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Happy New Year. Let's really make our work count this year, as we all count down to 2030.

(above image by Zbynek Burival)

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SCAN! signed on

We signed on to a joint letter by Ontario Nature and Nature Canada. The letter encourages the Government of Ontario to show leadership by effectively implementing the existing provincial Biodiversity Strategy and aligning it with federal activities in the 2030 Nature Strategy. The Ontario Biodiversity Strategy already incorporates many of the targets of the global biodiversity framework and 2030 Nature Strategy; but it requires a coordinated and consistent commitment across government ministries to implement the actions identified in the strategy.

We also signed on to a joint submission on the emissions cap. Here are the demands:

- **No more delays:** We demand that these regulations are finalized and implemented immediately, ideally ahead of the federal budget and the 2025 election.
- **Ramp up the ambition:** We're calling on the federal government to align these regulations with Canada's climate goal of a 40-45 per cent emissions reduction by 2030
- **Go further to usher in a just transition:** These regulations are just the beginning. We call on the government to go further to advance a transition away from fossil fuels towards a 100% renewable energy future. That means investment in Indigenous-owned and community-led climate solutions and investments in training programs for workers.

Maximum heat by-laws

Toronto, Kingston and other municipalities have been working on these by-laws. Toronto City staff tabled a report which went to Council December 17. The recommendation to report back on implementing a 26 degree maximum temperature, and to request the province amend the Residential Tenancies Act to introduce a maximum temperature carried 21-1. (See Toronto below.)

This CELA letter may be helpful to other municipalities.

SCAN! across the country

We have members in: NL, NS, NB, PE, QC, ON, MB, SK, AB, BC, YK. We look forward to having members in NU and NW. SCAN's regional groups (chapters) are increasing in number: Barrie, Edmonton, Guelph, Kawartha, Kingston, London, Northumberland, Ottawa, Toronto, Edmonton and Brant-Hamilton-Niagara-Norfolk.

Barrie, Ontario

They're ba-a-ack! SCAN! Barrie has been reinstated at the Barrie Farmer's Market with their first table to be set up on Jan. 4th. They plan to give out information on heat pumps, renewables and the folly of Highway 413. They also hope to garner some new members. They will be noticeable with their SCAN! Ts and hats, flying the Seniors for Climate flag as well as their large SCAN! banner.

They heard back from a teacher running the Global Perspectives program for Grade 11 students from across the Simcoe County Board. He is willing to have the class start collaborating on their Spring Seniors for Climate action as soon as the first week of class in Semester 2. He plans to get the students to meet with them on Skype; and brainstorm ways to encourage "Climate Conversations Across the Generations". They shared ideas centred on "Our Power, It's Our Planet", and "Climate Breakdown is Now". They hope to take the students' ideas and run with them.

They also heard back from the City's Energy Manager regarding Barrie's Climate Initiatives. The only initiatives the city is willing to consider are those that save them money in the very near future. They do not buy the argument that they are endangering kids' future.

Northumberland, Ontario

Northumberland SCAN! works in a coalition with a number of local organizations dedicated to climate, social and economic justice within Northumberland communities.

At their last meeting, they discussed presentations to seniors at the Public Library and to Northumberland secondary students, on behalf of the EV Society and Sustainable Cobourg. The focus was on the causes of the climate crisis and solutions, such as electric vehicles and heat pumps.

Northumberland County has hired an Environment and Climate person. Activists met with her; and they are making plans for future cooperation.

There is a broad Coalition, organized by Blue Dot Northumberland. They are lobbying against a potential application by a development corporation, with close ties to the Ford Government. This application would allow the corporation to purchase approximately 1000 acres of **prime farmland** to build housing and commercial buildings.

They have established their upcoming priorities: coordinating plans for the upcoming elections; and investigating the proposal to expand nuclear operations at CAMECO in Port Hope. They will also discuss a potential Seniors for Climate event for April, 2025.

Edmonton, Alberta

They now have a page on the website. They also created a Bluesky account. You can follow them here.

They continue to have relationship building meetings with a member of Indigenous Climate Action (ICA). They discussed the new ICA publication, valuable reading for collaborative work: “Healing the Land: Indigenous Perspectives on Divestment 2024”. ICA will be also creating a tool kit and actions in the future based on this publication. They are collaborating with:

- Edmonton Youth for Climate Action: Climate Caroling
- City of Edmonton, Change For Climate: City of Edmonton Climate Emergency
- Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (ECOHH) rally for more social housing
- For Our Kids Alberta: attending monthly meetings, support as retired teachers, divestment in retirement funds, supporting the release of a new report about Fossil Fuel Industry's influence on education
- Oil Sands Tailings Coalition event: “Tailing Behind: 60 Years of Inaction on Toxic Tailings Clean Up” A coalition of Indigenous, community, climate justice, and environmental organizations distributed information and talked with people on the crisis situation of the oil sands tailings ponds, coinciding with the Oil Sands Tailings Conference at the U of A.

They are also planning a holiday party with a film. Their "Momentum Event" will feature food, entertainment and networking with other climate and social justice organizations following the film.

Phew!

Kawartha, Ontario

At their November meeting they discussed how to “reboot” after focusing so heavily on Oct. 1st. They identified three broad issues:

- pushing the City to act on its Healthy Environment Plan, currently sitting on an unidentified shelf
- supporting the Kawartha Lakes Healthy Environment Committee
- ensuring that climate action is prioritized vis a vis the GHG Report Card

They set some specific actions/priorities:

- reaching out to their contacts
- lobbying for intercity bus service
- preparing for the Spring 2025 event

Sounds great.

Ottawa, Ontario

The Ottawa Chapter spent most of its time in November figuring out how best to deal with members' work to support SCAN!, Seniors for Climate and all their allies: national , provincial and local.

They held two face-to-face meetings to decide on an efficient, democratic and accountable structure in order to decide on the areas in which they will focus their energy. They also chose their leadership team.

Their key strategy will be to energize and involve their membership, now 87 strong. They are very interested in Climate Conversations training for their members.

They will undertake 3-4 events which they will plan and organize with partners. These would include Seniors Day(s) of Action, likely on Earth Day and one in the fall, and one or two events/activities related to the federal and provincial elections. In addition, they plan to actively support activities of Fridays for Future and CAFES (Community Associations for Environmental Sustainability).

They will also work on campaigns: CPPIB, public transit and the City's Climate Action Plan (which is up for review).

There's more…

In November, they distributed information about SCAN! at three local events (sponsored by CAFES, Sierra Club and FFF Ottawa). The Flash Dance Mob committee was in touch with other senior dance mobs and met to plan future events. They also presented to their City Transit Committee regarding a very disturbing transit budget, which they characterized as a "death spiral for public transit in Ottawa." They made the point that public transit is key to limiting car use and reducing the hidden costs of climate change to City taxpayers.

In addition, they met with the Chair of the ECC committee, city senior legal council and coalition members. They wanted to hear from staff about the status of the report on greenwashing fossil fuel ads which they were supposed to submit. They are waiting on further federal developments and on a similar struggle in Toronto.

That's an impressive amount of work.

Kingston, Ontario

Below are their priorities.

Maximum temperature by-law

They have been in consultation with the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA). They obtained the report that went to Toronto's Planning Committee. The maximum heat by-law staff recommendation in Toronto came to Council on

December 17. (See Toronto below.)

They have planned a zoom meeting for late January with CELA, a small group of councillors and supporters. They hope that after that meeting, they will get the needed support to take the issue back to Council. They continue to gather signatures on the heat by-law petition. Kingston City Council is reluctant to move on this. If Toronto and Hamilton move forward this will give them support.

Regarding Enbridge's Franchise agreement, they have reached out to a city councillor who is looking into it.

And there's more...

Kingston was considering going ahead with a biogas plant.

Subsequently community discussion and education took place, including a webinar organized by a coalition of allies. The Public Utilities Commission did not recommend the biogas plant: it was stopped. *(Yay! - ed.)* SCAN! Kingston did not play a direct role, but some members attended the council meeting and a rally prior to the council meeting and the webinar.

Guelph, Ontario

Guelph SCAN! was back at City Hall delegating at the end of November. They were supporting a motion that Guelph NOT automatically renew their Franchise Agreement with Enbridge. The motion was voted on at the end of the month and they were successful. *(Yay!- ed.)* The City voted essentially to ask the province to rejig the Franchise Agreement in order to allow the City to collect fees from Enbridge as they do in other provinces.

This is especially important in Guelph. Their mayor is exercising his strong mayor powers to cut climate initiatives from the budget. They also delegated on this point. Some of the cuts were subsequently restored. Read more here.

At the Council meeting, the Mayor noticed they were “back” calling them “the keeners in the front row.” Hard to miss in their green shirts.

SCAN! Guelph hosted an information evening with Guelph Climate Action Network. Approximately 50 people attended. Mike Marcolongo from Environmental Defence presented. They have been contacting MPs, MPPs and signing petitions.

They also began presentations in retirement homes; e.g., the effect of carbon on the environment and the 10 big findings of the IPCC 2023 report.

Their November chapter meeting was well attended with about 30 people. They had group discussions on new members, elections and heat adaptation. They also had initial discussions regarding the spring and fall Seniors for Climate mobilizations.

Guelph sent out its first monthly bulletin *(very impressive - ed.)* with “Ways to Act This Month". It included links to petitions, workshops, online meetings and conferences. They have 96 people on their mailing list.

On December 17, they tabled with other community groups at a Grade 9 Climate Conference attended by 150 students.

They also had a social that day to reflect on their good news and their good work.

Well deserved.

London, Ontario

Members attended "meet and greet" events in small groups and individually, handing out SCAN! business cards and information. They also approached the Youth Climate Corps, Citizens Climate Lobby Canada and ReForest London as potential partners for their spring Seniors for Climate event on Earth Day.

Because of their focus in each of the London ridings on lobbying at all three levels of government, Citizens Climate Lobby Canada webinars, actions and engagements were helpful. They met with a City councillor to focus on adaptation for the most vulnerable.

They have started to look ahead to a Seniors for Climate 2025 fall event, probably on or around Saturday October 5th, 2025.

They have a full slate of Executive members. Small groups are forming to take primary responsibility for outreach, fundraising/endorsement, partnerships, youth, tabling etc. They hope to form a small group interested in local politics to keep track of City Council's climate policies and attend Council meetings.

They plan to bring forward and take at least one political action at every SFC London meeting. They started off with 5.

Admirable goal.

Toronto, Ontario

Toronto's City Working Group has been busy preparing for both the City Budget submissions in January and the Transform TO Action Plan 2026-30 consultation. The Committee held a successful webinar for Toronto members in order to review the Action Plan process and issues. The research done by committee members received high praise. The budget process will heat up in January.

The maximum heat by-law recommendation went to Council on December 17. The recommendation to report back on implementing a 26 degree maximum temperature, and to request the province amend the Residential Tenancies Act to introduce a maximum temperature by-law carried 21-1. (*Yay - ed.)*

At the neighbourhood level, the east-end group TERRE (Toronto East End Residents for Renewable Energy) has continued its efforts to oppose the Portlands gas plant. It is noteworthy that the IESO recently advised, during its recent Toronto consultation, that they are planning for electricity demand *without* the gas plant now, as one possible outcome.

SCAN! Toronto has partnered with other climate organizations in forming new groups in Eglinton-Lawrence and in Don Valley West, and will be looking to expand these partnerships in 2025. They have continued their involvement in organizing climate actions in seniors' residences as well as in a seniors' organization located in a community hub. A recent event was an intergenerational art activity.

Toronto SCAN! members have also been active in Highway 413 protests, both in Toronto and in the GTHA.

Keeping you in the know

Because of restrictions imposed by Facebook on publishing Canadian news, we are publishing the main issues of articles and referring people to the source material. We have now established a presence on Bluesky. You can follow us @s4can.bsky.social. Until we have transferred our followers from Twitter ("X) we are still sending people there as well: @Seniors_CAN. FB has 1.3k followers and Twitter 1,100. Despite restrictions, we are doing our best to help people keep up to date.

Readers of this newsletter who are not yet members are welcome to join as members any time. Go to the web site and click on "Become a member". Questions? email us: info@seniorsforclimateactionnow.org

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(Photo below by Jason Mavrommatis)