

Draft Declaration Climate Change + Communities: A Call to Action



CIP CONFERENCE
CLIMATE CHANGE
+ COMMUNITIES:
A CALL TO ACTION
OCTOBER 2 - 5, 2010. MONTREAL, QUEBEC

- Climate change, caused by the excessive consumption of energy derived from hydrocarbons, is a reality. Without a significant reduction in the production of Greenhouse Gases (GHG's), the earth's surface temperature will continue to increase to levels that threaten the earth's ecological well-being and associated life systems. Those outcomes will be catastrophic.

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- Human behaviour is a central cause of climate change. Modifying human behaviour is critical if energy consumption is to be altered and GHG's are to be reduced.
- While international and national initiatives have struggled to deliver meaningful reduction of GHG production, local and regional governments appear to be positioned to develop and implement mitigation and adaptation strategies, programmes and initiatives that could significantly address energy consumption and GHG production, and minimise detrimental effects of climate change.

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- It is in cities, suburbs and rural communities that much of the intervention to address climate change will need to take place. Planners are well positioned to lead integrated action to reduce GHG's. The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) represents 7,000 planners across Canada. CIP has a history of climate change action, including partnerships with communities, government and adoption of a National Policy on Climate Change. As a member of the Global Planners Network (GPN), CIP endorses the GPN Communique.

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- This Declaration is an extension of that work and, more specifically, an outcome of the CIP hosted International Congress on Climate Change + Communities: A Call to Action. After three days of idea exchange, discussion and reflection, the attendees have prepared the following Call to Action.

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- **A Call to Action: The Response**

From the Congress discussions, it became apparent that, to address the urgent challenges of climate change, planners need to respond firmly with actions that:

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- bring energy and climate change science into the policy decision process by creating partnerships and inviting dialogue between concerned institutions, organizations and levels of governments;
- develop effective policy through the lens of climate change and thus integrate strong mitigation and adaptation actions in all strategies touching the places where we live;
- articulate an open and transparent discourse about climate change and the need for local political action;

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- respect the integrity of intergenerational and intercultural processes;
- support planners and other related professions by maintaining existing (and developing new) toolkits that assist in mitigation and adaptation;
- promote collaboration and knowledge sharing with other disciplines and join forces with all relevant organizations, institutions, governments to change the way we live;

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- address the complexity of climate change through integrated responses;
- advocate for relevant urban solutions and condemn unsustainable activities;
- tackle immediate challenges and achieve measurable actions;
- confirm they have a credible voice through their practice, innovative approaches and value as translators for technical and policy solutions.

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Call to Action: A Statement of Commitment:

Members of CIP commit to:

- livable, sustainable, healthy, safe and welcoming places that have a measureable, direct and significant impact on mitigating climate change;
- the transformation of suburbs into viable carbon neutral communities;

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- human scale transit that moves large volumes of people in energy efficient low carbon modes;
- integrated design and planning for community building that promotes effective and resilient mitigation and adaptation processes; and
- continual exploration of new relevant practices that address climate change.