



City of Langford

Declaration of the Right to a Healthy Environment

WHEREAS the City of Langford understands that people are part of the environment and that a healthy environment is inextricably linked to the well-being of our community;

AND WHEREAS the David Suzuki Foundation Blue Dot Tour has inspired many Canadians to request that the right to a healthy environment be enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Langford endorses the following declaration:

“All people have the right to live in a healthy environment, including;

- The right to breathe clean air;
- The right to drink clean water;
- The right to consume safe food;
- The right to access nature;
- The right to know about pollutants and contaminants released into the local environment;
- The right to participate in decision making that will affect the environment.

The City of Langford has the responsibility, within its jurisdiction to respect, protect, fulfill and promote these rights.

The City of Langford shall apply the precautionary principle: where threats of serious or irreversible damage to human health or the environment exist, the City of Langford shall take cost-effective measures to prevent the degradation of the environment and protect the health of its citizens. Lack of full scientific certainty shall not be viewed as sufficient reason for the City of Langford to postpone such measures.

The City of Langford shall apply full-cost accounting: when evaluating reasonably foreseeable costs of proposed actions and alternatives, the City of Langford will consider costs to human health and the environment.

By December 31st, 2015, the City of Langford will consider objectives, targets, timelines and actions within its jurisdiction to fulfill residents’ right to a healthy environment, including options to:

- Ensure equitable distribution of environmental benefits and burdens within the municipality, preventing the development of pollution “hot spots”;
- Ensure infrastructure and development projects protect the environment, including air quality;
- Address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and implementing adaptation measures;

- Responsibly increase density;
- Prioritize walking, cycling and public transit as preferred modes of transportation;
- Ensure adequate infrastructure for the provision of safe and accessible drinking water;
- Promote the availability of safe foods;
- Reduce solid waste and promote recycling and composting
- Establish and maintain accessible green spaces in all residential neighbourhoods.

The City of Langford shall review these objectives, targets, timelines and actions every five (5) years, and evaluate progress towards fulfilling this declaration.

The City of Langford shall consult with residents as part of this process.”

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City of Langford forward this resolution to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities, the Union of BC Municipalities, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and member local governments, requesting favourable consideration by local councils and by delegates at the 2015 meetings of these associations.