

SEP 04 2018

ITEM: 6.4 PFC 2018-1023
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CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

Submission to the City of Calgary Standing Policy Committee on Finance

Sept. 4, 2018

Hello,

My name is Walter Hossli and I'm the founder of Momentum, the organization that works with low income Calgarians using economic development principles - business start-up, trades training and financial literacy. I'm also a Changemaker in Residence at the Institute for Community Prosperity at Mount Royal University.

However, today I am here as a citizen, a Calgarian, Albertan and Canadian deeply committed to making a difference on increasing our efforts to cut CO2 emissions. I want to start by congratulating every member of City Council for voting in favour of adopting the Calgary Climate Strategy.

As a leader of a community organization I have learned at least one thing after 20 years of work: **You can only do what you have money for.** (yes, it took me a long time to learn this, because we live in a city where many of us do tremendous volunteer work and we do it for free. However, if it wasn't for paid staff, paid back-office support, paid marketing, brand promotion, etc. etc. most if this volunteer work would simply not happen).

So I am here to make two points:

The climate strategy needs to be adequately funded and
Funding for the education program envisioned in the plan is key to the success of the plan. In particular section 10.6 of the action plan "Develop and implement a comprehensive climate change education program" needs to be top priority. Education on this touchy subject needs to use all the best practice tools available.

As a decades-long advocate of policy to support low-income folks, why am I now so passionate about this topic?

Simply put: I know that the lower you are on the income and wealth ladder, the greater your chances of being hit hard by the effects of climate disruption.

In addition, our children and grandchildren deserve to live on a planet that has a realistic chance of not becoming hostile to human civilization. Humans have achieved remarkable things and unless we curb our emissions, many of these achievements are threatened before the end of the century.

So, on a very practical note: I am here to propose that Council invest a percentage of the climate adaptation infrastructure funding in this comprehensive education effort envisioned in section ten of the recommendations.

I mentioned the word touchy above. Some of you know that the minute you say climate change to someone you don't know in Calgary, you either get a blank look or an argumentative remark about the importance of the oil and gas industry. Both of these responses are understandable given the many years of absolute neglect of science-based comprehensive education on this topic.

As in so many other areas of life, education is the only tool to have sound and stable public policy in place for the long term.

In summary my hope is that council will put adequate resources behind the more touchy areas of the Calgary Climate Strategy – those that deal with leadership on comprehensive education.

Thank you.

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