

## **A Delegation to Burlington City Council On The Burlington Climate Action Plan March 9, 2020**

Good evening Mayor, City Councillors, and City Staff. My name is Roman Talkowski and I am pleased to delegate on behalf of HACEN which stands for Halton Action for Climate Emergency Now. Very briefly, HACEN is a non-partisan group with members from The Council of Canadians, GASP (Grandmothers and Grand Others Acting to Save the Planet) and concerned residents. We are also working with other Halton groups such as Sustainable Milton, The Canadian Federation of University Women, Citizens Climate Lobby Canada, the Retired Teachers of Ontario and Climate Reality among others, formulating collective Climate Action strategies.

Our objective is to raise awareness on the severity and urgency of the Global Climate crisis by lobbying municipal governments in Halton as well as our provincial and federal governments to create enabling legislation and programs to effectively tackle Climate Change.

HACEN applauds Burlington's goal to reduce community emissions by 50% below 2016 levels by 2030 and to become carbon neutral by 2050. You are following the science. We applaud the milestone targets and the detail that has been added to the February version of this plan that was not in the previous version. For the added effort that was required to produce this document, along with the new input on the Key Programs, and the clarifying content of Appendix C, we thank the contributors and particularly Lynn Robichaud and her team.

We like the monitoring and evaluation schedule, especially that Burlington's energy and GHG emissions profile will be updated every 2 years (page 76) and that Burlington will publish an annual indicator report which will let the community and stakeholders know where we stand. We also agree that the top three priority areas should be the Deep Energy Retrofits, Renewable Energy Co-operatives and the Electric Mobility Program.

I will confine most of my comments to these three high priority programs on which we have a few questions. It appears that each program has a 3 year study and planning phase, from 2020-2022, where task forces, experts and round tables are assembled. As much as we agree on good planning, apart from expanding the EV charging stations program, it doesn't appear that anything concrete to reduce carbon gets started until 2023. Is this correct - can someone please add additional detail to this?

For, if this is correct, the Deep Energy Retrofit Program, which calls for 39,841 dwellings to be retrofitted by 2025 (page 63), appears unrealistic if started in 2023. The same generally goes for the 2025 goals of The Renewable Energy Cooperative and the Electric Mobility program. If correct, the planning and task force phase lasting until the end of 2022 is way too slow.

We would like clarification on the timelines of the study portion versus the implementation portion. On this point, HACEN is calling for a more aggressive approach where the study and planning phase is sped up

and that retrofitting starts in mid-2021 at the latest. Same guideline principal applies for the other two programs.

This brings me to our next point, which is critical. Each of these three programs requires a great deal of detailed planning, research, expertise and a very solid roll-out and implementation schedule. This requires additional staffing and funding. Can the City please provide a report on the size of the budget and other resources that it plans to dedicate exclusively to the community part of the Burlington CAP for 2020, 21, and 22, as distinct from the Corporate Plan. Without adequate funding, community carbon reductions will not occur as per the plan.

We are asking for this information because the United Nations (Environment Programme's) 2019 Emissions Gap Report just reminded us that "there is no sign of GHG emissions peaking in the next few years". Every year of postponed GHG peaking means that deeper and faster cuts will be required to achieve the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement. The report (Dec 11, 2019) goes on to say that global GHG emissions must fall 7.6% each year from 2020-2030. Every month we delay delivering carbon reductions puts a heavier burden on the remainder of the reduction plan. The UN further reminds us that because of our past underperformance, the carbon budget for the 1.5C goal will be exhausted before 2030.

HACEN also believes that community buy-in is necessary to make this plan a success, so extensive and effective community messaging is important. I'll never forget the Participaction ad that said that the average 60 year old Swede is fitter than the average 30 year old

Canadian. That had impact because it was relatable to your quality of life and your lifespan. We urge a highly visible public messaging and advertising outreach to educate and encourage citizen buy-in to the 3 major programs. This can even be couched in economic terms showing that the financial returns make this an attractive and profitable investment, as well as a boon to you and your children's health and quality of life.

Finally, this Climate Action Plan exceeds Council's 4 year mandate. The plan must continue to operate until we reach our goal of carbon neutrality in 2050. The fruits of the Burlington Climate Action Plan is a birth-right and endowment to future generations. So how do we ensure its life beyond the next election, if heaven forbid, you are not re-elected? The answer, is to dig the foundations of this plan deeply and widely, so that it will be difficult to stop. Please speed up the timelines and carbon reducing action items and have them well entrenched and well underway by 2022. Speed up involvement by outside interest groups so that the roots of this plan extend well beyond whoever occupies City Hall so that the plan is inextricably woven through the fabric of the entire community.... because this plan must succeed and must meet its targets on time.

Thank you

Roman Talkowski  
on behalf of HACEN  
March 9, 2020