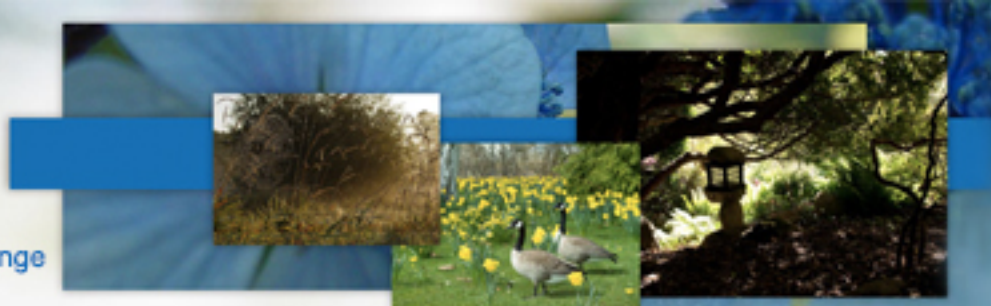




Meeting the Climate Change Challenge



AN ACTION AGENDA FOR BC DECISION MAKERS

The Province of British Columbia is leading community climate change and sustainability innovation at the local scale. Over the past five years, a suite of provincial government policies and initiatives such as the Climate Action Charter and Bill 27 Green Communities Act have stimulated local governments to undertake innovative climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. Yet, even here in BC, there is more to do.

Cutting-edge research on local climate innovation in eleven leading communities across BC provides critical insight into drivers of and barriers to climate innovation and action. The result is an agenda that informs BC decision-makers about next legislative and policy steps necessary for continuing the province's leadership

What if we understood the next steps on how to stimulate innovation and develop more sustainably?

Meeting the Climate Change Challenge (MC³) is a large-scale collaborative research initiative involving Royal Roads University, Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia working with twelve research partners from the public and private sectors. It examines the key climate innovations of eleven communities in BC. From 2011-2013, MC³ brought over 40 academics, practitioners, and civil society leaders together in online dialogues and a peer-to-peer learning exchange to discuss the innovations occurring in the province. The agenda includes their recommendations.

CLIMATE ACTION BARRIERS

Four barriers were identified slowing community climate action.

1. Lack of elected official and staff leadership
2. Minimal sharing of innovation and expertise
3. Limited access to funding
4. Electoral cycles

Innovators overcame these barriers by strategic partnerships, integrating climate action into existing municipal operations, and generating a business case integrating energy efficiency measures.

CLIMATE ACTION DRIVERS

MC³ identified seven significant drivers that supported community climate action innovations:

1. Getting energy right
2. Provincial legislative leadership and incentive programs
3. Leadership at multiple levels
4. Integrating climate policies into existing policies
5. Capitalizing on external funding opportunities and partnerships
6. Adoption of innovative energy technologies
7. Linking action to extreme weather events



CLIMATE ACTION AGENDA for LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

1. **Climate Action Charter V.2.** Develop the next provincial Charter by building on the successes of the program and identifying more aggressive targets, goals and monitoring.
2. **A municipal mandate on adaptation.** Introduce a Bill that requires inclusion of targets, goals and strategies on climate change adaptation in official municipal plans, and provide provincial support for these efforts.
3. **Require a climate vulnerability assessment** to be part of any provincially funded infrastructure project, and consider these assessments as eligible project expenses.
4. **Ongoing legislation to reduce GHG energy and emissions.** Mandate the creation of standing municipal climate action with fixed terms to address electoral cycles. Continue increasing energy performance requirements in the building code and support building innovations. Enable municipalities to finance renewable energy projects and municipal energy utilities
5. **Expand the carbon tax** to industrial production to stimulate increases in innovation and transition toward renewable energy, and frame this as revenue generating.
6. **District energy.** Support implementation of District Energy systems using strategies such as generating financing through carbon taxes.
7. **Cross-cutting networks.** Broaden the UBC - City of Vancouver Greenest City Scholars program to include all universities and municipalities to build novel networks that cross traditional professional silos and stovepipes.
8. **Financing strategies.** Amend the Local Government Act to allow land banking for diverse end uses. Continue to increase the gas / carbon tax. Reformulate the tax code to encourage land-use planning resulting in low carbon communities, and implement a 'sprawl-tax' that reflects greenfield versus brownfield developments. Encourage implementation of green revolving loan funds.
9. **Articulate the co-benefits.** Identify the co-benefits of climate action, sustainable development and the green economy, such as increases in public health and cost savings through reduced energy consumption.
10. **Regional and Local Governments.** Clarify and strengthen regional governments roles in coordinating climate action and sustainability among municipalities.
11. **Synergize.** Coordinate provincial efforts with relevant national / international initiatives engaging municipalities, such as PCP and SCI Energy Labs.
12. **Development Paths.** Encourage the transition to more sustainable development pathways that restrain energy demand, drive production of low carbon energy, and develop reporting metrics to measure progress.

For more information and to download full report, visit <http://www.mc-3.ca/action-agenda-bc-decision-makers>