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Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee
City of London
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RE: Draft Climate Emergency Action Plan

Dear Mayor, Councilors and City Staff

We would like to thank staff for the comprehensive draft Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP), the many supporting reports and already completed community consultations. Even as recently as when the City of London first declared a Climate Emergency in April 2019 many on council or in the community perceived the impacts of Climate Change as some vaguely defined risk at some undefined time in the future. This is no longer the case. The real and devastating impacts on Climate Change are now evident in Canada.

On 28 February 2022 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its latest report ⁽¹⁾, highlighting the causes, impacts, and possible solutions to climate change. The report suggests that the world must cut its total emissions by 45% by 2030 to avoid climate catastrophe. At current levels, global emissions will increase by almost 14% over this period. It is therefore critical we take urgent measures in the next 8-10 years rather than slowly progressing toward a far off 2050 goal as originally adopted by the council. We strongly support the inclusion and adoption of scientific based emission reduction milestone targets for 2030, 2035 and 2040 in the draft CEAP.

We live in one of the wealthiest nations on earth and historically are one of the greatest per capita emitters. We have a moral obligation and leadership responsibility to do more. This is not a task or obligation to be left to a future council or the next generation. We strongly urge the Mayor and council to adopt the draft CEAP without delay.

We look forward to being an active partner in progressing Climate Action in London forward toward a 2030 goal.

Other Important Issues

The draft CEAP framework and supporting reports lay out a comprehensive approach to moving forward. Although by no means exhaustive below are a few additional items we wished to highlight

- **It is important that the information provided to the public start early** and be properly framed within the context of this changing marketplace. As the order of government closest to people's daily lives the City of London has an important role in setting in motion these changes and discussions. A critical element to the level of effort required by different household types (starting on page 39 of draft CEAP) are the changes to the built city and the marketplace that will occur prior to many households engaging in some of these efforts. Some of the changes that will occur prior to many Londoners making a change are listed within the draft CEAP "Things Londoners will notice by 2030" (page 33). There are many other required changes that are shared responsibility between the municipal, provincial and federal governments..
- **There are significant financial reasons to take climate action and to take that action early.** It is well documented that urban sprawl is the most costly form of growth and that sprawl is also a significant contributor to increased emissions. The draft CEAP includes projections that are based on population growth per the London Plan. Recent actual growth reported by the census suggests that actual population growth may in fact exceed those population growth projections. Under either scenario of population growth it is imperative that London immediately stop the historical pattern of urban sprawl and **start following the vision of the London Plan. Direction 5 within the London Plan strategy is to build a mixed use compact city.** Every new development of single family housing sprawl makes the cost of change that much larger and more challenging.
- Foundational Action 10 - Best Practices for Investment in Energy Efficiency and GHG Emission Reductions is critical for changing the way we think about and assess projects or initiatives. In the report it states "Applying a purely financial lens to any potential investment in emissions reduction projects will not provide sufficient information to evaluate options. **Many emissions reduction projects or opportunities have social and environmental co-benefits that must be considered, especially those co-benefits that contribute to improving human health outcomes, equity, inclusion and adaptation to climate impacts.**" Creating a workable methodology for evaluating projects within this framework is needed although other key actions or projects should not be delayed while staff work on creating this methodology to be used in the future.

References

- (1) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change February 28, 2022
<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-ii/>