

Public Presentation to Oak Bay Council on April 8, 2019.

Hello, my name is Carrie Smart. I am a local Architect and the Chair of the Victoria Network and BC Chapter of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. The RAIC's mission is to promote excellence in the built environment and to advocate for responsible architecture. Please note that this agenda item came out too late for our group to formally speak as one voice, but many local Architects are in support and are in attendance tonight.

I am excited to see the CRD's request for support, to declare Climate Change as an Emergency, on the agenda tonight. This is an important initiative and I believe we need to talk about how this Municipality is going to take its draft Strategic Priority of Climate Change and transfer that priority into measurable goals and outcomes. Oak Bay will publicly strengthen that commitment by joining other CRD Municipalities in this declaration.

At our last Victoria meeting of the RAIC we had a discussion about the impacts of our profession and industry, on Climate Change and discussed the importance, as Architects, of making Climate Change Action our priority.

I urge you to not take the CRD's Climate Change Emergency Declaration request for "Information Only," but rather to allow it to start a serious, science-based conversation of how this Municipality is going to lead in achieving Climate Change goals; this year, in the next five years and by 2030. We need to take Action, and we need you to lead us in those actions.

Oak Bay used to have a Climate Change Task Force, but was disbanded. I believe at one time we had an Environmental Committee, but it too is no longer. The APC is not proactively looking at Climate Change. Why do we not have a current volunteer committee or task force to assist in what many refer to as the most pressing issue facing our world? What is our new goal post-2020?

Oak Bay has made some great strides to move us towards the target of a 33% reduction in GHG emissions by 2020. But this is not enough and we must set our next goal.

I understand the hesitation around declaring a Climate Emergency, as it makes it all feel too real. But I ask, if we are not now in an Emergency, then when? It is clear that if we wait, it will be too late to avoid significant negative impacts. Studies show that the cost of inaction will only increase in the long term.

The goal of this campaign that started in Australia in 2016, is leadership, education and advocacy framed by a sense of urgency and strong goals. As of the end of this March, 434 councils in Australia, the UK, the US and in Canada have joined in making this declaration.

As a Council you can declare a Climate Emergency as part of this international initiative and either set your own date for achieving Carbon Neutrality or even start by declaring without a date. We need to set goals in order to make progress. The OCP suggests that our Municipality work with the CRD to achieve climate change action, here is that opportunity.

I stand behind Oak Bay in its leadership to reduce the human impacts on Climate Change. Please lead us into Action towards that goal with an action plan, with a reinstated Committee or Task Force to direct and oversee progress.

Consider carefully what is a greater risk; declaring a Climate Emergency or ignoring that we are in one?

END