

DRAFT RESOLUTION

Re: Council Climate Crisis Declaration

THAT Council declare a climate crisis.

BACKGROUND:

On April 3, 2023, Councillors Singh and Lovegrove indicated their intent to bring forward a resolution to address our global climate emergency.

1. In their April 3, 2023, report, staff observed that current Kelowna GHG emission targets are insufficient to achieve the IPCC 1.5 C pathway of a 45% reduction below 2010 levels by 2030 (net zero by 2050) and will need revisions to do so. The City has launched Phase 3 of our CRKS (public engagement) to ascertain specific climate actions to take on behalf of our community. When asked what the implications of a formal Council climate crisis would be, staff have repeatedly stated that current efforts underway will continue regardless; however, it is incumbent upon us, as the elected leaders of our community, to communicate clearly to the residents of Kelowna the importance of urgent action on a government and community-wide basis in the face of the climate crisis that we all face.
2. Municipalities are understood to produce and/or have regulatory jurisdiction over approximately 50% of carbon emissions in Canada and as such have a responsibility to take actions within their direct control, influence, and advocacy to enable residents, institutions, and businesses to reduce their carbon footprint in support of collective global climate action.
3. Despite adopted policies and actions by the city, Kelowna is not yet meeting its GHG reduction targets, and, experiencing instead *increasing* greenhouse gas emissions. The impacts of global climate breakdown have already resulted in local states of emergency due to wildfire, extreme heat, and flooding over four of the past five years, having direct impacts on Kelowna's economy, city budgets, health, security, quality of life, and ecosystems. Flooding and fires have resulted in property damage and damage to infrastructure affecting supply chains, and food security. Poor air quality and extreme heat have harmed our vulnerable populations, keeping people inside, grounding planes, deterring tourists, and negatively impacting agriculture production. Climate related weather events continue to become more extreme and more frequent with 2023 being the worst year on record for forest fires in BC and nationally.

As such, as recommended by the UN IPCC AR6 (see hyperlink below), the City of Kelowna must declare a Climate Crisis in the knowledge that this is an emergency with no foreseeable conclusion and requires immediate and drastic action away from a Business as Usual approach in order to sustain our quality of life, including our thriving tourism, technology, and agricultural sectors; our citizen health and affordability; and our public infrastructure and celebrated environment.

References (hyperlinks):

[Afternoon Council Meeting - April 3, 2023](#)

[Afternoon Council Meeting – June 20, 2022](#)

[The UN IPCC Sixth Assessment Report \(AR6\) Synthesis Report on Climate Change 2023](#)