

MOTION

4. Climate Action Costs and Benefits (Members' Motion B4)

At the Council meeting on February 14, 2023, Council referred the following motion to the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities meeting on February 15, 2023, in order to hear from speakers, followed by debate and decision.

MOVED by Councillor Carr

WHEREAS

1. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities estimates that local governments across Canada need \$5.3 billion each year in order to prepare their infrastructure and systems to avoid massive costs due to climate change. The City of Vancouver builds, owns and maintains a wide range of public infrastructure from roads to storm drains and sewers, to sidewalks and sea walls, to green infrastructure, parks and our tree canopy, that are vulnerable to our changing climate (see: Federation of Canadian Municipalities and Insurance Bureau of Canada's 2020 report *Investing in Canada's Future: The Cost of Climate Adaptation at the Local Level* <http://assets.ibc.ca/Documents/Disaster/The-Cost-of-Climate-Adaptation-Report-EN.pdf>);
2. The City of Vancouver and its residents have recently experienced severe health impacts including loss of life, and financial losses resulting from climate change-related wildfire smoke, heat dome, extreme storms and other climate events made more extreme and frequent by accelerating climate change. Many of these negative impacts are reduced by investments in climate-resilient infrastructure including retrofitting public buildings as safe places with clean air, heating and cooling where people can retreat to in extreme weather events;
3. Vancouver City Council and the public do not have a detailed understanding of the full range and magnitude of costs experienced to date and likely to be experienced by the City of Vancouver to mitigate and adapt to climate change, notwithstanding some past cost estimates provided by city staff including for sea level rise (estimated in 2018 at \$1 billion for a projected sea level rise of 1 meter by 2100 – see <https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/vancouver-protect-rise-sea-level-2018>) and an estimate in 2022 that the city is spending about \$50 million a year on climate-related adaptation and \$65 million a year on climate mitigation, plus climate-action-related administration costs of \$40 million;
4. Despite Vancouver's 1990 *Clouds of Change* report recommending reducing the city and region's Greenhouse Gases (GhGs) by 20 percent by 2005, its 2010 *Greenest City Action Plan* goal to reduce Vancouver's GhGs by 33 percent by 2020, and its 2020 *Climate Emergency Action Plan* (CEAP) goal to reduce GhGs by 50 percent by 2030 and to be carbon neutral before 2050, the city has only reduced its GhGs by an estimated 10 to 15 percent over 2007 levels;

5. Ambitious goals, such as reducing Vancouver's GhGs by 50 percent by 2030, are rarely achieved unless there is a solid plan with specific actions, sufficient resources, regular assessment of the impact of each action and progress towards achieving the goal, and quick course corrections when progress is lagging. Although City Council receives highlights and update reports on CEAP, it does not yet receive comprehensive and detailed costs and benefits of all the City's GhG-reducing (mitigation) actions, nor of the projects to repair climate-caused damage to infrastructure and other adaptation measures that increase resilience to climate change impacts, including for vulnerable and at-risk populations;
6. As noted by the Canadian Climate Institute, investments in both mitigation and adaptation can help reduce the costs of climate change, by as much as 50 percent each (and 75 percent in total if both occur). Understanding the benefits, as well as the costs, of climate mitigation and adaptation could assist Council in its financial, infrastructure, emergency management and other planning, and the public in understanding the need to prepare for climate change impacts; (see: Climate Change Institute. Damage Control: Reducing the Costs of Climate Impacts in Canada <https://climateinstitute.ca/reports/damage-control/>;
7. Public reporting on the costs and benefits of city spending on climate mitigation and adaptation provides transparency and accountability to the general public and taxpayers, and compelling information for senior governments and other funders regarding the urgent need to invest in the City's climate actions;
8. Given the indisputable scientific evidence of accelerating climate change, it is essential that the City of Vancouver invest in measures that will enable us to meet our climate emergency goals to rapidly reduce the City of Vancouver's GHGs, increase our city's resilience as well as repair climate-related damage to our infrastructure.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT City Council direct staff to:

- A. Prepare an overview to help inform Council's decision-making on the City of Vancouver's 2023 Operating Budget on how much of the operating budget is directly related to climate action, what that funding is used for, and how it benefits the City and residents, including positive impacts on health and air quality and helping avoid or reduce future costs of coping with climate impacts.
- B. Report back by the end of 2023 and thereafter on an annual basis to update Council with a "carbon budget" that more thoroughly presents the current and anticipated costs and benefits of the city's climate emergency action regarding:
 - i. additional repair, replacement or increase of city-owned infrastructure necessitated by the impacts of climate change (i.e.,

beyond the costs of meeting the needs of new development and scheduled infrastructure maintenance and replacement related to regular use, wear and tear);

- ii. likely future climate impacts on Vancouver should the City not take appropriate climate adaptation measures;
- iii. planned or proposed adaptation or resilience measures required to prepare for future climate impacts, and the extent to which those measures are likely to reduce the costs in B.i and/or B.ii;
- iv. the results of mitigation measures in terms of actual and expected direct GHG reductions and whether the measures put the City on track to achieve its climate goals;
- v. the social and economic benefits of the City's climate emergency actions, including for the most vulnerable people in our city;

FURTHER THAT to include in the annual reports recommendations on how to maximize the positive benefits to the City of climate action, including how to better avoid climate costs and minimize the negative impacts of our changing climate.

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