

ETCRC Work Plan 2023-2024

The following sections in this document contain our goals and actions as they relate to our priorities, which are outlined in Attachment 1: Annual Report and Activities.

1. Instil Culture Change

The City of Edmonton and much of the world has declared a climate emergency; this urgency has not yet seeped into the fabric of our culture and the culture of the City Administration. We are in a climate emergency; work is needed to instil culture change within our city.

Actions:

- Identify a list of actions and/or decisions, small, medium and large, that would demonstrate to the citizens of Edmonton that the climate emergency is real, and that the City of Edmonton is serious about how it will be managed.
- Push the City to demonstrate that their decision making reflects the climate emergency.
- Recommend that the City create a Citizen Assembly to evaluate how to create climate urgency in everything we do as a City and as citizens.

2A. Land Use – Zoning Bylaw Renewal

The zoning bylaw should use all of the tools at its disposal to:

- assist in executing the City Plan,
- create a 15-minute city,
- develop appropriate density,
- achieve active transport, transit and other transportation goals, and
- build the net-zero city we need.

The current zoning plan is not transformative enough to achieve the goals set out in our plans.

Actions:

- Secure a meeting with the administrators of the Bylaw Renewal Process
- Provide verbal and written follow-up feedback.
- Appear at Council at opportune times to support a zoning bylaw that can help us build a climate resilient, net-zero city that aligns with the City Plan and Energy Transition Strategy.

2B. Land Use - District Planning and Growth Management

District planning is ongoing, and we should secure presentations on planning processes and growth management to learn:

1. whether these processes are going to help build a net-zero city, and
2. where we can engage to ramp up the ambition.

Actions:

- Secure presentation(s) to find out how district planning can contribute to the City's Energy Transition and Climate Resilience goals

3. Transportation

As 31% of total GHG emissions come from transportation, our transportation system requires a complete transformation to achieve energy transition goals.

Actions:

- Support the rapid acceleration of the bike plan implementation.
- Identify and actively support programs that seek to transform how we move; through either public or active modes of transportation.
- Identify unfunded budget initiatives that are essential to the success of the City's energy transition goals.
- Seek a presentation on the progress of decarbonizing the City fleet (cars, trucks, trains and buses) to ensure leading edge solutions are being deployed and not delayed unnecessarily by bleeding edge or “non-solutions”, actions that are intended to help but only waste time, money and resources.
- Encourage the City to use metrics in decision making when choosing between project options and hold the City accountable to learning from them and adjusting.
- Encourage the use of flexible and rapid approaches to transportation, such as Bus Rapid Transit.
- Remind the City to recognize and address the importance of the other 50% of transportation emissions, comprising personal trips.
- Ensure other transportation emissions, such as freight and last mile delivery, are incorporated in a meaningful way.
- Recommend the City create the opportunity for transportation culture to shift, using meaningful programs to allow City Employees to work remotely; and to encourage bike and transit trips.
- Remind Administration to work across departments to tie the transportation strategy into zoning and district planning, 15-minute communities, and other City initiatives.

4. Buildings

Since buildings represent 38% of GHG emissions, ETCRC will actively engage Administration and Council to ramp up efforts to get to net-zero and to reinforce that there is no climate success without dealing with buildings.

Actions:

- Retrofits
 - Support the full implementation of CEIP by 2023.
 - Explore access to and leverage of the Green Municipal Fund. Seek presentations and input on what is needed to ensure financing is ramped up in a way that is commensurate with the goals of getting to net-zero, for example, using promotions or incentives to address the challenge of radically increasing the uptake of green building programs.
 - Support green building initiatives with memos to Council.
 - Appear at council at the appropriate times.
 - Explore the connection of buildings to District Energy and how it can help transition existing buildings to net zero.
- New Builds
 - Explore using charter powers to speed up adoption of building codes.

- Monitor progress towards full adoption of the 2030 net-zero-ready building code.
- Seek clarification on how zoning, district planning and other tools can be used to advance the net-zero objective.
- Suggest forming an ad-hoc committee of private builders, city admin, experts and advocates whose sole task is to find ways to educate, promote, celebrate and increase the uptake of net-zero homes in the market. We need momentum.
- Explore energy code incentives to encourage District Energy connections.

5A. Energy Systems - District Energy

The City identified district energy, geexchange heating and waste heat as key strategies for tackling one of the biggest challenges in buildings - heating. This could be one of the best value-for-money technologies and implementation strategies to not only drastically reduce energy use and GHG emissions, but also to help electrify our buildings and increase equity.

Actions:

- Produce a memo in response to the recent District Energy update.
- Ask for regular updates on District Energy strategy.
- Recommend the city explore using EPCOR or other utility providers to fund and deploy District Energy and geexchange at a large scale.
- Appear at Council (date TBD) when the Downtown District energy project is updated to reinforce the importance of expanding district geo through a city-wide push.

5B. Energy Systems - Renewable Energy

The City's Energy Transition goal is to achieve 10% local generation. While it's hard to affect the provincial grid, the City can demonstrate its commitment by achieving the local 10% goal in three ways:

1. help residents participate in solar in order to reach a tipping point for home and business solar, and
2. encourage businesses and institutions to secure 100% renewable energy.

Actions:

- Request a presentation on the City's local generation progress and goals. Support more community interest.
- Encourage the city to create awareness of the City's procurement and procurements of other local corporations and institutions and facilitate and encourage others to do this in partnership with the Business Renewables Center.
- In partnership with the Business Renewables Center, assist the City in:
 - creating awareness around corporate and institutional procurement procedures, and
 - encouraging other corporations and institutions to develop transparent procedures.

6 + 7. Health and Equity

If it's not equitable, it's not sustainable. We need to stress to the City that the only way we can achieve our goals is to bring along the most vulnerable. Currently we are not focusing on

how our decisions impact equity and health for the most vulnerable. For marginalized communities, climate benefits may not be clear: health impacts are much clearer.

Actions:

- Ensure that the City is applying an equity lens to all decisions.
- Encourage the City to focus on communicating the health benefits of climate measures to increase the likelihood of community interest and action.

Additional Areas for Work

Two more areas that we will discuss as areas of interest for our committee include nature-based solutions as well as metrics and reporting. While not part of our priority list, it is still valuable for us to mention these.

1. Nature-based Solutions

The City must use carbon capture methods to meet its energy transition goals. Nature-based solutions have tremendous potential for carbon capture. Examples include planting trees, restoring carbon-storing ecosystems, and naturalising parklands.

Actions:

- Request a presentation on nature-based solution progress, including the state of current plans, the potential to leverage federal and other resources to drastically increase efforts, and progress measurement. As the leadership of these solutions seems to be spread across departments, the City may need to create a position to coordinate measuring and developing strategy.
- Identify the current solutions in discussion and which departments are leading what plans.
- Identify the progress of each proposed solution and its anticipated benefits.
- Identify any missing solutions and ask how the City intends to identify additional solutions.
- Identify which non-nature-based (technological) solutions being considered, if any, and their priority and status.
- Ask for a report on all the different nature-based solutions that work in the Edmonton context and how they are contributing to reaching the goals of the energy transition plan.

2. Metrics and Reporting

Ensure that metrics are established and applied to clarify, inform, measure and communicate strategy implementation progress toward targets such as greenhouse gas emission mitigation, climate resilience, reduced costs, increased numbers of jobs, and other co-benefits and impacts.

Action:

- Hold the City accountable to use metrics when making decisions.