

Senior Advisory Committee  
Housing Working Group  
Proposal for Extreme Heat Mitigation

If this committee is agreeable, we should recommend the City of Hamilton advocate to address the growing health concerns and the environmental concerns of heat mitigation in regard to its effects on the public's health and on the environment through the use of fossil fuels.

Whereas, the Ontario Human Rights Commission [OHRC] has issued a statement on human rights, extreme heat waves and air conditioning as of August 19th, 2022 stating that while under the Residential Tenancy Act, 2006 [RTA], tenants have access to vital services such as heat, hot and cold water, electricity and fuel [such as natural gas], it does not include air conditioning.

Whereas, the OHRC has stated this current RTA puts at risk many Ontarians, such as people with disabilities, older people and low income, youngsters under the age of 4, Indigenous, Black and racialized communities from protection from extreme heat. People with disabilities, older adults and children under the age of 4 years are at most risk for heat illness and death. This leaves many Ontarians without protection from extreme heat.

Whereas, the OHRC calls on the provincial government to include air conditioning as a vital service under RTA regulations and to establish a provincial maximum temperature to ensure that vulnerable Code-protected tenants are protected against threat of eviction for using safely installed cooling units.

Whereas, at the Federal level, Canada has committed to reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 [Paris Agreement] and to cut emissions of methane by at least 30% below 2020 levels by 2030 [Global Methane Pledge].

Whereas there is a growing trend across Canada to ban heat from fossil fuels with some cities setting target dates to ban fossil fuel use to reach zero-emissions [Vancouver 2025] as well as some provinces already making it illegal to replace existing furnaces with fossil burning fuels to reach near-zero emissions and drastically cut methane [Quebec].

Whereas the City of Hamilton committed to plans for transforming buildings to low carbon emitting and has prioritized a 13 Climate Change Impact Adaption Plan, one being to help vulnerable populations from experiencing climate related risks of extreme heat and cold.

Whereas heating residences with fossil fuels create 85% of Greenhouse Gas emissions mainly from natural gas that is itself 95% methane gas.

Whereas, the City of Hamilton has already officially approved to seek a FCM grant to design a Home Efficiency Retrofit Opportunity Program [HERO] for Hamilton that will allow for homeowner to get a low interest loan to make quality of life and energy conservation improvements to their homes that they would not otherwise be able to afford. This program is ready to launch soon.

Whereas the City of Hamilton has already become the owner of the world's largest residential building retrofitted to Passiv House standards. The Ken Soble CityHousing Hamilton building has achieved 94% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and 91% reduction in heating energy demand to support resident health and climate resilience. This building uses heat pumps to heat

and cool apartment units. CityHousing Hamilton is a true model for addressing extreme heat and housing crises.

Therefore be it resolved that: This committee recommends the City of Hamilton advocate to the Government of Ontario to change the building code to make heat pumps [heat and cooling units] and electrification mandatory in all new building and retrofit housing.

and,

The City of Hamilton should expand the extreme heat interventions to other CityHousing facilities and to low income rental units in the near future as per those already put in place by the Extreme Heat Working Group in 181 Jackson St. W., 200 Jackson St W., 191 Main St., and 95 Hess St.