



Cities Race to Zero - Draft Council Resolution

BACKGROUND

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) most recent report indicates that global warming and the melting of the arctic ice caps are happening at a faster rate than previously anticipated. The IPCC report also calls upon global nations to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, a goal set forth in the Paris Agreement. Science-based targets indicate that, globally, cities need to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and halve GHG emissions by 2030.

Guelph is facing significant financial losses due to the increased intensity of storms, flooding, freezing, and extreme heat linked to climate change. Our goal of Net Zero emissions by 2050, while commendable, is based on an end goal 30 years into the future. We need to be accountable at measured increments to reach a 50% reduction by 2030.

Race to Zero is a global campaign to rally leadership and support from businesses, cities, regions, and investors – ahead of COP26 in November 2021 – for a healthy, resilient, zero carbon recovery that prevents future threats, supports economic prosperity and innovation, and unlocks inclusive, sustainable growth. [More information about Race to Zero.](#)

Cities Race to Zero is a campaign – for cities by cities – to inspire commitments and action from our peers around the world and channel the best available tools and expertise to help us stay on track with the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement. The goal of Cities Race to Zero is to recruit 1,000 cities to the Race to Zero by COP26. Hundreds of cities world-wide have signed on as partners, including our neighbours Brampton, Toronto, and Hamilton.

2050 is Too Late is a collaborative campaign by fourteen Guelph organizations that are working to improve accountability and accelerate climate action. They reflect the fact that three-quarters of Guelph residents know that we must take concrete, credible and early action on the climate crisis.



RECOMMENDED MOTION

Moved by Councillor Gordon, seconded by Councillor Caron, be it resolved that:

1. The City of Guelph declares support for the Cities Race to Zero as part of the United Nation's Race to Zero campaign by joining hundreds of other cities in fighting climate change.
2. The City of Guelph pledges to the following commitments:
 - a) We reaffirm our acknowledgement of the global climate crisis.
 - b) We are committed to doing our part to keep global heating below the 1.5°Celsius goal of the Paris Agreement.
 - c) We are committed to putting inclusive climate action at the centre of all urban decision-making, including the City of Guelph Official Plan, to create thriving and equitable communities for everyone.
 - d) We are committed to including our partners – community organizations, businesses, school boards, public institutions, labour unions, financial institutions, Indigenous leaders, and the public – to join us in recognising the global climate crisis and help us deliver on science-based action to overcome it.
3. The City of Guelph pledges to reach (net)-zero in the 2040s or sooner, or by mid-century at the latest, in line with global efforts to limit warming to 1.5 degree Celsius.
4. The City of Guelph creates four-year interim climate change targets that fall within each city council's term of office. The first set of interim targets will be established by the second quarter of 2022.
5. The City of Guelph modify our 2030 target in order to achieve Guelph's fair share of the global 50% reduction in CO₂ identified in the IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°Celsius.

6. The City of Guelph plan at least one inclusive and equitable climate action as listed on www.citiesracetozero.org that will help to place our city on a resilient pathway consistent with the 1.5°Celsius objective of the Paris Agreement and begin implementation no later than the fourth quarter of 2022.
7. The City of Guelph report progress annually, for the entire City of Guelph (and continue reporting on the corporation) beginning no later than 2022.
8. The City of Guelph empower all city staff to bring their ideas forward to fight climate change, engage and train staff on best practices, and allocate funding to reach our approved goals.
9. The City of Guelph will offer regular consultation meetings with treaty partners and local indigenous elders to review climate initiatives.
10. That staff be directed to report back on the resources and possible funding strategies to meet new 'fair share' interim targets as determined by the climate target methodologies of the Cities Race to Zero, with an end target date of 2050 or sooner, for consideration prior to the 2023 budget.