

My presentation to City Council regards the City's Energy and Sustainability Strategy and revolves around three main themes: education, inclusivity, and support. As an associate professor at the University of Regina, I developed and am now teaching for the second semester an interdisciplinary class in climate change. From this experience, I am seeing that even students with a keen interest in climate issues are not aware of the science and dire situations we are facing. Accessible, city-wide education initiatives are needed -- climate awareness is not optional. Indigenous knowledge and science that have understood natural law and respectful relations with nature for millennia must be incorporated into the strategy and education material. We would not be discussing a climate emergency if these laws had not been broken. Including Indigenous knowledge and people in the strategy is a meaningful gesture of reconciliation. Support is necessary for people who may not be able to afford to make changes as we transition from fossil fuels, and /or whose livelihood is based in the fossil fuel industry. I would like to recommend that the City create a Citizen Advisory Council in addition to the planned Community Advisory Group composed of climate change experts. A Citizen Advisory Council is comprised of representatives from all groups of people living in Regina. They would be educated on and discuss climate science and issues to advise counsellors of ways the City of Regina and its citizens can move forward with efficiency, innovation, flexibility, courage, and urgency to make and support rapid changes to our urban ways of life.

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