



## ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN

### Why this election HAS to be about the environment

More than ever before, we MUST vote with the environment in mind. In recent years, Ottawa has seen drastic increases in extreme weather events such as floods, tornadoes, air pollution from forest fires in Northern Ontario and Western Canada, and the derecho thunderstorm in May 2022, one of the most impactful in Canadian history, which left at least nine people dead. These are NOT once in a lifetime events; they are and will continue to happen more frequently.

As cities generate enormous amounts of greenhouse gas emissions, they have the highest potential to combat climate change. Municipal policies are the key levers for creating this change.

With a new mayor and almost one-third of city councillors departing, there is an opportunity to have new leadership that is willing to prioritise the environment. Now is the time to build a thriving, world class city that is not only more sustainable but serves to increase quality of life for all its residents.

### What role does Ottawa play in fighting climate change?

Ottawa is a city with a sizeable population that has access to world-class city planners and funding from provincial and federal governments. Through municipal policy, the City of Ottawa influences the following:

- Building efficiency standards
- Number of electric charging stations throughout the city
- Implementation of green infrastructure & tree canopy
- Permitting of naturalised lawns and planting pollinator gardens
- Transitioning diesel buses and municipal vehicles to an electric fleet



- Public transit infrastructure and price of ticket/monthly pass
- Retrofitting existing commercial and residential buildings
- Waste diversion policies and landfill management
- Wastewater and sewage infrastructure
- Urban boundary expansion and urban density decisions
- Protected bike networks that are interconnected to facilitate active transportation
- Construction of new natural gas infrastructure

## What can City Hall do to build a better Ottawa?

According to the City of Ottawa in 2020, 46% of community greenhouse gas emissions came from heating, cooling and electrifying our buildings, and 42% came from transportation. If we want to fight climate change, we need the City to strike in the places where we can make the biggest impact.

Ecology Ottawa structures its work around 3 main program streams: Renewable City, Living City and Active City. When the next mayor and city council is elected, this is what we would like them to focus on:

### RENEWABLE CITY

- Fully fund and execute the city of Ottawa's Energy Evolution Transition Strategy, Ottawa's primary strategy to fight climate change and achieve our goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions in Ottawa by 2050. The strategy outlines 5 priority action areas that will account for approx. 80% GHG reduction: 1) Electrify personal vehicles, 2) Retrofit existing residential buildings, 3) Divert organic waste from landfill and create renewable natural gas, 4) Retrofit existing commercial buildings, and 5) Transition to zero emission commercial fleets. We would like to see timelines and budget for the strategy and quarterly reporting on progress;
- Impactful, accessible education and awareness campaigns designed for residents from diverse communities on the importance of decarbonization and individual actions that can contribute to the effort;
- City planning that prioritises 15-minute, affordable, sustainable and walkable neighbourhoods. This means ending suburban sprawl, intensifying development within existing urban boundaries, eliminating exclusionary zoning, supporting mixed-used development and focusing on connectivity of public and active transit; and



- Phase out natural gas in Ottawa. Require gas providers to align with the city's Energy Evolution Transition Strategy and prioritize conservation and efficiency over new, renewed, or expanded gas infrastructure.

#### ACTIVE CITY

- A public transit system that is rapid, reliable, affordable, and accessible for all users, with proper transit routes within rural, suburban and lower income communities;
- An active transit network with protected bike lanes and multi-use paths in all neighbourhoods (not just in the downtown core) that are interconnected and prioritise “missing links” in the bike network;
- Increase air quality monitoring efforts throughout all City of Ottawa neighbourhoods, especially those with vulnerable populations or less greenspace, and use this data to inform policy solutions; and
- Expansion of “car-free zones”, where streets are turned into spaces for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchairs users and other pedestrians to discourage the use of cars and reimagine outdoor spaces as community hubs.

#### LIVING CITY

- Increase Ottawa's tree canopy to at least 40% coverage in every neighbourhood and ensure the protection of mature tree species through the new Urban Tree Conservation by-law;
- Encourage biodiversity protection through rewilding and planting pollinator-gardens in City parks & boulevards as well programs to encourage rewilding on private property; and
- Reduce stormwater runoff and increase biodiversity with a new green roof by-law for the City of Ottawa.
- Ensure that all street surfacing and new road reconstruction integrate green infrastructure wherever possible to increase permeability and decrease hardscapes

#### WASTE

- Introduce a user pay system for curbside residential waste collection, similar to utilities (e.g., hydro and water in urban areas), where residents pay for the bags / containers they put out for collection and the actual level of service that they use
- Maintain the City's Trail Road landfill site by maximizing waste reduction and diversion from disposal



- Develop a zero plastics waste procurement policy and specifically eliminate the purchase and use of single use plastics, including water bottles

## How can YOU make an impact?

### 1. VOTE:

- The single, most impactful individual action people can take for the environment is voting in the upcoming municipal election on October 24th and telling others to vote!
- We want to encourage residents to vote for candidates who will push for a sustainable, equitable and climate resilient city. A candidate that does not recognize the urgency for climate action is not a candidate that you should vote for.
- Ecology Ottawa is working on an All-Candidates survey. We will survey every candidate in every ward in the city about their views on various environmental issues as we get closer to the election. You'll be able to see our questions and their responses as they appear on our website, which will help you make a more informed decision about who you vote for.

### 2. ATTEND AND ORGANISE CANDIDATE DEBATES:

- Ecology Ottawa, as part of the People's Official Plan group, is organizing a debate and several meet and greet events with the mayoral candidates. Show these candidates you care by attending the events and asking questions. Here's our poster with the details:
- Organize an environmental debate or meet and greet between councilor candidates within your own ward

### 3. JOIN THE MOVEMENT:

- [Volunteer](#) with local environmental organizations like Ecology Ottawa and/or for a candidate with a strong climate plan.
- [Sign our petition](#)
- [Donate](#) to our cause and talk to others about the amazing work being done.
- [Be informed](#) about the key environmental issues in the city and what policy levers have the biggest impacts.