

Notes on the London Climate Emergency Action Plan Part 2 April 4 2022

Your Worship, Councilors, and citizens interested in the Climate Emergency Action Plan:

My name is Don Millar, and I am a retired chiropractor, and the current President of the London Electric Vehicle Association.

Since the transportation sector is responsible for 47% of GHG emissions, it needs a lot of work. The bicycle paths the city has built are great for recreational use, but are not practical in the winter, or for commuting to work on rainy days or very hot days in the summer. London's rate of adoption of electric cars is very low. It is only about 1/5th of the Canadian average, which is about 1/5th of the European average. That means that electric vehicle sales in London are only about 1-2% of new cars, when in the rest of Canada they are about 5-10%, and in Europe they are about 25-50%. Why is this so low in an affluent city like London?

1. Cost. This was the number 1 reason Canadians are reluctant to buy electric vehicles, according to a Federal Government study by the Privy Council Office. We need to petition the Ontario Government to add to the Federal electric car incentive, so that electric cars are more affordable. This is currently being done in Quebec and BC. In some cities in Quebec, the municipal government also offers an incentive for the purchase of home charging units, which cost on average \$1,500 - \$3,000 to install. This could be done here in London as well.
2. Lack of Quick Chargers. London suffers from a lack of quick chargers anywhere but at Wellington Road and the 401. Lack of Infrastructure was the number 2 reason Canadians are reluctant to buy electric vehicles, according to the Federal Government study by the Privy Council Office.
3. No electric buses. Electric buses are very visible, and would help to lend legitimacy to the transition to electric cars. London waited too long to look into purchasing electric buses, and now our order for a few test buses is stuck in a long lineup of orders by other cities for electric buses. Guelph, by contrast has embraced electric buses, and already has 10 in operation and another 60 on order.
4. Reluctancy of car dealerships to spend the time, money and effort required to transition to the sale of electric cars and light trucks. Electric cars do not need as much service as gas cars, so profit motive could also be a factor, because servicing gas cars is more lucrative than servicing electric cars, which are more reliable. We need to find a method to encourage car dealers to become certified to sell and repair electric cars. Right now, a large number aren't certified, and quite frankly, some are not interested in becoming certified. If they are still reluctant after some encouragement, we need to find a way to either incentivize their transition or disincentivize their reluctance to transition.
5. Londoners' love of gas-thirsty large SUV's and 4x4 pickup trucks. Sales in this sector are growing so fast that in the last 3 years, the GHG's from large SUV's and 4x4 pickup trucks increased so much that it eclipsed all of the GHG's saved by the sale of electric cars. How are we ever going to decrease GHG's if this continues?

Finally, here are my general comments on the Climate Emergency Action Plan:

The first thing we need to do is to hire a manager and two assistants who will be in charge of the Climate Emergency Action Plan, and nothing else. Adding the Climate Emergency Action Plan to the workload of Senior City Staff will not work, because the CEAP will get neglected while they are taking care of day-to-day issues.

The second thing we need to do is to change the target dates in the CEAP from 5-year targets to 4-year targets that align with the municipal elections so that each elected council will be responsible for which Climate Action Goals are or are not done during their tenure in office.

The third thing we need is better two-way communication between the Climate Emergency Action Plan staff and community groups like the London Electric Vehicle Association, whose interests align with those of the Climate Emergency Action Plan. They might just find that we are ready, willing, and able to help a lot.

I have already passed on some other comments to His Worship and the Councilors, and hopefully they will take action on those recommendations too.

Thank you. Don Millar, President, London Electric Vehicle Association.