

To the Mayor and Council,

On March 15, Mayor Crompton raised a pivotal concern: the elusive climate targets of RMOW and Whistler. The heart of the matter, it seems, rests with our elected leadership.

It's becoming increasingly apparent that the gap in achieving Whistler's climate ambitions might just be the reflection in our leadership mirror. Our leaders, you are tasked with steering the ship, yet the inquiries directed at staff about unrealized commitments seem more like echoes in a void than steps toward accountability.

There's a pattern of questioning at Big Moves Progress Report updates, while seemingly earnest, skirts around the harder truths that leadership requires confronting. It's as if there's a reluctance to veer from the path of least resistance, possibly for fear of unsettling the status quo or the electorate's favor.

The challenge of implementing robust, needle-moving policies is not insignificant. It demands a blend of courage and foresight, qualities requisite for leaders who aim to navigate the community through turbulent waters. Leadership, after all, is about making the tough calls, even when they ruffle feathers.

So, where do we go from here? If Whistler is to truly meet its climate targets, there needs to be a tangible alignment of actions and budget priorities towards emission reduction efforts.

First off, we need a solid plan. There was a moment when we seemed on the brink of something transformative, but we veered off course. It's time to cast a wider net for solutions, seeking expertise beyond our local confines. My proposal from three years ago, which has since gathered dust, could be a starting point. Let's budget for both planning and implementation.

Transit targets won't be met with mere discussions around bus service. Look to the global stage: trams, trains, and mass transit solutions that work. If we're serious about our climate commitments, let's start planning for infrastructure that matches this seriousness.

Safe cycling alternatives are non-negotiable for a sustainable community. This requires bringing in specialists from cycling paradises like the Netherlands or Denmark, not half-hearted local attempts. Councilor DeJong, it's high time those comparisons to Copenhagen materialize into actionable policies.

The elephant in the room: large commercial buildings guzzling fossil gas need a green makeover. This monumental task falls squarely on your shoulders, our elected officials. Expert consultations, budget allocations, private public partnerships, and following through on expert advice are the steps forward.

In the chorus of voices clamoring for climate action, Councilor Jewitt's stands out. It's a testament to the impact that dedicated advocacy from within the council can achieve.

To the remaining council members, the road forks here: either we tread the path of transparency, admitting the current strategy's inadequacies, or we pivot, earmarking serious funds for substantial climate initiatives.

The time for half measures has passed. Whistler's future hinges on the decisions made today. Let's choose a course that aligns with the urgent need for environmental stewardship and community well-being.

With respect and hope for decisive action,

Brendan Ladner