



June 7, 2021

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

Re: RTS 14478

**For Our Kids Vancouver Oppose: Delaying Zero Emission Building Construction Guidelines and Amendments to the Protection of Trees By-Law**

We are a grassroots group of Vancouver parents and grandparents who have come together for the sole purpose of undertaking collective action to address the climate crisis for our kids. We have nearly 200 subscribers in Vancouver and are part of the For Our Kids national network composed of similar local grassroots parents' groups across the country.

Our members share in common deep fears of the impacts of the climate emergency on the quality of life of our kids, now and into the future. We also share in common our resolution to take action to slow global warming in alignment with IPCC recommendations. We are non-partisan. We engage all levels of government.

We supported and were pleased and relieved when City Council approved the Climate Emergency Action Plan in November 2020.

We are now troubled to learn that City Council is considering delaying key actions on addressing the climate emergency. Vancouver has been a leader on climate action and

a model for cities across Canada. We ask that the City stay the course and act consistently with its stated intentions. We are in a crisis and must act accordingly.

### **Zero Emission Building Construction Guidelines:**

1. The proposed amendments to Zero Emission Building Construction Guidelines delays by a full year, at minimum: our ability to significantly reduce residential emissions by 2030; facilitates the expanded use of fracked gas within Vancouver; and potentially requires the owners of new construction, in future, to retrofit their homes at their own cost. Approving such action and delay, does not respect that we are in a climate emergency as declared by City Council in 2019.
2. The proposed recommendation's intent to reconsider these policies as a 12 month pilot project, after which city staff are directed to recommend possible by-law amendments and policy changes threatens the very existence of the CEAP Big Move 4: Zero Emissions Space and Water Heating. We are concerned that an essential part of the CEAP could be undermined and potentially negated.

### **Protection of Trees By-law:**

3. The proposed amendments to the Protection of Trees by-law to allow for temporary suspension and alterations to the by-law would result in the loss of approximately 200 urban trees without required replacement. This equals the loss of tree growth of approximately 10 to 20 years and will reduce urban carbon sequestration and temperature reducing shade needed to mitigate climate impacts in the urban heat island.
4. This proposed by-law amendment is also considered a 12 month pilot project and directs staff to recommend further reduction in delays. We are troubled that the amendment prioritizes clearing of existing backlog over the principle of the related by-law to protect urban trees, which is a crucial component of urban climate mitigation measures.

## **The Principle of the issue and Vancouver City action:**

If the issue is one of labour force availability/allocation and permitting procedures then why is the 'solution' to delay or possibly abandon CEAP goals and principles rather than address staffing issues and refine procedures for efficiencies? If absolutely no alternatives or redirection of resources can be identified, can resources be redirected from other departments rather than CEAP implementation? Lastly, delaying building permits rather than CEAP implementation is the least harmful action to take in light of the urgency of the climate crisis.

As we know, 70% of carbon output in Canada happens in the urban areas; therefore city action is crucial to fighting the climate emergency.

We request, on behalf of our children and grandchildren, that Vancouver City Council oppose city staff's recommendations to delay changes to the building by-laws and maintain Vancouver's bold climate leadership.

For Our Kids Vancouver

Website: [https://www.forourkids.ca/for\\_our\\_kids\\_vancouver](https://www.forourkids.ca/for_our_kids_vancouver)

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