



CITIZEN COMMITTEE REPORT

To:	Emergency & Community Services Committee
From:	Seniors Advisory Committee <div style="text-align: right;">(Penelope Petrie, Chair)</div>
Date:	September 12, 2022
Re:	Extreme Heat Mitigation

Recommendation:

Whereas, the Ontario Human Rights Commission [OHRC] has issued a statement (https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/ohrc-statement-human-rights-extreme-heat-waves-and-air-conditioning) 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, 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 under the Paris Agreement and to cut emissions of methane by at least 30% below 2020 levels by 2030 through the 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 (<https://www.hamilton.ca/city-initiatives/strategies-actions/climate-change-action>), 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 grant to design a Home Efficiency Retrofit Opportunity (HERO) Program (<https://www.environmenthamilton.org/hamiltonhero>) for Hamilton that will allow for homeowners 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.

Whereas, the City of Hamilton has already become the owner of the world's largest residential building retrofitted to Passive House standards (https://passivehouse-international.org/index.php?page_id=150). 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:

- (a) That the Seniors Advisory Committee recommends that 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
- (b) That the City of Hamilton should expand the extreme heat interventions to other CityHousing Hamilton facilities and to low income rental units in the near future as per those already put in place by Public Health's Extreme Heat Working Group in 181 Jackson Street West, 200 Jackson Street West, 191 Main Street West and 95 Hess Street South.

Background:

Extreme heat and lack of air conditioning in low-income rental units has disproportionately affected the senior population who are at high risk of death during extreme heat waves. The Seniors Advisory Committee has created a statement for resolution with recommendations for Council to improve their involvement.

At the September 9, 2022 Seniors Advisory Committee meeting, Motion 11.1, which refers to the resolution concerning Extreme Heat Mitigation, was carried unanimously. The committee is submitting this Citizen Committee Report for consideration to City Council.

Analysis/Rationale:

The Seniors Advisory Committee believes that more action has to be taken to expand extreme heat interventions to more CityHousing units and other low-income rental units. Therefore, the Seniors Advisory Committee recommends that City Council advocate to the Government of Ontario and to intervene by enforcing the recommendations listed above.