

Third Annual
Windsor – Essex County
Air Quality Action Plan
Report Card



CEA SmogFest, May 2002.



Citizens Environment Alliance

The Citizens Environment Alliance Air Quality Programme is funded by...

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October 2002

Introduction

On July 28, 1998, the Citizens Environment Alliance (CEA) proposed an anti-smog action plan for the City of Windsor and its departments. Although City Council did not adopt the plan, it was referred to City administration for review and comment. Almost two years later, the Windsor Essex County Air Quality Committee (WECAQC) revised and approved a similar plan, Components and Recommendations for a Successful Air Quality Action Plan. In May 2000, Windsor City Council and Essex County Council unanimously passed this plan in what they described as an effort to mitigate this region's poor air quality. This Plan, known as the *Air Quality Action Plan* and/or the *Smog Action Plan*, is available at <http://www.city.windsor.on.ca/>.

In October 2000 the CEA published *Air Quality Action Plan Report Card 2000* summarizing the commitments made by City Council, evaluating progress and grading the City's efforts in implementing its Air Quality Action Plan. We used the *Air Quality Action Plan* structure, which outlines both emergency measures and long term air quality strategies, condensing some sections to avoid redundancy. In thirty categories, the City of Windsor garnered eighteen "F"s and seven "D"s.

In our *Air Quality Action Plan Report Card 2000* Essex County was excluded, as the Essex County Air Quality Action Plan is limited to the properties of the Corporation of the County of Essex. This Report Card, like our *Windsor – Essex County Air Quality Action Plan Report Card 2001*, will focus on the City of Windsor, evaluating the County when it is relevant. During the last twelve months, the City and the County have, again, made no significant attempts to address air quality issues. In thirty categories, they garnered 23 "F"s in addition to 5 "D"s and 2 "C"s.

Recent trends show that smog in Windsor and Essex County is bad and getting worse. In April 2002, the Clean Air section of Environment Canada's website stated, "*The summer smog capital of Canada is Windsor, and it averages more than 30 smog advisory days a year.*" The causes include poor land use planning (urban sprawl), truck and automobile emissions (worsened by our position along the *NAFTA Superhighway*), heavy industrialization on both sides of the border and hot and sunny summers. More information on smog is available in appendix B.

Failure to address air quality issues in this region reaches beyond local Governments. The Province of Ontario, which is responsible for things like permit approvals, monitoring and enforcement, has stripped the Ministry of Environment's ability to address these issues, especially in Windsor. Similarly absent is the Federal Government, which is responsible for addressing transboundary air quality issues. There are, however, many locally based reasons for continued failure. If local governments truly wish to ameliorate our poor air quality a comprehensive change in *business as usual* will be necessary.

Communication and Implementation

The City and County have been negligent in developing an implementation strategy for the Air Quality Action Plan. The lack of such a plan, with timetables and an annual report, has left the public without the information they require to assess the commitments made by their representatives.

Currently the City and County are not providing the tools necessary to make their environmental decision-making transparent. There has been no accountability for these failures. Local municipal officials have consistently refused to acknowledge the fundamental importance of creating an information base and the means of tracking progress in order to improve environmental quality.

Highlights from the past twelve months

- ⊙ Both public members of the Air Quality Committee (one representing the CEA) resigned from the Committee in November 2001 due to the frustration associated with sitting on such a dysfunctional committee. The remaining Air Quality Committee members then voted to explore opportunities to amalgamate with the Windsor Environmental Advisory Committee. Both committees adjourned this summer with no progress being made toward the formation of an amalgamated committee since.

- ⊙ Without the guidance or oversight of a functional Committee, the Air Quality Coordinator, Ron Elliott, was left to fashion his own work schedule. He has favoured travelling to Air Quality meetings throughout Canada rather than deal with air quality issues at home. In an attempt to sit on a National Working Group, Elliott attempted to gain non-governmental organization status within the Ontario Environment Network (OEN) – demonstrating he misunderstands the nature of the Air Quality Committee and his role within it. The OEN rejected his application.

- ⊙ Transit Windsor has taken some positive initiatives. Their campaign to achieve funding for free Smog-Action-Day transit has resulted in some funding from Environment Canada. Transit Windsor also deserves credit for continuing their bike rack programme, promoting transit passes for University of Windsor students, and for experimenting with alternative fuels. Unfortunately, Transit Windsor suffers from a lack of senior government funding and a seemingly indifferent City Council.

- ⊙ Bicycle infrastructure on Windsor streets is another positive development in the last twelve months. Unfortunately, several Councillors continue to make it clear that they view bicycle infrastructure as secondary to motor-vehicle infrastructure; some Councillors are even openly challenging the use of on-road bicycle lanes. Bicycle lanes and/or better road access for cyclists must become a key issue for City Council if cycling is to become a prominent form of transportation in the City of Windsor.

- ⊙ The Air Quality Committee passed only one resolution in 2002: a Clean Car Campaign resolution regarding municipal fleet purchases and practices. A similar resolution had been passed in November 2001. Which of the two resolutions should guide City/County purchasing policies remains unclear. Whether or not the City/County have altered their purchasing policies as a result of either resolution is similarly unclear.

- ⊙ In late 2001, Brighton Beach Power, a joint venture of ATCO Power and Ontario Power Generation, proposed a new natural gas power plant in west Windsor. CEA announced our opposition to the plans and later requested the Province require an Individual Environmental Assessment for the project. At the same time, the Air Quality Coordinator, without Committee knowledge or consent, was soliciting donations from Brighton Beach Power. The City of Windsor later encouraged the Province to approve the construction of Brighton Beach Power; Provincial approval has been granted and construction has begun.

- ⊙ The Air Quality Coordinator has failed to tackle the difficult job of advocating for air quality improvements by, for example, confronting polluters. Instead the Coordinator has shamelessly solicited funds from polluters – compromising his position of trust, see above. The Coordinator is primarily an operative of municipal governments rather than an independent public servant. The funding status of the Coordinator remains in conflict with the public interest.

- ⊙ The National Post published an article entitled *Study Finds Oddly High Death Rate in Windsor* on January 4, 2002. The article stated: “Windsor and nearby municipalities have death rates ‘significantly higher’ than the Ontario and Canadian averages.” Local media focused attention on the issue for several weeks. A public forum drew hundreds of concerned citizens; air quality was cited as the biggest concern. The Mayor of Windsor and other local politicians committed to finding solutions. Nothing has happened since.

Recommendations:

1. The City of Windsor and local municipalities should create an implementation strategy from the Air Quality Action Plan that was adopted in May 2000. The implementation strategy should set out targets and a timetable to achieve those targets.
2. The City of Windsor and local municipalities should ensure the creation of an independent Air Quality Coordinator office. The office would be responsible for producing an annual report, for the public, assessing municipal compliance with the *Air Quality Action Plan*.
3. The City of Windsor and local municipalities should join the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Partners for Climate Protection Programme.
4. The City of Windsor and local municipalities should demand that Environment Canada open an office in Windsor or Essex County. Many air quality issues facing this region fall within federal jurisdiction (e.g. transboundary air pollution). Environment Canada would better assist our communities in addressing environmental issues if they were doing it from Windsor/Essex, as opposed to Burlington or Toronto.
5. The City of Windsor and local municipalities should demand that the Province of Ontario re-invest in the Ministry of the Environment. The Windsor office of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment was a District Office before it was downgraded to an Area Office in 1997. Its staff was cut in half from sixteen positions to eight. There was a full-time air quality technologist until 1997; this position was cut. Contact with US counterparts was compromised. This year, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality approved another incinerator for Detroit Michigan - less than 1 km from Windsor; the process went virtually undetected by the City of Windsor and the Province.
6. The City of Windsor and local municipalities should insist that all levels of Government devise an international transportation strategy with a view to alleviating air quality problems. According to the Canadian Consulate General in Detroit, 3.5 million trucks crossed the Detroit River on the Ambassador Bridge in 2001. Given current growth trends, there will be 6 million by 2012!
7. All levels of Government should spend more public money on public transit. Windsor property-tax payers and Transit Windsor riders are the sole source of revenue for our local public transit system. Transit Windsor riders have faced fee increases twice in less than three years. Despite an identified need for it, there is still no public transit linking the City with other municipalities.
8. The City of Windsor should develop a pedestrian Charter of Rights containing a list of principles to develop a walkable city and include it in the Official Plan.
9. The City of Windsor should enforce existing laws that would improve air quality (e.g. the City of Windsor Anti-Idling bylaw). Further, the City of Windsor and local municipalities should challenge senior levels of Government to enforce their laws, like the Ontario Environmental Protection Act, Regulation 346 which allows the Minister to order sources of air pollution to curtail or cease operations when certain air pollutants reach levels that may be injurious to health.
10. The City of Windsor and local municipalities should insist on revisions to the current Air Quality Index in Ontario. The changes must incorporate health-based criteria that reflect the most recent scientific evidence for numerous air pollutants.
11. The City of Windsor should fully implement the Bicycle Use Master Plan (BUMP) endorsed in 2001. Bicycle lanes on Windsor streets (and plans for more bicycle lanes and greater bicycle access) are positive steps, however, Windsor still lacks safe on-road routes for cyclists wishing to commute to work, shopping, etc.. An education campaign, for motorists and cyclists, must be implemented.

Windsor/Essex County Air Quality Report Card 2002

Table I: Recommended Elements of a Community-based Response to an Air Quality Advisory

| What They Promised: | What they delivered: | GRADE |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| i) AIR QUALITY ADVISORY MECHANISM | | |
| Appointment of an Air Quality Coordinator | An Air Quality Coordinator has been contracted. Unfortunately, a more ambitious (full-time) proposal was rejected in favour of a part-time proposal. Worse, the City and the County guarantee only two-thirds of the part-time Coordinator's salary, and plan to review their commitments annually. Further, the current Air Quality Coordinator works without the guidance of a Committee and chooses to travel to Air Quality meetings throughout Canada – rather than deal with air quality issues at home. | F |
| Identification of an anticipatory air quality advisory mechanism | The Provincial air quality detection and alert system is used by the City and the County. This system, however, contains outdated health information that has resulted in an excessively high poor-air-quality threshold. The City/County have failed to address this flawed Provincial mechanism. There is no evidence that Michigan air quality advisory programmes are being monitored locally. | F |
| Local Response plan | There is no overarching response plan. The City Parks Department has rescheduled some activities, but these are ad-hoc measures. This failure seriously undermines several other promises that have been made and are outlined below. | F |
| ii) ACTIVATE COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURE | | |
| Notify major employers, government departments and agencies, institutions and the public in the region regarding the smog advisory, with required and suggested actions | Notification of a smog alert entailed forwarding emails to City workers. The Air Quality Coordinator reported contacting approximately 100 businesses, healthcare and day-care facilities. The lack of an official response plan and mandatory reduction programmes undermined the Coordinator's ad-hoc efforts. Aside from Transit Windsor's signboards (only on newer buses) there is no public notification of smog alerts from the City or County. | D |
| Staff a hotline and website to provide information, advice and referrals regarding smog advisory and appropriate responses. | A hotline does not exist and no independent website has been created. This is an egregious failure especially since the City of Windsor recently launched a <i>litterbug</i> hotline. The <i>litterbug</i> project will reportedly use billboards and pamphlets to educate the public about littering and illegal dumping. One <i>litterbug</i> hotline project worker reportedly told the Windsor Star, "It's important that children learn early about the dangers of polluting." The City's Air Quality Campaign doesn't even have a pamphlet! | F |
| iii) SUGGESTED ACTIONS TO ALLEVIATE AIR QUALITY IMPACTS (Suspend or Reduce...) | | |
| Non-essential motor vehicle use (use transit and alternative travel; delay deliveries and errands; use teleconferencing in lieu of driving to meetings; for essential vehicle use, priority to alternative fuels/zero emission vehicles) | There is no evidence of any progress in this category, partially the result of the lack of a municipal implementation plan. | F |
| Use of gasoline-powered equipment (including lawnmowers, trimmers, leaf blowers, chainsaws) | Violations are widespread – mainly by Parks and Recreation. Parks reports that the use of gas-powered equipment has been reduced on smog advisory days, but admits that there is no overall plan. Further, they assert that grass cutting will continue through smog advisories if it is deemed to be <i>necessary</i> . Provisions like this are subjective. As | F |

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| | for the County, grass cutting operations at the Essex County Civic building continued during smog advisories this summer. | |
| -Gasoline re-fuelling (delay essential re-fuelling until evening hours) -Use of solvents, oil-based paints and stains, solvent-based cleaners and other materials containing volatile organic compounds (VOCs) -Road and path sweeping operations -Use of air conditioning in all vehicles and buildings; use of lights | In all four categories there is no evidence that any of these actions were reduced or suspended by City or County Departments. We can only assume that it was business as usual. The Windsor Utilities Commission (WUC), for example, had young workers painting fire hydrants on some of the worst smog days of 2002. Overall, there is no sign of a long-term strategy to implement any of these actions. This demonstrates both a lack of commitment to the Plan's initiatives, as well as a lack of communication with the public, a continuing problem for the successful implementation of the plan. | F |
| Pesticide spraying | Evidence of action in this category remains incomplete. Windsor Parks and Recreation reported that all pesticide contractors are required to suspend spraying on air quality advisory days, but admitted that there are deficiencies in their smog advisory notification system. | F |
| Road resurfacing and paving; asphalt roofing | A much-hyped voluntary commitment strategy by the Heavy Construction Association was forwarded to City Council. Although the County Warden, Windsor Mayor and Ontario Minister of the Environment endorsed it, members of the Air Quality Committee were never invited to discuss its merits or shortcomings. Because compliance was voluntary, there remained no penalties or effective restrictions for paving on smog days. This is a good example of how members of the Air Quality Committee, and by extension the public, are not being consulted on pertinent issues. | F |
| Outdoor activities for vulnerable groups (children, elderly, those with heart or respiratory problems) | The Air Quality Coordinator has reported contacting some healthcare and day care facilities via fax. Any reduction in outdoor activities as a result of the Coordinator's actions is unknown. A strategy to communicate with parks users (ie. Little League baseball, soccer, etc.) has not been established. No effective public notification system has been established. Communication with local school boards has been insufficient. | D |
| Municipal, industrial and agricultural point and area source emissions of ozone precursors and particulate | There is no evidence of reduction in this area by either City or County point source polluters. Provincial efforts and/or assistance in this category have been woeful. Credible data for programmes such as Drive Clean have not been provided to the public. The province has only recently mandated a pollutant emissions inventory for point sources. Public access to this data will be limited since the Ministry of the Environment will not produce a summary report for the public containing regional and Provincial-level analysis. | F |
| Vehicle idling | The City passed an Anti-idling bylaw in June 2001 after approximately eighteen months of deliberation. There has been no public education campaign about vehicle idling or the bylaw. Similarly, enforcement of the bylaw has been nil. Enforcement and education about the idling bylaw could improve this grade. County members at the Air Quality Committee have stated that they do not intend to address this issue. | F |
| Use of motorboats and recreational vehicles | Things are actually progressing in the opposite direction. The City's riverfront plan for a transient marina in Windsor's downtown has progressed behind closed doors. | F |
| - Requirement of formal office attire - Rigid (inflexible) work schedules | For these initiatives there is no evidence that any type of communication or incentives were offered to City of Windsor employees. | F |

Table II: Local Smog Prevention Initiatives (long term strategies)

| What The City Promised: | What The City Delivered: | GRADE |
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| i) PROMOTION OF ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL | | |
| <p>a. General</p> <p>Develop and implement regional transportation plan to improving air quality.</p> <p>That the City of Windsor commit to a timetable for re-routing diesel trucks away from the tunnel and downtown core, and further, to a traffic engineering study of truck traffic on Huron Church Road.</p> | <p>A regional transportation study has begun. There are no signs of a plan to re-route truck traffic away from Windsor's downtown. Official discussion of upgrading this region's trade corridor (ie. Huron Church Rd, etc.) has virtually ignored possible air quality impacts. An Air Quality Committee member, representing Essex County Council, opposed requesting senior-level government funding for a regional transportation network; no explanation of his position was offered. The County of Essex continues to provide support for the NAFTA Superhighway Coalition.</p> | F |
| <p>Human-Powered Transportation</p> <p>Enhance infrastructure (bicycle lanes/paths, sidewalks, racks, mixed mode)</p> <p>Provide support for employees (showers, secure storage for bicycles, financial incentives to ride or walk)</p> <p>Require staff to walk or cycle when appropriate (e.g., police, parking enforcement, couriers, deliveries)</p> <p>Require provision of secure bicycle storage in new developments</p> <p>Promote walking and cycling through education and partnership with community groups and local businesses (e.g., bike share programme, "walking school bus")</p> | <p>Windsor Council endorsed the Windsor Bicycling Committee Bicycle Use Master Plan (BUMP) in 2001. Unfortunately, several Councillors continue to view bicycle infrastructure as secondary to motor-vehicle infrastructure; some Councillors are now openly challenging on-road bicycle lanes.</p> <p>Bicycle lanes on Windsor streets (and plans for more bicycle lanes) are a positive step, however, there has been no evidence of progress in any of the other listed items.</p> <p>Bike to Work Month was a success. More initiatives like this need to be implemented.</p> <p>Bicycle rack/parking requirements for new developments need to be extended to existing commercial and industrial areas.</p> <p>Bicycle lanes and/or better road access for cyclists must become a key issue for City Council if BUMP is to be fully implemented – and for this grade to be improved. Bicycle links to other municipalities as well as an education campaign for both cyclists and motorists will also be essential.</p> | C |
| <p>b. Transit Use</p> <p>-Develop and implement incentives to encourage increased transit use (e.g., subsidize transit passes, education)</p> <p>-Study feasibility of regional express buses, preferential fare structure, financial support, infrastructure (express lanes)</p> <p>-Promote corporate commuter service</p> <p>-Develop options for rural residents</p> <p>-Enhance public education programme to encourage ridership</p> | <p>Although there has been criticism that county residents' use of the City of Windsor roadways goes unsubsidised, there has been no provision of alternatives to driving one's car. Transit Windsor deserves credit for continuing the bike rack programme on 17 of its buses, promoting transit passes for University of Windsor students, and pursuing funding for free transit on smog days. Unfortunately, Transit Windsor suffers from a lack of senior government funding and a seemingly indifferent City Council. Future initiatives must include: elimination of diesel buses, low emission or zero emission fleets, increased service during critical smog time and free service on smog alert days. Options for rural residents do not exist despite expressions of interest from many County residents, as well as the towns Essex and Kingsville, for the expansion of Transit Windsor into the County.</p> | C |
| <p>c. Ride Sharing</p> <p>Provide economic and other incentives to promote ride sharing; remove disincentives (e.g., subsidized parking, priority parking spaces/lot, guaranteed ride)</p> <p>Provide assistance for development of trip reduction programmes (e.g., education, ride matching service, challenge programmes)</p> <p>Designate priority lanes for ride share</p> | <p>There is no sign of any effort in this area. The City and the County need to look at other municipalities that are already practising these small but not insignificant measures.</p> <p>No progress on Windsor-Detroit water taxi services. A Windsor-Detroit gondola feasibility project remains in nascent form.</p> | F |

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| <p>vehicles Boat Services Study feasibility of water taxi or passenger ferry service between regional locations</p> | | |
| <p>d. Discourage Motor Vehicle Use Decrease amount of land dedicated to vehicles through promotion of denser development, mixed-use communities; provide incentives to developers (consistent with official plan policies) Restrict use of private cars (from certain areas, every other day, etc.) Modify parking policies and by-law requirements (e.g., shift subsidies from parking to transit or alternatives, raise parking fees, raise parking permit fee for second car, by-law to reduce number of paved spaces provided in new developments and redevelopment)</p> | <p>These measures are not being met; there is evidence to the contrary. Plans to construct road bridges across Little River are in the process of being approved. New communities in Windsor and Essex County reflect outdated modes of land-use planning and development (ie. near total reliance on automobiles, absence of community services in new residential neighbourhoods, etc..) Mixed-use planning policies seem foreign to local bureaucrats and the developers who direct planning.</p> <p>Parking policies have included giving free parking passes, rather than transit tokens, for city committee members attending meetings at City Hall, approval of new parking garages downtown as well as a municipally-funded multi-million dollar parking deck for the new Chrysler-Canada headquarters in downtown Windsor. The Riverfront Plan includes increases of parking surfaces on the riverfront by 40%.</p> | F |
| <p>e. Alternative Work Options Allow flexible hours to avoid peak road use Telecommuting (work at home, satellite offices), Teleconferencing/video-conferencing in lieu of driving to meetings.</p> | <p>No evidence of action on any of these items.</p> | F |
| <p>ii) REDUCTION OF EMISSIONS FROM VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT</p> | | |
| <p>a. Fleet and Equipment Reduction and Replacement Initiate programme to replace fleet of vehicles with alternative fuel, zero emission vehicles; programme to replace high emissions equipment Promote fleet reduction/replacement for local businesses through cooperative programmes Study feasibility of lawn mower, other equipment or vehicle buy-back or rebate programme</p> | <p>Natural Gas and Propane-powered vehicles, now among the City-owned fleet, are examples of alternative fuel use. Zero emission fuel cells would be preferable.</p> <p>The Air Quality Committee passed two Clean Car Campaign resolutions regarding municipal fleet purchases. Which of the two resolutions should guide City/County purchasing policies remains unclear. Whether or not the City/County have altered their purchasing policies as a result of either resolution is similarly unclear.</p> <p>The City should set targets and a timeline to fulfil the requirements of this category; there is no overall strategy.</p> | D |
| <p>b. Emissions Reduction Install anti-idling timer on fleet vehicles Use reformulated gasoline, low sulphur fuel and alternative fuels Encourage the availability of low sulphur gasoline (prior to regulatory deadline) and alternative fuels at retail stations Require contracting or leasing companies to comply with specified standards for vehicles and equipment or with certification programmes (such as Drive Clean)</p> | <p>There has been no discussion of anti-idling timers or the other innovations listed. We reiterate the need for reporting of all departments on whether they are implementing these measures. Transit Windsor is participating in a pilot project that is experimenting with water/diesel fuel mixtures designed to reduce emissions, but this programme, funded by Sunoco Inc., is temporary and does not reflect a permanent policy change of the Transit Windsor Board.</p> | D |

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| <p>Implement an inspection and maintenance programme for fleet vehicles</p> <p>Require installation of vapour recovery systems at fleet refueling stations</p> <p>Support regulations to mandate vapour recovery at retail fuel stations</p> <p>Lobby, and co-operate with, other levels of government to accelerate and improve mandatory emissions testing programmes, anti-tampering regulations, air quality standards</p> | | |
| <p>iii) ENERGY USE REDUCTION</p> | | |
| <p>ACTION</p> <p>a. Power Sources</p> <p>Promote use of cogeneration, district heating and cooling</p> <p>Procure electricity from alternative power (non-coal fired) sources</p> | <p>The downtown district energy system, begun in 1996, remains the only encouraging action in this category. But it preceded the Air Quality Action Plan and was serendipitous - not an action generated from an air quality action strategy.</p> <p>The Brighton Beach Power facility, given unanimous support by City Council, is a step backward for this category. The facility, not a cogeneration (cogen) facility, will be less efficient and produce more pollution than cogen natural gas plants. The Provincial government altered environmental assessment requirements for electrical generating facilities in order to allow natural-gas powered plants to contribute to the electrical grid quickly and thus ease the strains on the system from Provincially mandated reorganization.</p> | <p>F</p> |
| <p>b. Energy Efficiency</p> <p>Retrofit existing buildings for energy and hot water efficiency; promote private sector retrofit through cooperative programmes (e.g., Toronto's Better Buildings Partnership)</p> <p>Promote energy efficiency in new design and construction</p> | <p>New construction projects and the refurbishing of older structures present opportunities for the City to promote energy efficient design. There has been no evidence that such opportunities are being exploited. The absence of such initiatives is particularly evident in the Canderel project plans, which call for roof parking instead of a "green" rooftop garden. Representatives from the City of Windsor, until recently, have refused to take advantage of the Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) programme. Ninety-nine municipal governments in Canada are members of the programme and have committed to working toward greenhouse gas emission reductions in their respective municipalities. City Council will consider joining the PCP in December, and this may improve the grade in the future.</p> | <p>F</p> |
| <p>c. Reduce Urban Heat Island Effect</p> <p>Use lighter colour pavement and roofing; alternatives to paved surfaces</p> <p>Use strategic tree planting to shade pavement and buildings and protect existing shade trees</p> <p>Increase green space (reclaim pavement), restore natural areas, naturalized planting (to reduce amount of grass), native species, use of rooftop gardens on public and private property</p> | <p>The actions in this category have taken a turn for the worse from last year. In some respects, the City has been stagnant on these issues. For example, there is no sign of a tree-planting programme. In other ways, the City has worked against the measures. More parking garages are being constructed downtown with hard surfaced roofs, rather than rooftop gardens. Many downtown developments proceed with no evidence of concern for the issues in this category.</p> <p>The County of Essex Official Plan has lax controls protecting natural areas. City of Windsor's eastside developments included the emaciation of a natural area across from Peche Island and ambitious plans to extend roads. The Brighton Beach area has been zoned heavy industrial. Representatives of the City of Windsor are aware of viable options to decrease the urban heat island effect, such as rooftop gardens. There has been a conspicuous lack of interest among many City officials in acknowledging the importance of environmental improvements in design, let alone requiring mega-project developments to include innovative, sustainable design elements.</p> | <p>F</p> |

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| <p>iv) OTHER</p> | | |
| <p>a. Smog Prevention and Reduction Plan Implementation Establish clean air fund; direct fees, fines and other moneys into the fund (to be used for anti-smog initiatives) Set emissions reductions targets Establish programme for plan evaluation; audits</p> | <p>Funding, target setting and evaluation are fundamental aspects of any anti-smog action plan. Regrettably, they are absent here. Funding allocated to the Air Quality Committee is controlled by Public Works—who have yet to show a commitment to clean air. There is no established programme for target setting or evaluation; Public Works officials have publicly stated they do not believe target setting and evaluation of progress are important to air quality initiatives. Several municipalities in Canada, including Edmonton and Toronto, have demonstrated the efficacy of creating and directing finances through clean air funds to mitigate pollutant emissions. The Partners for Climate Protection programme is an example of a national programme designed specifically for municipalities to reduce their emissions.</p> | <p>F</p> |
| <p>b. Education and Communication Develop and implement a comprehensive smog prevention education and communication plan Prepare annual report on smog action and goal achievement Establish awards for meeting or exceeding goals and for innovative smog reduction ideas</p> | <p>Education is key to the success of any public interest campaign. Communication is the cornerstone of public education. But despite its importance to public health, no action has been taken.</p> | <p>F</p> |
| <p>c. Particulate and Dust Reduction Develop programme for dust suppression at construction sites and aggregate storage facilities Develop programme for dust reduction from roads</p> | <p>Although some industries have their own programmes, there is no overall city effort to encourage others to follow suit. The City does have a programme to limit dust on main roadways; it needs to be expanded and the private sector should be encouraged to follow suit. Dust at paving operations throughout the city remained ubiquitous. A combined sweeping and vacuuming system, such as the one used by Hamilton, could be looked into by the City of Windsor to further reduce air-borne particulate matter.</p> | <p>F</p> |
| <p>d. Phase Out of Cosmetic Use of Pesticides Educate on alternatives to pesticide use, “green” lawn care</p> | <p>In October 2000, City Council finally adopted as its goal the elimination of the cosmetic use of pesticides on municipal properties. A timetable that will culminate in a phase-out has not been adopted. Despite City departments’ claims of pesticide reductions, there has not been public verification of reductions. A second Aquacide (steam sprayer) unit has been purchased by the Parks and Recreation department and is intended to replace some herbicide spraying. LaSalle has a corporate policy against spraying; other local municipalities should follow their lead. Ultimately, Windsor Parks officials are resistant to working with the public on the issue of pesticide reduction and refuse to address a petition (submitted in 2001 and containing over twelve hundred signatures) calling for an end to spraying on public land. There is plenty of opportunity for improvement in this category.</p> | <p>D</p> |



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Citizens Environment Alliance

Appendix A

Windsor Essex County Air Quality Committee attendance:

| Committee Member | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Total |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Rep. for the City of Windsor | | | | | | | | | | | |
| © Bill Marra, Windsor City Councillor (ward 4) | | -- | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | -- | -- | -- | 4 |
| Eddie Francis, Windsor City Councillor (ward 5) | | -- | | | | | | -- | -- | -- | 0 |
| Rep. for the County of Essex | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Jim Reid, Deputy-Mayor of Leamington | ✓ | -- | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | -- | -- | -- | 5 |
| Nelson Santos, Deputy-Mayor of Kingsville | ✓ | -- | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | -- | -- | -- | 5 |
| Rep. for Labour | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Canadian Auto Workers Regional Environmental Council | | -- | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | -- | -- | -- | 5 |
| Windsor and District Labour Council | | -- | | | | | | -- | -- | -- | 0 |
| Rep. for Medical Community | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sandwich Community Health Centre | ✓ | -- | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | -- | -- | -- | 5 |
| Essex County Medical Society | | -- | | | | | | -- | -- | -- | 0 |
| Rep. for Industry | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Daimler Chrysler Canada | ✓ | -- | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | -- | -- | -- | 5 |
| Windsor and District Chamber of Commerce | ✓ | -- | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | -- | -- | -- | 5 |
| Rep. for the Public | | | | | | | | | | | |
| *Citizens Environment Alliance | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| **Miriam Goldstein or Pam Goldstein, Citizen | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| TOTALS... | 5 | -- | 4 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 | -- | -- | -- | ●● |

© Chair of the Committee

*Formal resignation made in late 2001.

**Informal resignation made in late 2001.

The February meeting was cancelled.

Quorum was not attained in January or March.

The committee was adjourned in July 2002.

Appendix B

What is Smog?

Smog is a combination of ground-level ozone and fine airborne particles.

Ground-level ozone is a colourless and highly irritating gas that forms just above the earth's surface. It is produced when two primary pollutants react in sunlight and stagnant air. These two primary pollutants are nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Ground-level ozone not only affects human health, it can damage vegetation and decrease the productivity of some crops.

Airborne particles are microscopic and remain suspended in the air for some time. Particles can be both primary pollutants and secondary pollutants, sent directly into the atmosphere in the form of windblown dust and soil, pollen and spores. Secondary particles are formed through chemical reactions involving nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, VOCs and ammonia. Numerous studies have linked particulate matter (PM) to aggravated cardiac and respiratory (heart and lung) diseases such as asthma, bronchitis and emphysema and to various forms of heart disease. Children and the elderly, as well as people with respiratory disorders such as asthma, are particularly susceptible to health effects caused by PM.

Scientists now understand that there is no "threshold," or safe level, for exposure to PM or ground-level ozone. Further, PM and ground level ozone are not limited to urban areas; their presence is widespread throughout North America.

"It's really quite dramatic. Until very recently, we believed there was some sort of magic threshold, and once you crossed it, things got toxic," stated Dr. Ted Boadway of the Ontario Medical Association in early May 2001. "But we were wrong. We can now say definitively that air pollution operates on a graded and completely linear way. A little bit affects everybody a little bit, a little more affects everybody a little more. "This is a quite a radical departure in our understanding of smog. The bottom line is there's no comfort level. What you can see does hurt you. But what you can't see hurts you as well."

In Ontario a smog advisory, or *smog day*, occurs when the concentration of ground-level ozone is expected to exceed an Ontario Air Quality Index (AQI) of 50, which is approximately 80ppb (parts per billion). Readings below 50 are described as *good* or *moderate* air quality.

Despite the interruption in the Smog Advisory Alert Network caused by the labour dispute between the Province and its staff, the Ministry of the Environment still issued twenty-two (22) Smog Advisories for Windsor-Essex County in 2002. The data also reveal that there were fifty additional days when the air quality in Windsor was described as *moderate* by the Ministry.

Since recent studies show that there is no threshold below which ozone or particles will cause no effects on the lungs, the Province of Ontario needs to adjust its Air Quality Index reporting to reflect this reality. Governments need to communicate that all levels of pollutants, even the lowest, can cause harm to some people.

For more information, please see Toronto Public Health (2000) *Toronto's Air: Let's Make It Healthy*. TPH, Toronto; Health Canada and Environment Canada (1999) *National Ambient Air Quality Objectives for Particulate Matter, Science Assessment Document*. Health Canada and Environment Canada, Ottawa; Health Canada and Environment Canada (1999) *National Ambient Air Quality Objectives for Ground-Level Ozone, Science Assessment Document*. Health Canada and Environment Canada, Ottawa.

Appendix C

Air Quality Quotes:

“Every time we make a recommendation, it’s like we’re banging our heads against the wall. Nobody is listening.”

© Pam Goldstein, former “public-at-large” member of the Windsor Essex County Air Quality Committee, April 2001.

“You won’t know how to make reductions if you don’t know what your emissions are.”

© Louise Comeau, Director of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ Centre for Sustainable Community Development, in an October 2002 interview with CBC Radio One.

“Particulate matter and ozone are the key smog pollutants and are responsible for more than 1,900 premature deaths a year in Ontario. We see the serious health effects that people exposed to these pollutants endure everyday....”

© Ontario Medical Association President, Dr. Elliot Halparin, August 2002.

“Studying the human health effects of air pollution has often been challenging, because it is difficult to isolate from other factors that also influence health, such as smoking, diet and exposure to poor indoor air quality. But recent studies are now confirming what intuitively makes sense - air pollution really does make us sick, and it may cause disease as much as it makes existing problems worse.”

© David Suzuki, Ph.D., geneticist, broadcaster, author, teacher and Chair of the David Suzuki Foundation, March 2002.

“It isn't pollution that's harming the environment. It's the impurities in our air and water that are doing it.”

© U.S. President George W. Bush, 2002.

“Recent studies have shown that every major Canadian urban centre has levels of ground-level ozone high enough to pose a health risk.”

© Environment Canada Website, 2002.

“You will be interested to know that the comments submitted to the Michigan DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) by the Citizen’s Environment(al) Alliance on July 13, 2001, were taken into consideration and resulted in environmental improvements to the facility permit.”

© David Anderson, Federal Minister of the Environment, in a letter to the City of Windsor regarding the Minergy Sewage Sludge Incinerator to be built in Detroit’s Del Ray Neighbourhood, less than one kilometre from Windsor/LaSalle, Ontario.

“How about a strong show of support for the Citizen’s Environment(al) Alliance, Windsor’s only environmental advocacy group that has the courage to confront and stand up to the major environmental offenders. ... if the people of Windsor and Essex County don’t take some action to protect the environment and ultimately protect their health, don’t trust or expect the government to do it for you.”

© Vox Magazine Columnist Linda Balga, March 2002.