

CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Key Facts regarding the Climate Emergency Response

Regionally, nationally, and globally, cities are declaring climate emergencies in response to growing concern about the serious threat of climate change.

On April 29, Vancouver City Council approved a roadmap that lays out ambitious local solutions to scale-up climate action and limit warming to 1.5°C to avoid devastating climate breakdown, in line with recommendations made in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report and Paris Agreement. This will require a coordinated effort and Mayor and Council indicated their commitment to work with the community, partners, and other levels of government on this bold and necessary plan.

Vancouver has decreased emissions from buildings, transportation, and solid waste by 19,000 tonnes per year over the past decade. The recommendations approved last night will mean a five-fold increase of emission reductions to an average of 92,000 tonnes per year to achieve the City's 2030 target of limiting warming to 1.5°C.

This report identified six 'big moves' to dramatically reduce carbon pollution from buildings and transportation (the city's largest sources), as well as, sequester carbon through conservation efforts. A set of 53 quick-start actions complement the big moves and allow implementation to begin right away, building on Vancouver's previous efforts.

The six big moves to achieve the 1.5°C objective are:

- **Walkable complete communities** - 90% of people live within an easy walk/roll of their daily needs by 2030
- **Safe and convenient active transportation and transit** - two thirds of trips in Vancouver will be by active transportation and transit by 2030
- **Pollution free cars, trucks and buses** - 50 per cent of the kilometres driven on Vancouver's roads will be by zero emissions vehicles by 2030
- **Zero emission space and water heating** - all new and replacement heating and hot water systems will be zero emissions by 2025
- **Lower carbon construction** - the embodied emissions from new buildings and construction projects will be reduced by 40% compared to a 2018 baseline by 2030
- **Restored forests and coast** - staff to develop "negative emission" targets that can be achieved by restoring forest and coastal ecosystems by fall 2020

Additional actions

The 53 accelerated actions build on the City's previous climate actions to transition to cleaner sources of energy, increase active and clean transportation options for residents, green City operations, and increase community engagement.

FACT SHEET



453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V5Y 1V4 • media line: 604.871.6336 • website: vancouver.ca

These are designed to allow work to begin immediately and will fit together with the six big moves as the details, analysis, consultation, and budgets are developed.

As part of the climate emergency response, Council approved the formation of a Climate and Equity Working Group to ensure that equity has a central place in the City's climate emergency and sustainability work moving forward.

The Climate Emergency Response [staff report PDF file](#) and [presentation PDF file](#) are both available online.

FAQs

Why is Vancouver doing this, can cities really make a difference?

- **Cities around the world are taking bold action to fight climate change:** Regionally, nationally, and globally, cities are declaring climate emergencies. Cities must also be an integral part of the solution to fight climate change and we are seeing cities step up to identify stronger regulations, cleaner sources of energy, and actions to limit industrial emissions. Cities, including Vancouver, are sharing experiences with each other through networks like C40, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance, and Urban Sustainability Directors Network to amplify our impacts.

Isn't addressing climate change better addressed by the region, the province, or the federal government?

- **Success will require increased collaboration and new efforts from all levels of government, utilities, business, and residents.** The actions outlined in the Climate Emergency Report align, and will require coordinated efforts with Metro Vancouver's Climate 2050 Plan and the Province's new climate plan, CleanBC.

Vancouver and other cities have municipal tools that can help accelerate progress to our collective goals like jurisdiction over land-use planning and parking policies.

Hasn't Vancouver been taking environmental action already, why this added climate action?

- **Vancouver has been taking climate action for some time:** This climate emergency plan builds on and accelerates work previously undertaken by the City. We have made significant progress already (as of 2017, we reduced the carbon pollution from all the buildings and vehicles in Vancouver by 7% from 2007 levels, despite a growing population and economy) but more needs to be done. A central part of the Paris Agreement is regularly looking for opportunities to increase our ambition on climate change, which is what Vancouver is trying to do.

Why now / what's the urgency?

- **Urgent action is needed to avoid the worst impacts of climate change:** We are already experiencing the impacts of climate change right here in Vancouver and around the globe.

FACT SHEET



453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V5Y 1V4 • media line: 604.871.6336 • website: vancouver.ca

By not taking immediate, bold action to reduce emissions we risk greater challenges, more inequality and real health risks for Vancouver residents.

- [Chapter 3 of the IPCC report](#) explains why it is necessary and even vital to maintain the global temperature increase below 1.5°C versus higher levels. Adaptation will be less difficult. Our world will suffer fewer negative impacts on intensity and frequency of extreme events, on resources, ecosystems, biodiversity, food security, cities, tourism, and carbon removal.

Are the Big Moves and amplified actions presented in the report bold enough?

- **The scale of Vancouver’s Climate Emergency Response is based on the best available science, as presented in the IPCC report:** Ratcheting-up our efforts to reduce emissions is a solid approach that is central to the Paris climate agreement. The Climate Emergency Response is what we are committing to today, and we will continue to look for opportunities to raise our ambition and add new actions as we move forward.
- The Climate Emergency Report outlines how Vancouver can increase the rate at which we are reducing our carbon pollution by fivefold. Combined, these six Big Moves in addition to the CleanBC renewable fuel standards will result in the 1.3M tonnes of carbon pollution reduction in Vancouver by 2030, which meets the intent of the IPCC report.

What risks does Vancouver face due to climate change?

- **Climate action is essential to limit risks associated with climate change, such as rising sea levels, wildfire smoke and extreme weather:** Across the globe, we’re seeing grave climate crises occur regularly, and Vancouver is not immune to them. The 2018 United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report identifies failure of climate mitigation as a significant threat to global stability.
- By 2050, Vancouver is expecting hotter, drier summers, wetter falls and springs, and warmer winters. Extreme weather events will be more frequent and intense, and sea level rise is anticipated to be 1 meter by 2100. Learn more about [local changes to climate](#).

What will reducing the level of carbon pollution mean for the health of Vancouver residents?

- **The vast majority of solutions Vancouver is pursuing to reduce carbon pollution will also lead to better health outcomes:** Zero emission solutions contribute to improved air quality. Zero emissions buildings have better indoor air quality. Electric vehicles produce less air pollution than their gasoline and diesel counterparts. Walking and cycling are pollution-free and they help people stay active.

What is Vancouver doing about cutting emissions from the cruise ships / tankers at the Port and air travel through YVR?

- While Vancouver agrees that these are important areas that need to be addressed, our Climate Emergency Response is focused on where Vancouver has jurisdiction. Visit [Port of Vancouver](#) and [Vancouver International Airport](#) websites for information on their climate related actions.

FACT SHEET



453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V5Y 1V4 • media line: 604.871.6336 • website: vancouver.ca

What is the cost of the Climate Emergency Response?

- **Based on past modelling work, we're confident that investing now makes sense and will cost less than reactive measures in the future.** In 2017, the City worked with BC Hydro and Navius Research to better understand Vancouver's energy needs and costs. Overall, when considering per capita energy, capital, and carbon tax savings we expect to see a 9% cost savings between 2015 and 2050. Annual household energy costs, relative to 2015 are expected to decrease by \$61 by 2030 and \$245 by 2050 for home energy – and by \$522 by 2030 and \$748 per year by 2050 in transportation costs. Read the economic modelling results [report](#).

As part of the next steps for the Climate Emergency Response we will be calculating the financial costs and benefits of the big moves and quick start actions.