



June 6, 2022

Members of City Council,  
City of Calgary  
P. O. Box 2100, Stn. M,  
CALGARY, Alberta  
T2P 2M5

Dear Mayor Gondek and Councillors:

Our community needs you to adopt *The Calgary Climate Strategy*. The Strategy puts Calgary on the right course. It's the journey we must make. You are doing what our future requires.

**There's no governance manual for leaders in a climate emergency.**

How do you govern in a climate emergency? We all share some responsibility for climate warming. What is the most constructive role for you to play in this political environment? Perhaps something in my experience will resonate and help inform your choices going forward.

The climate issue is contested, as you know. Some use climate as a litmus test to define political identities. "Conserving", and keeping our planetary home safe, should be as important to "conservatives" as to anyone else. Climate change threatens loss and entails grief. This can be a hard reality for anyone to face. Denial is one coping mechanism. Show kindness and empathy to one another. This work is the hardest you will ever do. Try always to find common ground.

**The problem of climate warming is physics, not ideology.**

Large numbers of citizens and policy makers do not understand climate change. They cannot describe the process. Please ensure City climate communications with our citizens continually provides basic climate science knowledge. My own climate "ah ha!" moment came at a Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) conference in 1998. The workshop explained how CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere inhibits the earth's heat from radiating into space. Once I understood the science and the likely risks, I felt a compelling need to act.

**Climate warming has to get under our shells and into our hearts.**

Emergencies call out our courage and passion. Resolve to do something tangible every day to fix the climate problem, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant. I made that resolution in 1998, when climate was not on any City of Calgary agenda. I've kept that promise ever since.

**Mandate a framework for climate action.**

Approving *The Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050* is your next step. My first step as a Council member was to submit a Notice of Motion for Calgary to join the FCM's, Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) Program.

**Make commitments with integrity.**

Several days after submitting my motion, Lyle Ward, Commissioner of Operations, came to see me. He told me administration would not be able to support it. Joining the PCP Program would

require the City of Calgary to reduce corporate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 6% below 1990 levels by 2012 – the Kyoto Protocol target. Commissioner Ward explained that Calgary would be 25% bigger in 2012 compared to its area in 1990. The Commissioners couldn't envision being able to shrink energy use and emissions to meet such a target. *But*, he offered a compromise. Administration would support a made-in-Calgary *per capita* target.

On that basis, Council approved joining the FCM's PCP Program. The City of Calgary's first climate target was: *reduce corporate GHG emissions, on a per capita basis, 6% below 1990's level by 2012*. This meant of course, The City could continue to grow its actual GHG emissions, just not as rapidly as its population growth.

This experience taught me an important lesson. City administrators were not prepared to embrace a bogus goal or make an empty gesture. They would only promise something they believed they could deliver. May such integrity still be the public service standard in Calgary!

The Calgary Climate Strategy reflects the need to reach net zero emissions by 2050. It's a courageous goal. Are you committed to it? Is it so audacious, Council or administration will ignore it? If so, be honest. It would be better to commit to an interim stretch target you can deliver during your term in office than to adopt an aspiration you have no intention achieving.

#### **Climate action is a journey of organizational discovery and learning.**

The PCP Program was the catalyst to discover how energy was being used, and wasted, throughout the organization. Energy performance contracts for buildings were awarded. Small combined heat and power (CHP) turbines were tested. A solar wall was even installed at the Victoria Park bus barns. However, one measure in particular stood out.

The Transportation Department asked Council for funding to change out the northwest quadrant streetlights with more energy efficient high pressure sodium lamps. (LED street lamps were not yet available.) The payback from this measure was so large, the operational savings in the one quadrant were enough to re-lamp the rest of the city. The GHG emissions reductions were equally huge.

What it inspired next though, was even larger.

#### **Early wins build commitment and momentum.**

After eighteen months of steady progress, the streetlight project gave administration confidence they could, by 2012, hit *absolute GHG reductions* of 6% below 1990's level. They asked Council to adopt the Kyoto Protocol target – without conditions. This we did.

#### **City leadership is the catalyst for community climate action.**

Calgary became the first jurisdiction in Canada to adopt a Green Building Policy. Every new building had to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver or better – later upgraded to LEED Gold. The building at Ralph Klein Park even achieved LEED Platinum.

The Zoo, Vivo, Lindsay Park and the Calgary Public Library were some of the civic partners that embraced the challenge. All found operating cost savings in the new facilities they acquired under this policy.

The Green Building Policy transformed the Calgary market. Private sector owners – like Bow Valley Square – adopted the LEED Gold standard. Canada now ranks second in the world for LEED-certified buildings. The Canada Green Building Council says Canada has well over *1 billion square feet* of LEED projects, representing nearly 7,000 buildings.

That transformation began here. Calgary's leadership got the ball rolling.

Build on this legacy. We are in a climate emergency. Double down on Calgary's Sustainable Buildings Policy. Require all buildings that receive City of Calgary funding to meet a zero-carbon emissions performance standard. Every building should be built with super thick insulation and integrated green building design. Owners will save decades of operating costs.

Council and Enmax built Calgary's downtown district energy centre as a catalyst for community GHG reductions. "District energy" simultaneously produces power and heat, virtually eliminating wasted energy. GHG emissions also drop dramatically. The original vision for the Energy Centre has not been achieved. The number of connected buildings does not yet justify adding a gas-fired cogeneration turbine. The Energy Centre remains a community asset, although no longer owned by Enmax. Work with the new owner to realize its potential.

#### **Zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions requires using renewable energy.**

Radical energy waste reduction is good, but it is invisible to our citizens. In 2001, "*Ride the Wind*" caught the city's imagination. Calgary Transit and Enmax joined forces and Calgary's LRT system became the first in North America to be entirely powered with renewable wind energy.

*Ride the Wind* was a catalyst for Enmax to become Alberta's renewable energy pioneer. In 2008, the City of Calgary agreed to source all its electricity from Enmax in a 20-year renewable energy supply agreement. The parties used an open-book sourcing process to ensure a competitive Enmax price. Even then, new wind power was competitive with new coal power.

#### **A series of wins for the climate had dramatic results.**

In the decade after my meeting with Commissioner Ward, what was the end result of "doing something tangible every day"? Senior managers had worried The City could never achieve the Kyoto Protocol target. How much had GHG emissions dropped in 2012 compared to 1990?

In 2010, my last year on Council, administration estimated that once the renewable power from Enmax began to flow, the City's actual 2012 GHG emissions would be **40% below 1990's level**.

That extraordinary accomplishment – likely unrivalled – is not widely known. Has The City sustained this legacy and leadership since then? If so, celebrate it. You stand on a solid foundation. If not, the administrative DNA is likely still there. Find it and rebuild on top of it.

**You need Enmax to succeed.**

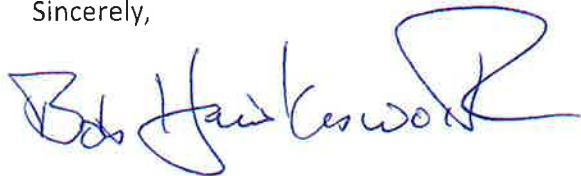
But now, we need you to go much further. Our community needs to rapidly transition to a net zero emissions future. The City of Calgary is in a better place than many. You have a foundation on which to build, inherited from previous Councils. You own a utility company that can help you seize the tremendous business opportunities this future presents.

To govern the climate emergency wisely and well, please consider these recommendations:

- 1. Adopt The Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050;**
- 2. Continually communicate basic climate science knowledge.**
- 3. Resolve to do something every day to reduce the risks of climate warming.**
- 4. Commit to real CO<sub>2</sub> reduction targets.**  
It requires integrity and heart to promise verifiable results.
- 5. Make the climate emergency the lens for your decision making.**  
Every capital project has to meet a test – does it get us to net zero? If so, fund it. If not, don't fund it. Apply the same test to your operating budget.
- 6. Strengthen the sustainable building policy.**  
As a condition of funding, all new builds – such as the Events Centre – must achieve a zero-emissions performance standard; major building renovations to achieve net-zero.
- 7. Fully integrate Enmax and civic partners into the City's Climate Strategy.**  
Enmax will be a priority partner to achieve community climate goals. Their strategy has to support yours and yours, theirs. You own Enmax. Appoint Council members to the Board of Directors if you have to. Extend your renewable electricity contract to civic partners.
- 8. Speed up the transition to non-emitting energy sources.**  
Use non-emitting sources for heating and transportation. Improve Calgary's food security: create a greenhouse growers park that can use the Shepard Energy Centre's waste heat and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Investigate the feasibility of carbon capture and storage (CCS) at the Shepard Energy Centre to extend the Alberta Carbon Trunk Line to Calgary.

I trust these insights, drawn from my experience, are of some assistance as you begin to govern Calgary's journey to net zero emissions by 2050. Please let me know how I can help!

Sincerely,



Bob Hawkesworth, Former City Councillor  
Ward 3, 1980 – 1986 / Ward 4, 1993 – 2010

cc. David Duckworth, City Manager