Mayor's Youth Climate Leadership Team (YCLT)
Minutes

Wednesday, December 18, 2024, 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Meeting Room G & H
511 Royal Avenue

PRESENT:	
Nadine Nakagawa	Council Representative
Silisha Ali	Youth Services Coordinator
Leya Behra	Deputy Director of Climate Action
Erika Mashig	Manager, Parks and Open Space Planning, Design + Construction
Laura Sampliner	Manager, Climate Action
Paolo Zenone	Youth Centre Supervisor
Juno Avila-Clark	YCLT Member
Elizabeth Cavanagh	YCLT Member
Uliana Chernykh	YCLT Member
Ruqaiyah Clouden	YCLT Member
Shreeya Jagadeesh	YCLT Member
Curtis Lever	YCLT Member
Max MacInnes-Cann	YCLT Member
Lili Mizuno	YCLT Member
Mahsa Soltani	YCLT Member
Lucille Stathis	YCLT Member
Dione Costanzo	Notetaker, Raincoast Ventures Ltd.
REGRETS:	
Mayor Patrick Johnstone	Facilitator
Justine Rosendo	YCLT Member
Leo Li	YCLT Member
Irene Lu	YCLT Member

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1. Welcome and Introductions

Silisha Ali, Youth Services Coordinator, opened the meeting at 4:11 p.m. and welcomed participants.

Councillor Nadine Nakagawa offered a land acknowledgement, recognizing that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered lands of the Halkomelem-speaking peoples.

A round of self-introductions was followed by comments from Councillor Nakagawa regarding the climate perspective and approach of the City of New Westminster.

2. Working Together

Paulo Zenone, Youth Center Supervisor, and Silisha Ali provided information and guidelines about safety and boundaries in consideration of the varying ages of the Youth Climate Change Leaders.

It was noted that laws protect people of a certain age and guide appropriate behaviour, and the following topics were discussed:

- Consent and informed consent
- Younger people looking up to adults (18+), putting them in a position of power
- Keeping conversations and topics public
- Keeping personal information private
- Considering that some people might be influenced or not interested in certain subjects
- Keeping personal contact professional
- Consideration of language and context of language.

Solutions were discussed to facilitate communication and information sharing between YCLT members. The Engagement Team plans to utilize the “BeHeard” platform, which offers features like timeline posts, surveys, polls, and a chat forum. Be Heard will be introduced at the January 2025 YCLT meeting, and all participants will need to create profiles to access the platform.

To support collaboration outside regular YCLT meetings, one working session per month will be held at Century House, where the Youth Program is centered. This space will provide a way for members to work and communicate outside of YCLT meetings.

Youth under the age of 18 will receive a permission form outlining information about the group and methods of communication that will be used.

At the previous YCLT meeting, participants reviewed categories of work and strategies for organizing thoughts and ideas. Seven Bold Steps for Climate Action were introduced, and participants were requested to consider areas of specific interest to them and, as homework, begin formulating ideas, problems, and solutions which would inform projects for the group.

3. Voting Results

Leya Behra, Deputy Director of Climate Action, provided an overview of the Seven Bold Steps for Climate Action, designed to illustrate what the City of New Westminster could

look like if its climate targets were achieved, and shared the results of a voting exercise conducted during a previous YCLT meeting, where members identified which of the Steps they found most interesting.

Voting Results in order of popularity:

1. Robust Urban Forest (27 votes)
2. Carbon Free Corporation (14 votes)
3. Quality People Centered Public Realm (12 votes)
4. Car Light Community
5. Carbon Free Energy
6. Pollution Free Vehicles
7. Carbon Free Homes and Buildings

4. Project Brainstorming Activity

YCLT members were invited to share any thoughts or ideas they had conceived or were interested in developing further with the group. Discussion ensued, and the following comments were offered:

- Transform underutilized grass spaces, such as those in front of 7-Eleven, into areas with native plants and other greenery to mitigate flooding and enhance curbside appeal
- Introduce bio-soils (plants and rocks) in high-emission areas
- Create green walkways by reclaiming 10% of road space, reimagining roads as people-centered spaces
- Develop green spaces close to the river to promote ecosystem development, with bio-filtration systems to remove pollutants
- Utilize permeable surfaces to manage rainwater
- Explore repurposing road space for community uses, such as bike paths and pedestrian walkways
- Repurpose the original Pattullo Bridge as a green pedestrian walkway
- Investigate the potential of turning leftover spaces into community connection areas
- Encourage building designs with multi-purpose underground parking that can be used for parks or other uses
- Address public opposition to reducing traffic through education about alternatives like biking and walking
- Promote the removal of underused parking spaces, such as sections of downtown parkades, to create people-centered spaces
- Advocate for safer bike lanes and improved access to bike lanes and bike lock stations
- Improve public transit reliability during winter weather
- Enhance electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, including faster chargers like Tesla's

- Work with local businesses to reduce concerns about reduced car access affecting customer traffic
- Encourage behaviour change through education, as seen with past successes like recycling initiatives led by youth
- Explore "daylighting" local streams to restore ecosystems, such as the Glenbrook Stream
- Collaborate with organizations like Douglas College to map and rediscover New Westminster‘s lost streams
- Integrate public art and creative expression to highlight restored streams and attract public interest
- Establish reduced parking minimums in new developments, especially near transit
- Support legislative changes to promote incentives for biking and electric scooters
- Encourage EV infrastructure through credits for installing home chargers
- Develop public awareness campaigns about the benefits of sustainable transportation and land use
- Use information from City archives to educate residents about New Westminster’s environmental history and the Seven Bold Steps.

Following dinner and brainstorming, YCLT members were divided into three groups to engage in more detailed discussions around the three top Steps for Climate Action as identified through voting:

- Robust Urban Forest
- Quality People Centered Public Realm
- Car Light Community.

Members expressed interest in multiple topics and suggested focussing on one topic/project at a time.

In response to a question about the workflow and process, it was clarified that the immediate goal was to work within the three chosen topic areas to get some actionable thoughts and ideas documented. The three groups will work in parallel, share progress, and take feedback from the group at each meeting.

It was noted that ideas and discussion points from each group will be refined in future meetings and that projects could overlap into more than one of the Seven Bold Steps for Climate Action.

Discussion among groups was documented within each group.

5. Wrap Up

The meeting concluded at 6:00 p.m.