

2014 Air Quality and Climate Change Management Plan

- This is a really positive and hopeful step forward – I urge you to endorse this plan today
- Congratulations to all those involved in getting us this far
- I'm happy to be able to participate in this meeting today, but I'd like to point out that lots of people like myself who also feel as passionate as I do about our collective need to address climate change in Ottawa aren't able to step away from their jobs and commitments to come down here for 2 hours to voice their support
- This plan identifies 3 guiding principles:
- **Everyone has a responsibility to manage energy consumption and to mitigate risks**
 - This is absolutely true... but this is going to take a lot of work to change social norms – to change behaviours away from the status quo.
 - I work in tobacco control, and I recommend that you take notice of the amazing successes that we've collectively achieved over the years in denormalizing smoking and in changing social norms.
 - This can absolutely happen in the context of addressing climate change and energy consumption, but it will need a comprehensive approach that includes, among other things, strong policies/bylaws that combine carrots and sticks (incentives and enforcement measures), and public education.
 - I can't emphasize enough how important public education is. People need to know that the situation is urgent, and that they have a role to play
 - Climate change is such a huge problem that many of us just become paralyzed in its face and end up feeling that it's already too late, and that there's nothing we can do
 - People need hopeful messages, and concrete examples of things they can do
 - I saw the anti-idling bylaw mentioned a few times in this report. I personally have never seen a sign or read or heard a message about it, and I see a lot of idling around the city
 - Start there! The bylaw is already in place – tell people why, and what they can do!
 - Individually these things might not seem like a big deal, but collectively they will definitely make a positive difference
 - My neighbour runs a horrible 2-stroke lawnmower that leaves the air blue
 - **Operating a two-stroke gas-powered lawn mower for one hour can emit as much pollution as driving a car over 320 kilometres, according to Environment Canada and the U.S. EPA***
 - People don't know this!
- **Collaboration is needed amongst various levels of government, utilities, stakeholders, and the broader community to effect change**
 - This is also spot on
 - I strongly urge the City to get outside and go talk to people in the context of their daily lives... in addition to holding consultations and round tables during business hours, get out to farmer's markets, the Bluesfest, Dragon Boat festival, Tulip Festival... any one of the dozens of activities and events being held in Ottawa.
 - You'll get input from so many more people, and from all walks of life
 - Meet people where they are – they'll really appreciate it

- **Municipal leadership is needed**
 - Desperately!
 - Along with me, my friends, colleagues and family are so disturbed by the lack of leadership and action on climate change at the federal level (and that's putting it kindly)
 - We can't rely on the federal government on this issue... and despite the positive things that we've seen provincially to date, there's a real chance it could come unravelled depending on who wins the provincial election.
 - Real leadership, innovation and change needs to start here at the municipal level
 - ... and in fact, if I can again refer to my experiences in tobacco control, it's always been at the municipal level where real change begins
- In closing, I encourage the committee to endorse this plan, and to be bold – to be ambitious, because I think you'll find that most people in this city will support local action to address climate change
- **And remember, it all starts with public education! Thank you.**