

December 1, 2019

To: Committee of the Whole, City of Burlington  
Re: Climate Action Plan for Burlington,  
Report CW-20-19

Mayor Meed Ward, Council,

I applaud Council's decision to declare a 'Climate Emergency' earlier this year. I consider the climate crisis to be the defining issue of our times and generation.

I am heartened when I see the City of Burlington incorporate new green elements in City operations such as the new Skyway Community Centre and the City View park infrastructure. Several items noted in the Corporate Energy and Emissions Management Plan: 2019-2024 are encouraging and should be shared more widely with the public. Talk at Council and Committee meetings of the electrification of fleet and buses, actions to increase energy efficiency, and the request for an environmental impact statement to accompany each and every staff report, I believe, are steps in the right direction.

However, after reviewing the proposed 'City of Burlington Climate Action Plan', I am dismayed if not downright discouraged. I question the methodology of this report. I see little in the way of substantial proof or documentation of the data provided. I read wishful thinking in projections and proposals. I cannot accept the numbers or expectations presented. And I see numerous examples of assumptions and vague language that cannot be verified or acted upon.

I feel that this report has no serious suggestions, recommendations or measureable outcomes – merely aspirations. We need actionable items on the part of the City. We need incentives and assistance for the general public to act beyond 'business as usual' if we expect home retrofits, solar panel installations, increased transit usage and renewable energy job creation. We need the City of Burlington to lead by example, push the boundaries of what a City can do, and learn from other municipalities what can be done and what is being done.

I strongly recommend that Council send this report back to staff and/or consultants to create a viable document with attainable goals and realistic expectations, actionable items and specific timelines. We need a Plan that the entire community can embrace and participate in.

Sincerely,  
Lawson Hunter

## What can a City do to address the Climate Crisis?

### COMMUNITY

1. Dry clothes naturally
2. Replace showerhead
3. Replace faucet aerators
4. Cut your lawn with solar or push mower
5. Wash clothes in cold water
6. Leave grass clippings on lawn
7. Drive better/smarter
8. Use toaster oven for small meals
9. Set house thermostat lower
10. Open and close blinds seasonally
11. Use fans instead of air conditioning
12. Start composting
13. Weatherproof your home
14. Retrofit drain with DWHR unit
15. Car share
16. Purchase a tankless water heater
17. Switch to LED lightbulbs
18. Insulate basement
19. Purchase efficient washer/dryer
20. Replace stove with induction top
21. Vacation locally instead of abroad
22. Commute sustainably year-round
23. Insulate walls
24. Purchase electric vehicle
25. Install hi-efficiency furnace
26. Work and play close to home
27. Buy green power
28. Purchase solar panels for home
29. Upgrade roof insulation
30. Retrofit building envelope
31. Install solar panels on roofs
32. Use materials with recycled content

### MUNICIPALITY - AIR

33. Ban gas-powered leaf blowers and hedge trimmers
34. Strictly enforce Idling by-law
35. Additional monitoring and online listings of air quality in various city areas
36. Purchase carbon offsets
37. Establish online registry of community activities that reduce emissions
38. Discourage the establishment of new drive-thru facilities
39. Use low VOC (volatile organic compound) solvents and paint (& COMMUNITY)
40. Keep lawn mowers, off-road vehicles well maintained (& COMMUNITY)

## **MUNICIPALITY – BUILDING/LAND USE**

41. Insist on higher, 'greener' standards on new building construction
42. Create sustainable, 'green' roofs on buildings
43. Create 'green' roofs on bus shelters
44. Change zoning to encourage 2<sup>nd</sup> units, 'granny-flats', rental units
45. Change zoning to allow alley houses and tiny houses
46. Reward sustainable building demolition/ re-use of materials
47. Widen sidewalks to encourage walkability
48. Test and review emissions after building/construction completion
49. Provide up-to-date floodplain maps to residents
50. Develop policy that reflects 'smart growth' principles
51. Set and ensure reasonable development intensification rates
52. Communicate development plans with neighbourhood residents before construction

## **MUNICIPALITY - ENERGY**

53. Encourage 'distributed energy' throughout the city
54. Install motion sensors on indoor lights in all municipal buildings
55. Allow connections to power grid to avoid use of generators (food trucks, events)
56. Analysis of existing City operations to determine maximum energy efficiency/replacement
57. Encourage net-metering
58. Pursue opportunities for community-based power generation

## **MUNICIPALITY - FOOD**

59. Build (and encourage) more Community Gardens
60. Identify opportunities to reduce food waste from restaurants/stores/markets
61. Promotion of local food sources
62. Provide community education on nutrition and food waste
63. Encourage greater participation in Community Shared Agriculture (CSA)

## **MUNICIPALITY – NATURAL HERITAGE/BIODIVERSITY**

64. Plant native trees and shrubs
65. Give away trees to residences
66. Convert vacant land into parks
67. Expand tree pits for city trees to improve drought and pest tolerance
68. Initiate Top-Soil protection by-law (prevent soil removal)
69. Maintain, or increase, biodiversity throughout neighbourhoods
70. Update City's urban tree policy
71. Initiate community and/or employee based tree planting projects
72. Plant native trees and shrubs on City property

## **MUNICIPALITY – TRANSPORTATION**

73. Create car-free zones
74. Transition buses to all-electric

75. Install segregated bicycle lanes to encourage bike riders
76. Free public transit for all
77. Electrify City fleet
78. Safe bus shelters with emergency communications
79. Increase and connect cycle lanes
80. Segregated bike lanes
81. Add charging systems for vehicles and e-bikes
82. Undertake gap analysis to determine efficiency of modal connections
83. Toll roads
84. Parking zones for car-share vehicles
85. Limit on-street parking to one hour
86. Insist that all new multi-residential buildings supply charging stations for vehicles
87. Encourage/Incentivize City staff to use public transit, car pooling

#### **MUNICIPALITY - WASTE**

88. Ban single-use plastics and plastic bags
89. Bus school-age children to the landfill site to witness the volume of waste
90. Support re-use centres and repair cafes
91. Increase proportion of re-cycled aggregates in road construction

#### **MUNICIPALITY - WATER**

92. Recycle 'grey-water' from municipal and Parks & Recreation facilities
93. Regulate alternate water days year-round
94. Offer rebates/incentives to households installing water-saving features
95. Separate all sewer and waste water mains
96. 'Daylight' buried creeks and streams
97. Reduce road salt usage

#### **MUNICIPALITY - OTHER**

98. Establish collective purchases of efficient vehicles/equipment with Regional municipalities
99. Support cities in developing countries to grow without relying on fossil fuels
100. Establish regular and ongoing meetings with senior levels of government to align policies
101. Offer bursaries to students taking environmental courses
102. Provide 'clean rooms' for the public during days of poor air quality
103. Provide temporary cooling measures and facilities accessible to those living in older buildings