



**OREC**

Ottawa Renewable  
Energy Cooperative Inc.

March 20, 2013

Dear Councillor McRae and Mayor Watson,

The Ottawa Renewable Energy Co-operative (OREC) would like to thank you for hosting the GHG Roundtable on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. OREC is very much looking forward to participating. We represent 155 members across the City who have invested \$1 million into solar rooftop projects in Ottawa.

We have been participating in discussions with a group of stakeholders prior to this Roundtable and we would like to echo the perspectives of that group by requesting that the overall objectives of the Roundtable this weekend be focused on the following:

- 1. Refreshing the old *Air Quality and Climate Change Management Plan*, ensuring 'community' greenhouse gas reduction targets are included; and**
- 2. Finalizing the Plan before the end of 2013.**

At present, the *Air Quality and Climate Change Management Plan* (AQCCMP) is out-of-date and needs a refresh as well as science-based targets. To ensure that the Plan has 'legs', the City needs to allocate funding and staff to update the Plan, implement the programs and activities, and ensure ongoing measurement of the progress towards the GHG emission reduction targets. We noticed that the City did not achieve its previous targets in the 2004 AQCCMP, missing the targets by 17.5% and 31% at the 'corporate' and 'community' levels, respectively. We feel strongly that community level reductions are the most important to focus on, as they represent **95% of all** local emissions.

Moving forward, if the City wants to make more of an impact at the 'community' level, it need not look much further than the 2004 AQCCMP's *Strategic Directions*, which set out in detail the areas of our society causing greenhouse gas emissions as well as potential strategies for reducing them.

OREC is in a unique position to offer the City support in achieving both GHG reductions and community engagement. As mentioned, we currently have approximately \$1 million worth of solar rooftop projects in Ottawa, with plans to build another \$2.5 million in the coming year. More importantly, however, is that we have developed a structure of social finance in Ottawa. This tool can be applicable to many other applications that could be collaborations with the City of Ottawa. The most obvious opportunity for collaboration is to install solar systems on the City's rooftops while engaging the local neighbourhood in the investment. OREC is also

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preparing itself to expand to other types of renewable energy, including biogas and wind, of which there may be opportunities on City land such as in the greenbelt.

Moreover, our social finance model could be adopted to finance energy efficiency retrofits. This is timely, as we understand the City is considering launching a game-changing program using the property improvement charge mechanism (known as the Pay As You Save program or the Collaboration on Home Energy Efficiency Retrofits in Ontario program). Funds for this could be leveraged through the sale of shares or bonds to residents of Ottawa, keeping both the investment money as well as savings local. As you know, the more that local money can be leveraged in our own community, the more ripple effects it will have on job creation and the local economy. Portland, Oregon has been demonstrating such a model for a number of years, with a community investment partner, the Reinvestment Fund, providing equity that the City then loans to building-owners for energy efficiency retrofits of their buildings. (See <http://www.trfund.com/financing/energy/energy.html> for more details).

Ottawa has the opportunity to inspire other cities to be champions for climate change. We hope that this Roundtable launches a movement towards responsibility in Ottawa for our GHG emissions as well as ongoing dialogue between the City and the wealth of expertise that exists in the Ottawa community. OREC would be happy to sit on an advisory group of stakeholders to help and ensure that progress is made on the topics discussed this Saturday.

Sincerely,

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