

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION AGENDA

Tuesday, November 12, 2019

6.7 Resolution Declaring a Climate Emergency and Imperative Climate Action for the City of Brantford - Councillor Antoski

WHEREAS in April 2016 world leaders from 175 countries recognized the threat of climate change and the urgent need to combat it by signing the Paris Agreement, agreeing to keep global warming to “well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels” and to “pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C”; and

WHEREAS Canada has disproportionately contributed to the climate and ecological crises and thus bears an extraordinary responsibility to rapidly solve these crises; and

WHEREAS the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the scientific consensus confirm that the only way to limit global temperature increase to 1.5°C is to become net carbon neutral by 2050; and

WHEREAS an emergency mobilization on an unprecedented scale will be required to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors by 2050; and

WHEREAS a national scientific analysis and independent assessment published in 2019 reported that Canada’s temperature is rising at twice the global rate and that the rise is due to global emissions of carbon dioxide from human activity. Further, the report confirmed that the effects of widespread climate warming are already evident in Canada and are projected to intensify in the near future, including more frequent and intense droughts, forest fires, rainfall, and other extremes of weather and climate; and

WHEREAS the transition to becoming net carbon neutral by 2050 involves so many economic, social, and environmental unknowns over the next 30 years that it is unrealistic and impossible to reasonably or reliably predict the financial cost or the resources that will be available to make the transition. At the same time, the magnitude and scale of the challenge compared to the time remaining demands that we not wait any longer for these figures before we begin to take action. The only immediate and realistic solution is to take action based on the costs we can reasonably forecast and the resources are available; and

WHEREAS the City of Brantford has experienced the social impacts and borne the financial costs of severe flooding events in 2017 and 2018 due to more intense storms and greater volatility in local climate patterns; and

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WHEREAS the City of Brantford joins with 466 other Canadian municipalities, the Government of Canada and more than 650 other governments around the world in recognizing climate change as a clear and present danger to our community and the existential imperative to begin the transition to an ecologically, socially and economically regenerative economy;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT the City of Brantford DECLARES that a climate emergency threatens our city, province, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world; and
- B. THAT the City of Brantford further DECLARES its commitment, in principle, to becoming net carbon neutral by 2050; and
- C. THAT the City of Brantford COMMITS to maximum transparency with the residents, businesses, community organizations, and other partners in the climate action mobilization; and
- D. THAT the City of Brantford COMMITS to a citywide climate emergency mobilization effort to adapt to current climate change impacts and mitigate future climate change; and
- E. THAT the City of Brantford ADOPT a carbon reduction strategy target which would reasonably and effectively lead the city to becoming net carbon neutral by 2050; and
- F. THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to develop a carbon reduction strategy in collaboration with the Environmental and Sustainability Policy Advisory Committee, to be provided to Council by August 2020 that details the following:
 - i. A process to ensure that by August 1, 2021, every matter coming before City Council will quantify and report its impact relative to the climate emergency and Brantford's carbon reduction strategy; and
 - ii. A public reporting framework regarding the climate emergency that includes quarterly updates on the impact of municipal actions and decisions on Brantford's carbon reduction strategy; and
 - iii. A communications and engagement plan to educate Brantford residents about the climate emergency, the carbon reduction strategy, and the immediate need to mobilize at the local, provincial, national, and global levels; and
 - iv. Methodology and tools that will be used quantify and report the carbon impact of municipal actions and decisions; and
 - v. The resources required to quantify and report on the carbon impact of each municipal action and decision; and
 - vi. The resources required to implement the community-wide communications and engagement plan.