CITY OF Burlington . . . Memo

**To:** **Mayor and Members of Burlington City Council**

**From:** **Councillor Rory Nisan**
**Councillor Paul Sharman**

**Date:** **November 13, 2020**

**Re:** **Final City of Burlington Resolution Calling for Gas-Fired Electricity Generation Phase-Out**

---

The Ontario Clean Air Alliance has requested the support of municipalities to adopt the following resolution in objection to the Government of Ontario's plan to increase the use of gas-fired electricity generating plants. Some of the background below has been provided by the organization.

Background

The Government of Ontario is planning to ramp up greenhouse gas emissions from Ontario's gas-fired power plants by more than 300% by 2025 and by more than 400% by 2040 to replace the output of the Pickering Nuclear Station (scheduled to close in 2024). This plan will eliminate more than one-third of the greenhouse gas reductions Ontario achieved by phasing out its coal-fired power plants.

To support this significant increase in fossil fuel electricity and greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution, the provincial government recently purchased three gas plants at a cost of $2.8 billion.

Greenhouse gas pollution is causing temperatures in Canada to rise at more than double the rate of the rest of the world and more than triple in northern Canada, causing adverse impacts. The citizens of the City of Burlington will not be immune to adverse climate impacts including warmer (more heat waves), wetter (especially in spring and winter), and unpredictable weather (increased wind gusts, freezing rain, and intense and extreme rain events).

The City of Burlington has declared a climate emergency and has committed city operations to be net carbon neutral by 2040 through actions in its corporate energy and emissions management plan. We have set a target for the community to be net carbon neutral by 2050 in the climate action plan. Burlington has joined in partnership with the City of Hamilton and Centre for Climate Change Management at Mohawk College to support the Bay Area Climate Change Council to help accelerate climate action in both communities.

The City of Burlington is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through the development of an integrated mobility plan to support active and sustainable transportation options, update our sustainable development and building guidelines and implement a home energy efficiency retrofit program to improve building efficiency, support EV adoptions through EV charging stations and expand the use of renewable energy.

Municipalities are at the front lines of taking action on climate change in Canada. The planned increase in GHG pollution will reduce the effectiveness of communities such as Burlington taking action on climate change. It will decrease the effectiveness of electrification programs (deep building retrofits, EV programs) due to increased GHGs associated with electricity, discourage development of distributed renewable energy initiatives, delay municipal transition to the clean economy of the future, and prevent Ontario from meeting its GHG reduction commitment.

Ontario can phase-out its gas-fired power plants by 2030 through an integrated combination of energy efficiency investments, wind and solar energy and Quebec water power. The costs of the alternatives to gas-fired generation are all less than the price Ontario Power Generation's current price per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for power from nuclear plants (9.5 cents per kWh).

Ontario can increase its investments in quick-to-deploy and low-cost energy efficiency programs. Ontario can cost-effectively maximize its energy efficiency efforts by paying up to the same price for energy efficiency measures as it is currently paying for power from nuclear plants.

Ontario can become a leader in developing increasingly low-cost renewable energy resources rather than investing in high-cost nuclear re-builds. Ontario should support renewable energy projects that have costs that are below what we are paying for nuclear power and work with communities to make the most of these economic opportunities.

Quebec has offered Ontario low-cost 24/7 power from its massive water power system at less than half the cost of the planned re-buildings of the aging Darlington and Bruce Nuclear Stations.

In addition, Quebec's system of hydro-electric reservoirs can be used like a giant battery to provide load balancing/back-up for Ontario's intermittent sources of renewable energy.

Ontario can benefit from making long-term electricity deals with its green energy-rich neighbour.

The phase-out of Ontario's gas-fired power plants will help the City of Burlington and the Province of Ontario to achieve their greenhouse gas pollution reduction goals.

Municipal Resolution

WHEREAS the Government of Ontario is planning to increase electricity generation and greenhouse gas pollution from Ontario's gas-fired power plants by more than 300% by 2025 and by more than 400% by 2040, reversing more than a third of the greenhouse gas pollution reductions achieved by phasing out our coal-fired power plants;

AND WHEREAS greenhouse gas pollution is causing temperatures in Canada to rise at more than double the rate of the rest of the world, causing impacts to municipal operations and affecting residents of the City of Burlington;

AND WHEREAS the City of Burlington has declared a climate emergency and is taking measures to mitigate and adapt to the climate impacts caused by increasing greenhouse gas pollution;

AND WHEREAS there are feasible, cost-effective alternatives to increasing gas-fired electricity generation without increasing greenhouse gas pollution at costs well below the current price for Ontario's nuclear energy (9.5 cents/kWh), including:

- energy efficiency investments;
- low-cost, distributed, renewable energy, providing employment in Ontario communities and restoring our leadership in this industry;
- the purchase of low-cost power offered by the Province of Quebec from its existing hydroelectric generating stations; and
- using Quebec's system of reservoirs like a giant battery to back-up made-in-Ontario renewable power, eliminating the need to use gas-fired power plants for this purpose;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Burlington requests the Government of Ontario to place an interim cap of 2.5 megatonnes per year on greenhouse gas pollution from Ontario's gas-fired power plants and develop and implement a plan to address future energy needs through investing in renewable energy and purchasing low-cost hydro-electric power from the Province of Quebec, making gas-fired electricity generation no longer necessary and supporting its phase-out by 2030 to help Ontario and the City of Burlington meet their climate targets.**

**AND BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution be sent to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, all local MPPs, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and copied to the Region of Halton and local municipalities of Oakville, Milton and Halton Hills.**

Regards,

Councillor Rory Nisan, Ward 3 Councillor Paul Sharman, Ward 5