

COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

4. Working with Youth Climate Corps Vancouver

Submitted by: Councillor Carr

WHEREAS

1. Despite climate change accelerating far faster than scientists predicted, with increasingly devastating impacts including this year's extreme heat, droughts, storms and fires, Canadian governments at all levels have failed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with their pledges;
2. The City of Vancouver pledged to reduce our GHG emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050, but have so far only reduced our emissions by 10%;
3. Youth are particularly impacted by an increasingly uncertain and frightening future, leading to extreme anxiety, exacerbated by feelings that government response is not commensurate with the climate emergency. A recent city council report noted that 51% of youth experience eco-anxiety. A 2021 survey of 10,000 youth reveals that 60% of youth are very or exceedingly worried about the climate crisis and 78% view their future as frightening ¹;
4. In 2020 youth established Youth Climate Corps BC to organize and advance opportunities to be positively engaged in work to mitigate climate change. Their first programs with the municipalities of Nelson and Kamloops included delivering door-to-door public education about rebates and other climate programs, developing retrofit plans for building owners, hands-on work in home energy retrofits including improving insulation and installing heat pumps and solar panels, wildfire mitigation, and decreasing organic waste ²;
5. In September of 2023, the Biden-Harris Administration in the USA launched a Climate Corps to train young people in clean energy, conservation, and climate resilience skills, create good-paying jobs and tackle the climate crisis, benefiting local communities ³;
6. In Canada, since the spring of 2023, the David Suzuki Institute has been helping coordinate efforts to establish a Youth Climate Corps Canada that would offer training and employment for youth in work that would both help achieve climate mitigation and resilience as well as alleviate the anxiety and helplessness many youth feel in the face of accelerating climate change⁴.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

A. THAT Council direct staff to:

- a. Identify projects related to Vancouver's Climate Emergency Action Plan where the city can work with Youth Climate Corps Vancouver on projects that educate and engage the public in both climate mitigation and resilience that could, for example, include:
 - i. Home and building climate-smart retrofit programs, including green roofs and production of renewable energy;
 - ii. Increasing and maintaining Vancouver's tree canopy (e.g., an "adopt a street tree" similar to "adopt a catch basin") and neighbourhood green streets;
 - iii. Reducing food waste;
- b. Report back to Council by the end of Q1 2024 with some potential projects including funding sources.

B. THAT the Mayor, on behalf of Council, write to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Chrystia Freeland, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth of Canada Marci Ian and Minister for Environment and Climate Change Steven Guilbeault, expressing Council's support for the federal government creating a national Youth Climate Corps that would benefit local communities.

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¹ [The Most Significant Mental Health Impacts Affecting Local Youth Due to the Climate Crisis A Study of Selkirk College Students.pdf](#)

² [Partnership package 2023.pdf](#)

³ [American Climate Corps Will Put Thousands To Work Building A Stronger U.S. \(forbes.com\)](#)

⁴ [Canada Needs a Youth Climate Corps, and More | The Tyee](#)