

ReThink Sub-Committee

Janice (Chair), Tariq, Gabor, Mike, Mark, Ravi

INITIATIVES IDENTIFIED

- ReThink Energy
 - Renewable Energy
 - Solar
 - Wind
 - Biogas (Long term goal) - reviewing the Hamilton Model
 - Biomass

- LIC (Local Improvement Charge) – Work with Built Environment
 - PACE Program
 - PAPER Program

NEXT STEPS

- Invite Guest Speaker from City to provide an update on the LIC programs for future meeting (April)

Built Environment

Maurice (Chair), Mike, Tariq, Lois, James

INITIATIVES

- Highbury Planning
- Sewers & Wastewater
- Workshop - New Home Builds and Energy Conservation – Gord Cook (Energy Efficiency Science) – April 17 (work with Education Committee)
- LIC (Local Improvement Charge) – Work with ReThink
 - PACE Program
 - PAPER Program

NEXT STEPS

- Sub-committee to meet to discuss initiatives

Upcoming Events

- Tour of LHBA Green Home (Energy Star and Green house certified) – Mid February – End of March
-

By-Laws, Policy & Planning

Mike (Chair), Lois, Gabor, Diane

INITIATIVES

- Provincial Policy Statement
- Green Roofs
- City Energy Strategy
- Transportation

NEXT STEPS

Sub-committee to meet to discuss initiatives

Education

Colin (Chair), Mark, Tariq, Janine, Diane

INITIATIVES

- Develop a calendar identifying Environmental Workshops, Speakers, Programs happening in the City for the website
- Workshop - New Home Builds and Energy Conservation – Gord Cook (Energy Efficiency Science) – April 17 (work with Built Environment – Lead Sub-committee)
- Coordination of the Friends of Groups and community events such as the Children’s Water Festival – how can we get involved and assist

NEXT STEPS

Sub-committee to meet to discuss initiatives

Finance

Maurice, Mike, Mark, Tariq, Ali

INITIATIVES

- Current and Future Budget Review
- Financing Environmental Issues

NEXT STEPS

- Sub-committee to investigate the possibility of meeting with Tom Copeland to review current budget
- Sub-committee to present to Budget Committee – February 13, 2013

ACE's comments are directed at the above City budgets with regard to environmental sustainability. We thank the City for letting ACE comment on budget items of interest to ACE. ACE's mandate involves environmental matters affecting the City of London and thus our comments below involve a wide range of considerations.

OPERATIONS AND CAPITAL BUDGETS –

1. ACE members recognize that a cost of living increase for Canadians was 1.5% in 2012, followed by a 2.9% rise in 2011 and 1.8% in 2010 which impacts Londoners. Visit: (<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/130125/dq130125a-eng.htm>). To this end, a quest for a zero budget increase is a challenging process and involves difficult decisions that still must influence the long term sustainable future and quality of life for London.

ACE notes Hamilton and Windsor's progress is likely of interest to Council given their proximity to London. Hamilton tabled a 2.9% property tax increase as a "starting point" for budget deliberations to culminate in April. Councillors will need to eliminate \$24 million off the budget to achieve a tax freeze and re-examine 30 enhancements costing \$5.9 million or an additional .64% to the residential tax bill.

Windsor has seen 5 years of tax freezes. The city's top administrators have entered a draft budget that projects a 2013 tax freeze for property taxpayers and cuts of \$20 million primarily involving salaries. This is to be passed in March. No other city in Canada has frozen or cut property taxes so many times in close succession.

2. **ACE asks** that even while seeking this challenging target, environmental efforts continue to demonstrate London as a champion and not be compromised, particularly as it relates to climate change. London is to be commended for its climate change adaptation strategy focused on stormwater, based on a 2007 Western University study on the Thames River's vulnerability to intense and frequent flooding. This strategy is recognized nationally and internationally.

We realize that Council has approved the 2013 Water and Wastewater & Treatment budgets and capital plans in November 2012. **ACE asks** that the study team involved on the stormwater strategy continue to look at long term climate considerations and infrastructure funding opportunities and gain community input. This team includes: Risk Management Division, Wastewater and Drainage Engineering, Planning and Development – Building, Transportation and Design, Water Operations Division, Water Engineering Division, Pollution Control Operations, Environmental Programs and Customer Relations, and Corporate Security and Emergency Management Division.

ACE asks this given continuing research findings on climate change involving cities. For example, a December 2011 Senes Consultants study on future weather and climate drivers expected to impact the City of Toronto reiterates the need for municipalities to plan for more intense storms and flooding in building, renewing and replacing its infrastructure. The report states that by 2050 although winters will bring less snow, fewer snow storms and reduced occurrences of wind chill, summers will bring more rain, an expectation of approximately 40 humidex days over 40 C in the Toronto area, and more heat waves (three or more consecutive days of temperatures greater than 32 C).

Climate oscillations are becoming more wide spread in large-scale atmospheric pressure patterns. It is therefore, necessary for cities to plan, design and maintain electricity and road infrastructure differently in addition to sewers and water systems. Cities need to fully understand the scale and importance of expected climate and weather changes such as cold snaps, extreme wind events ie tornadoes, low pressure events, intense precipitation events, drought and freeze-thaw cycles, as well as factor in population growth and carbon based fuel consumption. "Extremes are more significant for public operations and service provision regarding such basics as flood appropriate sewer and culvert pipe sizing, heat wave appropriate load-bearing resistance of road surface materials, and heat appropriate public services for the elderly and disadvantaged." Visit: www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2012/pe/.../backgroundfile-51664.pdf.

3. The City is to be commended for maintaining specific London Transit Commission

services, bike lanes, ash tree protection and ReThink London opportunities in its budget deliberations as of January 25, 2013 in reducing the 2.5% increase in property taxes to zero through \$20 million in cuts or new revenue generation. **ACE asks** that London's environmental considerations be viewed as quality of life issues and not diminished. As an example, in the development of additional housing units, ACE would like to see trees relocated as part of a preservation strategy with ReForest London rather than destroyed.

Economic prosperity – **ACE asks** that the City produce a strong business case for the development of strategically located serviced lands for London Economic Development Corporation to market toward economic growth and employment opportunities. At a cost of \$40 million over 10 years, the timing does not seem to enhance a zero budget priority nor has there been opportunity to identify the businesses to utilize this development.

ACE encourages development upwards versus outwards including core areas to avoid urban sprawl. **ACE asks** that the City continue to support initiatives such as 'Hire One' designed to provide resources to local small and medium businesses (90% of London's business sector) that allows them to, as the name suggests, hire one or more additional employees as well as to update the community on new jobs created in the Forest City.

Financial savings – **ACE notes** that more than 6x the proposed budget of City services in 2013 of garbage, recycling and composting (\$12.72 million), is expected by the City on technology services (79.73 million) for a total of 366,151 London residents. Given Environmental Services (ES) supports community relationship building involving: air quality, climate change, energy conservation, active transportation, transportation demand management, urban watershed management, natural landscaping, community capacity building and community outreach, we see the ES division as integral to strengthening of neighbourhoods and growing our city sustainably. **ACE asks** that the review of the technology budget be examined closely for efficiencies rather than to take from environment, staffing and areas that support broadly citizens to live in London.

4. We understand the challenges in finalizing this year's City budget. **ACE notes** Council's Strategic Plan mandate (2011-2014) indicates the City is entrusted with the responsibility of providing a wide range of services that enhance London's quality of life through 5 key results – a strong economy, a vibrant and diverse community, a green and growing city, a sustainable infrastructure, and a caring community.

ACE asks what better way to make London attractive and protect the health of citizens, expand businesses and education than to demonstrate strong leadership to ensure: clean air, clean water, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, a healthy forest cover, protected wetlands and quality recreational space. In addition, ensuring human capital has access to education and training to establish new technologies and research that creates sustainable, capacity building initiatives that increase the City's competitive edge in the long term, is highly desirable.

5. **ACE asks** that programs being eliminated or reduced in scope not be core to municipal services and that the city continue to negotiate with provincial and federal governments for funding, particularly for new 'green' initiatives, the focus of the future. Given the downloading of services to municipalities, it is important that London speak strongly to this and be seen as a champion for municipalities and long-term needs.

Regarding any recommendations of not adding new services and selling key assets to reduce debt, **ACE asks** that the City and staff continue to look closely at other similar sized municipalities and budgets as well as to find ways to reduce capital budget expenses rather than cut back on new services and key assets for the future.

6. **ACE asks** that the City further engage the community particularly for insights and feedback on programming and the gas tax funding specific to the environment given the allocation appears to be evenly distributed presently over gas tax eligible projects within public transit, water, wastewater, solid waste, local roads, bridges and tunnels, including active transportation infrastructure, capacity building and community energy systems noting monies are not to be used to offset other capacity funding sources.

ACE asks that distribution of funding in 2013 for gas tax funds in the city's agreement address the greatest impact as listed in gas tax fund objectives for clean air, clean water and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The City should reduce road rehabilitation projects from gas tax funding which do not create innovative new long-term jobs for citizens. The City should instead engage new innovations on municipal properties over time such as green purchasing, permaculture, green buildings, sustainable agriculture

and architecture, green technologies, gardens, renewables, green roofs, rainbarrels, mixed-mode air conditioning, solar walls and energy-efficient lighting/heating to offer broader appeal for community-wide application. These are all areas to coordinate existing funding, special funding and possible leverage of funding yet to be applied for in a coordinated approach in 2013 and beyond to enhance long-lasting environmental projects and education spearheaded by gas tax funding.

2. **ACE encourages** City staff to examine every opportunity for leveraged funding from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) Green Infrastructure Funding toward higher standards of air, water and soil quality, and climate protection. Examples of sustainable transportation projects might include: active transportation networks and facilities, transportation demand management, land-use planning, modal integration, public transit systems and technologies, complete streets and traffic calming measures.

Leading municipalities go beyond compliance and understand the cost of protecting the environment totally outweighs the long-term cost of not protecting it. **ACE asks** the City of London to always consider the legacy for future citizens as the responsibility of current decision makers toward a sustainable community.

Presentation to the City public meeting February 13, 2013 by,
City of London's Advisory Committee on the Environment