

Delegation presentation - Jan 27 Budget Meeting

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Good morning Your worship, members of council, and city administrative staff. My name is Ali Tejani, and I, along with my colleague Tasha Stansbury, am a student from the University of Windsor, Faculty of Law, and members of the Windsor Law Cities and Climate Action Forum. We are here to speak about the City of Windsor's budget and why it is necessary and timely to use a climate lens when deciding how best to allocate funds in 2020.

Viewing budget deliberations through a climate lens is critical in 2020. We know that globally and nationally we are not on track to meet international targets and national commitments to keep the warming of the earth's surface under 2.0 degrees above pre-industrial levels. And we know that globally cities are increasingly seen as key actors, controlling more than 60% of greenhouse gas emissions. We are constantly seeing the effects of inaction even in our own community through flooding and shoreline erosion. It is particularly important for council to use a climate lens in light of the climate emergency declaration passed unanimously by this council in November 2019. While we are aware that the 90 day report on implementation of the declaration is not due back until the middle of February, we cannot afford to wait until those reports are released before we start considering climate implications prominently within the budget.

To quote from the declaration, what is required are "robust and permanent changes in how the City and County conduct their business." The declaration goes on to say that responding to the climate emergency and reducing emissions "are deemed to be high priorities when considering budget direction and in all decisions of council." Read alongside this council's commitment in the 2017 Community Energy Plan to a target of a reduction in emissions of 40% in by 2041 (itself a very modest target) it is clear that the time to act is now.

The first fundamental issue is one of framing. The City of Windsor's budget hasn't been crafted as a climate budget, and we hope that this will be a future step. It is useful to look at other municipalities that have also begun to take steps in the right direction.

The City of Guelph, for example, has implemented an interactive alternative budgeting strategy tool at the consultation stage that allows community members to indicate what kind of initiatives they would be willing to pay additional taxes towards, allowing a view on what a climate-focussed budget might look like. Valérie Plante, the mayor of Montreal, said earlier this month that all of Montreal's municipal decisions need to be made through the lens of climate change. London had its budget meeting last Thursday, and there was a common refrain on the part of delegates to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and focus on environmental programs like green bins, river cleanup and easy access to transit.

Looking beyond Canada, we would also note that as part of the International Urban Cooperation project, Windsor has been paired for knowledge exchange with Vitoria-Gasteiz, a similarly-sized auto-manufacturing centre in Spain. Vitoria-Gasteiz has set aside 23% of its geographical area for conservation, is in the process of creating its own greenbelt, and has allocated 2.5 million euros per year for heavy developments in sustainable transportation like bike paths and pedestrian infrastructure. Importantly, while an auto town like Windsor, only 25% of trips within the city are in a car.

Windsor's information exchanging relationship with Vitoria-Gasteiz is ongoing, but as we have mentioned, Windsor should take bolder steps to make change now by looking to innovative ideas implemented by other cities.

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Looking at the 2020 budget through a climate lens, there are some successes. These include the hiring of a Community Energy Plan Project Administrator and an Active Transportation Coordinator. These experts will be crucial in the implementation of their respective initiatives. However these decisions will only have real impact if the recommendations and targets in the Plans they support are also supported and prioritized. There are significant investments in transit, which is to be commended. However the pace of spending, in particular on the capital side of things, is slower than the emergency demands. Far more funds should be allocated to cycling infrastructure by comparison with planned spending on roads. Climate change is included in only 3 items in the capital budget, and in 3 items in the recommended operational budget. A commitment should be made today that every decision that comes through council is looked at through a climate lens, as noted in the declaration.

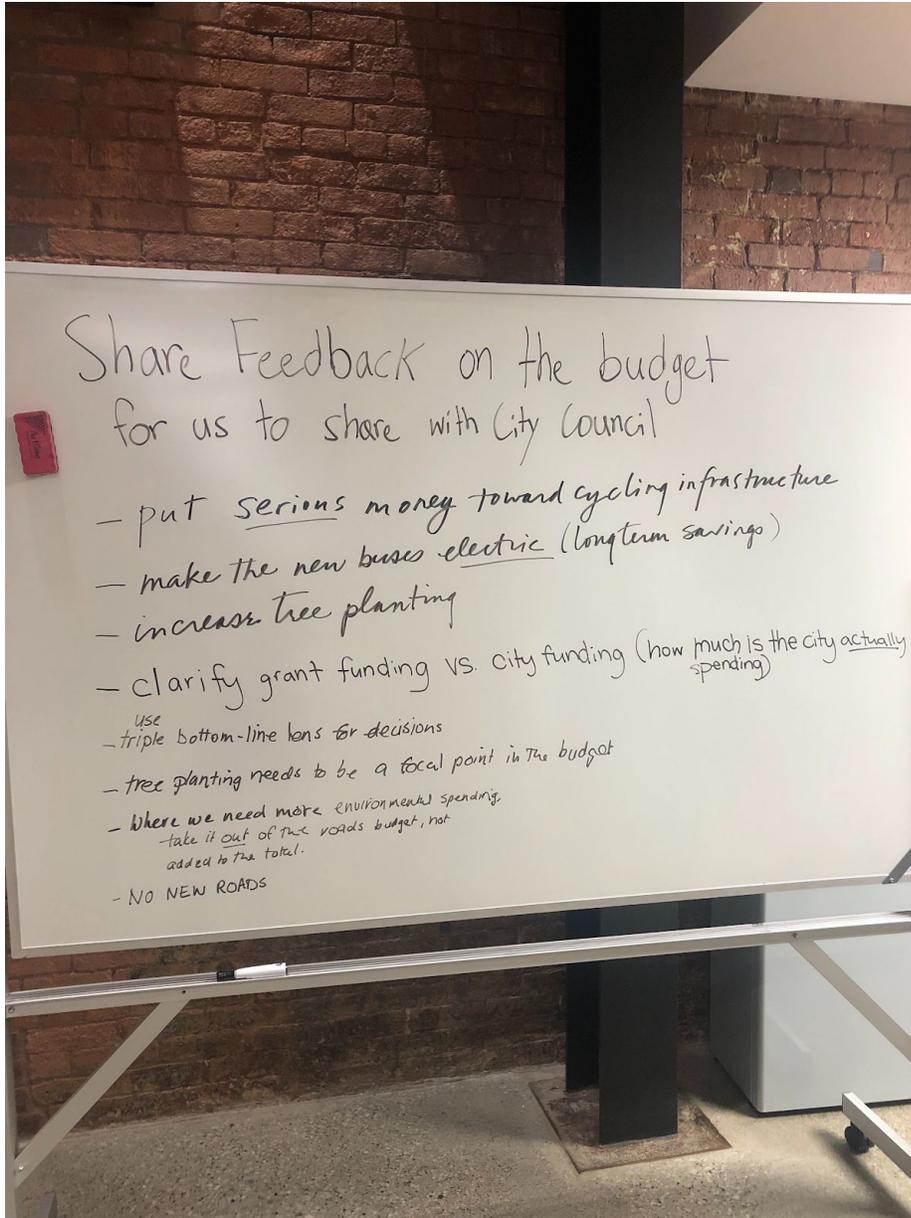
Last Thursday, the Cities and Climate Action Forum held our first Climate Cafe to discuss the issue of climate in the proposed budget. Local community members from our multigenerational audience were asked for feedback on what they would like to see in this budget. Your constituents wanted more discussion and action on cycling infrastructure, tree-planting, and electric public transport, as well as more transparency about whether projects were being funded by city dollars or from grants from federal initiatives like the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. On this last point, individuals also wanted us to highlight that green projects, including both climate change adaptation and climate change mitigation, are important initiatives that should be budgeted for regardless of whether grant funding is ultimately obtained.

Attendees also expressed that the implementation of a climate change lens should consider issues of poverty and maximizing well-being for vulnerable communities.

Windsor has recently won awards on its work in climate adaptation; it's time we also start winning on climate mitigation. Windsor can and should continue its positive efforts, through every decision it makes, to end its reliance on fossil fuels. This means making decisions to generously fund active transit and public transit and responsible land use planning (including

densification), to name a few. It won't be cheap but it will pay for itself over time in climate resilience and a bigger tax base.

We close by noting that from March 8-11 this year, Windsor will play host to 200 Ontario high school students attending our Cities and Climate Action Forum Youth Workshop on Local Climate Action. What better way to showcase the city to the generation leading the way on climate action, than to highlight the city of Windsor's leadership, imagination and courage on reducing greenhouse gases and slowing the rate of climate change? Where the city places money for the next year is a fundamental part of this. The decisions we make today will impact us, and future generations.



“Not constructed through the lens of climate change”

- pivotal point to make
- can also be instructive for the future
- science presented by Sarah necessitates using that lens. Do we know of other municipalities that have constructed their budget through the lens of climate change? (should also incorporate poverty and other ideas about how we're living, maximizing well-being)
- from a legal perspective, and from declaration of climate emergency, can you necessitate that that lens is taken?

- This is an emergency; community energy plan targets need to be before them again
- They committed in 2017 to a 40% reduction in community emissions by 2041 - incredibly modest target. Emissions rose last year
 - Some to be expected; change take time to reflect
 - Consider carefully - are you even getting to those targets?
 - Knowing what we know about the global targets, even those targets are insufficient

On January 23, we held our first Climate Cafe - we gave members of the public an opportunity to give feedback, here are some comments

E-Scooter Pilot Project

- Bike Windsor/Essex

Trees:

- Land use planning aspect
- Finite budget on tree planting, expand footprint of the city, now you've paved over what green was there AND now you have to plant trees to landscape new area
- Previous years had no trouble getting trees planted
 - Tree budget was redirected to new subdivisions
 - Every decision you make to expand is going to have an impact on some of these other areas
 - How much space are we trying to cover? Density question
- Bigger picture - we know we're in the process of awaiting full implementation of climate emergency declaration, pleased to support that with our research - in the meantime, this was a budget that was created without a climate lens
 - Here are some cities that are taking the lead
 - Montreal, Paris
 - <https://www.c40.org/>
 - David Miller
 - City of Windsor's Climate Emergency Declaration
 - www.tinyurl.com/WindsorCity18Nov2019 ; page 34
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- Going forward, we would urge city council to take a climate lens, as they committed to
 - Look at climate emergency declaration
 - Language said they would take climate into high consideration

- This morning our project was followed by International Urban Cooperation European Union https://iuc.eu/na/city-pairings/?c=search&pairing_id=yvcvqjbms
 - Windsor's twin city: Vitoria-Gasteiz
 - "The economies of both Windsor and Vitoria-Gasteiz are centred on the auto industry. Despite this, the compact city of Vitoria-Gasteiz is a leader in sustainable mobility. With less than 25 percent of daily trips being taken by car, Vitoria-Gasteiz is now updating their urban mobility plan to set even greater targets. Windsor is embarking on their first plan, hoping to learn from Vitoria's successes. Both cities are exchanging knowledge on how they engage their constituencies in mobility planning, energy planning and revitalisation initiatives."
 - Focusing on expanding bike paths & pedestrian paths
 - "Bicycle Cities" in the EU
- Commitments: Council shouldn't sit on their hands until the report comes out in February, approve a budget that ties our hands until next year
- Look into Active Transportation Plan (passed, but no mention of it in budget?)
- Other things "in the budget" with \$0 next to it
- Link to budget: <https://www.citywindsor.ca/cityhall/Budget/Pages/Budget.aspx>
- We spend all this money on reports - we know what the plans are, we know what the targets are, we make all these external connections but we're not doing the real work of mitigation - what are we waiting for?

<https://www.vitoria-gasteiz.org/we001/was/we001Action.do?idioma=es&accionGSA=buscarPrimeraVez&accionWe001=buscarWe001Google&accion=buscar&tipoArchivo=&termino=el+plano+del+mobilidad+urbano>

- Look at Detroit? (potential comparison for biking)

Distinguish between mitigation and adaptation throughout

- Climate emergency declaration commitment re: budget planning
 - Waiting for the report to come out before making budget commitments to mitigate climate change essentially ties our hands for another year - we should continue Windsor's positive work, if necessary looking to other cities as a guide
 - Windsor has recently won awards on their work in climate adaptation; it's time we start leading/winning awards for climate mitigation
- Comparison to Vitoria-Gasetiz/Sudbury, Montreal, Paris, Victoria

- Although this budget hasn't been crafted as a climate budget, we hope that will be a future step, but we should be making the commitment today that every decision that comes through council is looked at through a climate lens
- Active Transportation Plan/Community Energy plan
 - We have plans, we've spent the money on the reports, what's happening?
 - Refer to targets
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- Climate cafe, concerns brought up
- Very well attended first climate cafe, we asked constituents for their feedback, if you're worried about reflecting the will of people
 - 77% of young people want to live in a city that's doing climate action
 - Your own constituents are telling us they want climate action, here are some of the comments we heard from the multigenerational audience we had at our climate cafe
- Closing statement: where you place your money for the next year is the most fundamental decision
 - The decisions we make today will have impact on future generations
 - A decision not to act will also have an impact

