



Dear Council Members,

We applaud the comprehensive approach to forming the Resilient St. John's Community Climate Plan. We are happy to see that the City is taking steps in the right direction to become Net-Zero by 2050. The Community Climate Plan will also help individuals already working toward Low-Carbon Scenario lifestyles.

Climate change is a multi-layered issue and will require complex solutions to address it. We are most hopeful about the GHG Mitigation Action Themes *Affordable, Efficient Buildings for all, Transportation Transformation, and Low-Waste Future*. These plans can help reduce our consumption, especially oil and gas products while creating innovative waste (resource) management solutions that reflect income inequalities.

Members of the Social Justice Co-operative NL are part of the St. John's community. We have organized several events and projects to highlight the injustices that residents face and create solutions for their concerns.

Pedestrian and cyclist safety has been high on our agenda as they are trying to navigate our community without cars and are facing extreme danger. In our community, people are being injured, sometimes fatally, and we believe the policy changes outlined below are crucial to keeping each other safe.

People are also seeking out improved zero-waste options. Conversations with the City are underway to see how the City can play a more significant role in circularity actions. For instance, the community compost pilot project

in partnership with the City, MMSB and Food First NL has been an enormous success with strong uptake and nutritious soil creation for a community garden.

We propose that the plan includes further mechanisms to support the following activities:

- Construction of housing units to tackle the growing housing crisis
- Prioritization of safe and efficient transport of people, i.e. investment in transportation infrastructure that benefits walking, cycling, mass public transit **before** private car infrastructure.<sup>1</sup>
  - Focus on public transit like it is a public service, not a business
  - The bus system is part of the pedestrian system. Make the city pedestrian-friendly, and bus ridership will increase.
  - Keep expanding sidewalk snow clearing and salting so people can walk in the city year-round.
  - 30KM/h speed limit on residential streets as soon as possible.
  - Full implementation of the Bike Plan.
- Implement mandatory recycling and composting for residential, and Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (ICI) units to truly achieve Zero Waste Communities.
- Expand the Environmental Coordinator team by funding an additional position tasked with writing grant applications to Provincial and Federal agencies for project implementation and maintenance that serves the Community Climate Plan.

We were elated to see the City of St. John's declare a climate emergency and join the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy in 2019. These actions recognized the threat of climate change and the vital role that cities must play to prepare. Since then, we have faced significant challenges, from "Snowmageddon" to COVID-19, highlighting the need for

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<sup>1</sup> <http://fourthplan.org/action/streets-for-people>

solid emergency preparation. We believe the City of St. John's could be a climate action leader in Canada and well prepared for climate change's challenges with active consultation.

The Social Justice Co-operative NL's knowledge and experience in these areas gathered through our Action Teams' grassroots work (i.e., Challenge Car Culture and Zero Waste) are ready to support the City to prioritize safety and care in our community.

We urge the City Council of St. John's to strengthen and approve the Resilient St John's Community Climate Plan in full to accomplish Net-Zero by 2050 and to implement necessary projects to achieve this goal.

Sincerely

The Social Justice Cooperative of Newfoundland and Labrador

