

I approve of this letter being added to the public record.

Dear members of the civic works committee:

The following letter to the committee concerns agenda item 2.12 which is scheduled for discussion on May 22, 2024.

Gas-powered lawn care equipment – most especially gas-powered leaf blowers -- negatively impact our community in host of different ways including excessive noise, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions. In view of this, many jurisdictions in Canada and the United States have banned their sale and use. London needs to do the same.

Having read the report I have a number of questions and suggestions.

Q1: Given the dangerous levels of noise, pollution, and GHG emissions created by GPLBs and the wide commercial availability of safe alternatives, why is the burden of responsibility on citizens like me to argue against the use of GPLB rather than on the landscaping industry to argue for their use? We are in a climate emergency -- municipal policy should not protect the right to burn fossil fuels to blow leaves around.

Q2: Why is the City partnering with a corporate lobbyist (Landscape Ontario) to develop a public awareness campaign rather than grassroots citizen organizations? Quoting from their own website (see <https://horttrades.com/government-advocacy-work-is-crucial>) Landscape Ontario's mandate "involves engaging in government advocacy to influence policy decisions and create a favourable business environment." At best, LO will argue for the status quo with respect to municipal policy rather than for regulatory policies that promote sustainable practice and livable communities by banning GPLB use.

Q3: Why does the report overlook the legislative initiatives of other Canadian (e.g., Beaconsfield by-law 5.2.1 banning use of GPLPs except in the fall -- see https://www.beaconsfield.ca/storage/app/media/ma-ville/administration-et-finances/reglements/EN/BEAC-033%20-%20Nuisances%20consolidated%20-%202020_12_22.pdf) and American jurisdictions that have banned outright or limited sale and use of GPLBs (see Washington DC; State of California)? The report downplays how far behind London is on this issue.

Q4: Why is the City not willing to re-purpose existing by-laws to limit noise and disturbance of GPLBs? Currently, staff at the municipal compliance office (519-661-5670) DO NOT ACCEPT complaints about GPLBs as they have been instructed that GPLB use by landscaping companies is exempt from municipal noise by-laws.

I urge you to strengthen the report and help see the gradual replacement of gas-powered lawn care equipment with clean quiet alternatives.

Best regards, Dr. Anabel Quan-Haase (pronouns: she/her)

[REDACTED]

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