

Excerpt from Township of King Council agenda for July 8, 2019

8.1.

At the Council Meeting of June 24, 2019, Mayor Pellegrini put forward a Notice of Motion, seconded by Councillor Schaefer, Re: Resolution, Declaring a Climate Emergency. The following Motion is included for consideration:

RE: RESOLUTION, DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

WHEREAS Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on October 8, 2018 has urged the world to reduce the level of Green House Gas (GHG) emissions by 45% before 2030 as compared to 2010 to ensure that there is not more than a 1.5 degree increase in global average temperatures above pre-industrial levels and to reach net zero by 2050;

WHEREAS there is a need for urgent and transformative action to reduce GHG to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees to avoid catastrophic climate change;

WHEREAS climate change is currently responsible for billions of dollars in property damage worldwide, negatively affecting local and international economies;

WHEREAS climate change is threatening human civilization through rising sea levels, poor air quality, intense wild fires, heat events, unpredictable droughts and heavy rains;

WHEREAS research shows that the Great Lakes region is warming faster including southern Canada and the physical behaviour of the Great Lakes themselves, as the air warms, will hold more moisture, which will bring heavier winter snowstorms and spring rains – with more flooding in vulnerable areas;

WHEREAS climate change brings a higher risk of extreme and disaster level weather such as tornadoes, windstorms, and ice storms as well as creating rapidly evolving weather patterns making planning for disaster response a more complex exercise than before requiring provision of more extensive resources than in the past;

WHEREAS front line communities, those that have been affected by systemic vulnerabilities and inequities, are often at greater risk from the impacts of climate change and often have the fewest resources to respond and adapt;

WHEREAS climate change will impact human health through increased injury and death from extreme weather and temperature events and

increased rates of vector-borne diseases from a climate more favourable to vectors;

WHEREAS climate change contributes to poor air quality that will exacerbate respiratory and cardiovascular disease, and increased rates of illness through food and water contamination;

WHEREAS these health impacts from climate change will worsen health inequities by disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups such as seniors, children, those experiencing social or economic isolation, and those with chronic health conditions or disabilities or both:

WHEREAS all of the cities which have declared climate change a state of emergency, have established a goal of reducing Green House Gasses by 80 per cent by 2050, per the Paris Accord;

WHEREAS at least 35 Canadian municipalities have declared a "climate emergency" – in Ontario these include Ottawa, Hamilton, Kingston, London, Burlington, St. Catherine's, Halton Hills, Sudbury, Vaughan, and Prince Edward County;

WHEREAS hundreds of local governments around the world have recognized the emergency that climate change represents and have accelerated their own actions, and call on provincial, state and national governments to strengthen action on climate change;

WHEREAS the solutions for reducing GHG provides other positive impacts on health, social inequity and economy;

WHEREAS the Township of King recognizes that climate action also represents an opportunity for economic growth, stimulation in the low-carbon economy, and cost benefits for all who consume energy;

WHEREAS the draft Official Plan Review makes reference to Climate Change Adaption and Resilience Framework;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Township of King officially **DECLARE A CLIMATE EMERGENCY** for the purpose of naming and deepening our commitment to the protection of our economy, environment and community from the impacts of climate change;

2. The Township of King officially **DECLARE A CLIMATE EMERGENCY** for the purpose of expressing our commitment to reduce emissions across the whole Township, including both the emitters within the Township's control and all those who consider King to be their community such that the whole community can benefit from the ancillary opportunities such as economic

growth, stimulation in the low carbon economy, and cost savings which are created by reducing emissions.

3. That in response to this declaration, Council directs staff to:

i. Ensure that the Township of King's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan is utilized as a platform for public engagement and community collaboration to respond to this emergency during the Refresh of the Sustainability Plan which is currently underway;

ii. Proactively engage staff to reach near and long term GHG reduction targets as outlined in the Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan Update and present additional opportunities relating to increased GHG and energy reductions to Council for consideration as they arise;

iii. Staff begins the process of creating a Climate Action Plan for the Township of King, focused on mitigation and adaptation at the community level;

iv. Evaluate joining the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy or other forums and bring forward a staff report to Council with more information in 2020.