

media briefing note



Council to Make Biggest Climate Change Decisions of the Termon Anniversary of Paris Climate Change Conference

No Council meeting has been as important as this one when it comes to deciding whether Toronto will be ready for climate change. By the end of this Council meeting, Mayor Tory and City Council will either turn Toronto into a climate change leader or climate change laggard.

Below is a list of reports Council is considering and what they need to do to make Toronto a leader, and not a laggard.

PE15.1 TransformTO: Climate Action for a Healthy Equitable, and Prosperous Toronto.

What's It About?

Includes actions the city must take to meet its 2020 greenhouse gas reduction targets.

What to Look For:

There is no money set aside to ramp up the actions. A last minute staff report that puts a price tag to these actions is in front of Council. Look for whether the Mayor and Councillors make funding these necessary actions a priority or whether they will pass yet another plan without adequate funding.

PE15.2 Resilient City - Preparing for a Changing Climate - Status Update and Next Steps

What's It About?

An update on what the City has to do to prepare for severe weather events (like floods, ice storms and heatwaves) and other challenges that climate change will bring.

What to Look For:

Again, the report makes it clear money is needed if Toronto ever hopes to prepare for climate change. Given that the 2013 flood and ice storm cost Torontonians over \$1.2 billion, it would make sense to invest money in 2017 to get our infrastructure ready for future severe weather events. Will the Mayor and Councillors delay this investment as well?

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EX20.2 The City of Toronto's Immediate and Longer-term Revenue Strategy Direction

What's It About?

The financial future of the city and whether City Hall will have the money required to create a city that takes poverty reduction seriously and is ready for climate change.

What to Look For:

The Executive Committee said no to a Vehicle Registration Fee. Members also said no to the City Manager's recommendation to start talking with the Province about new revenue tools like a parking levy, income tax, sales tax and graduated property tax. Without new revenue sources there is no way to fund the climate change programs Toronto needs. Will the Mayor and Councillors keep the door open to new revenue sources that we need to fund climate change programs or follow the lead of the Executive Committee and slam the door shut?

EX20.23 2017 Rate Supported Budgets - Solid Waste Management Services and Recommended 2017 Solid Waste Rates

What's It About?

It's not just about our bin fees and recycling. The City actually collects the raw material to make renewable natural gas; it's called the Green Bin. The City's organic waste facilities generate biogas, which can be turned into renewable natural gas to fuel vehicles, save money, and significantly reduce greenhouse gases. With the business case in front of us, and even more people using the Green Bin, we need to start building more organics facilities and fast.

What to Look For:

Will Council focus on just keeping garbage fees low? Or will they make the wise decision to start capturing more green bin material and building new facilities to turn our green gold into renewable natural gas?

EX20.9 100 Resilient Cities Network - Chief Resiliency Officer

What's It About?

The City gets Rockefeller Foundation money to hire a Chief Resiliency Officer for 2 years to figure out how to create a resilient city (code for preparing for the shocks and stresses of climate change).

What to Look For:

It's easy to spend someone else's money. So it should be a no-brainer to say yes to this. The real proof of commitment by Council will be whether they are interested in finding new money in 2017 to help this new person actually build a resilient Toronto.

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