate change and apply a climate lens to the plans and actions of the City of Burlington including the Council strategic workplan and future budgets; and

That staff are directed to bring a report to the June 3, 2019 Committee of the Whole meeting that outlines actions taken to date and includes a critical path for the development of the first City of Burlington Climate Action Plan that will:

- a. address the operations of the corporation of the municipality as well as the functioning of the entire community; and
- b. include a plan for a thorough and complete consultation with stakeholders and the community; and
- c. increase action and ambition for the City's climate change-related activities; and
- d. include performance metrics to track progress and timelines for achieving key deliverables/major milestones, and a strategy to report back publicly on progress.

Direct the City Manager to bring back the Burlington Climate Action Plan to Council no later than December 2019 for approval.