



# MEMBER MOTION

## Section 5.4.4 (b) of Procedure By-law

<b>Meeting:</b>	Committee of the Whole
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	April 3, 2024
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Support for the Decision of the Ontario Energy Board to End the Gas Pipeline Subsidy
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Councillor Scott Thompson

Whereas, residents are struggling with energy bill increases and need relief; and

Whereas, natural gas is no longer the cheapest way to heat homes because electric heat pumps are now much more efficient, can provide all heating needs even in the cold climates, and result in far lower energy bills over the long term compared to gas heating; and

Whereas, natural gas is methane gas, which is a fossil fuel that causes approximately one-third of Ontario's Greenhouse Gas ("GHG") emissions, and must be phased out because it is inconsistent with all climate targets, while heat pumps result in the lowest GHG emissions and are consistent with a zero-carbon future; and

Whereas, the Ontario Energy Board ("OEB") decided to end a subsidy for methane gas pipelines to be built in new residential developments, effective 2025, finding that this would lower energy bills for existing gas customers and improve affordability for new homebuyers, but this decision is at risk of being overturned by the provincial government; and

Whereas, the OEB decision will help lower energy bills and encourage heating and cooling systems that are consistent with climate targets and plans; and

Whereas, the construction of new methane gas pipelines, which have 60-year lifetimes, should not be subsidized because they will result in higher carbon emissions, higher energy bills, higher future decarbonization retrofit costs to get off fossil fuel heating, and a continued financial drain as dollars leave the province to pay for fossil fuels extracted in other jurisdictions; and

Whereas, the City is committed, through its Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP), to achieving a target of net-zero GHG emissions by 2050; and

Whereas, the CEEP recognizes that one of the most significant opportunities to reduce GHGs is through homes and buildings transitioning away from fossil fuel use to electricity and improving their overall energy efficiency; and

Whereas, Richmond Hill initiated home energy retrofit programming in 2023 to encourage energy conservation, lower energy demand, and reduce GHG emissions – including free home energy retrofit webinars, a home energy improvement survey and free consultations with an energy expert, education on heat pumps and energy efficient technologies at the City's 2023 Earth Day event, and initiating a feasibility study for a home energy retrofit financing program; and

Whereas, the City is reviewing its current Sustainable City Building Policy and exploring net zero and net zero-ready requirements for the construction of new City buildings as directed by the Environment Strategy; and

Whereas, Richmond Hill continues to focus on reducing energy consumption and related GHG emissions from corporate buildings in accordance with its Corporate Energy Plan and the CEEP; and

Whereas, Richmond Hill's Sustainability Metrics Program (the City's Green Development Standards), initiated in 2014 and updated in 2023, strongly encourages the incorporation of energy efficiency, alternative and renewable energy, and GHG emissions reductions in private development.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved:

That the City of Richmond Hill expresses its support for the decision of the Ontario Energy Board to end the gas pipeline subsidy and requests that the Ontario Government allow the decision to stand; and

That the Clerk send this resolution to the Premier of Ontario; Todd Smith, Minister of Energy; Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance; Andrea Khanjin, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks; Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services; MPP Daisy Wai; MP Majid Jowhari; MP Leah Taylor Roy; Colin Best, President of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO); the Region of York; and all local municipalities in York Region.

Moved by: Councillor Scott Thompson

Seconded by: