



28th August, 2018

Resort Municipality of Whistler

4325 Blackcomb Way

Whistler, B.C. V0N 1B4

RE: Climate accountability

Dear Mayor and Council,

My Sea to Sky, the Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment (AWARE) and many other community groups are currently working with West Coast Environmental Law (WCEL) on their Climate Accountability campaign, to hold the world's fossil fuel polluters accountable for their role in causing climate harm to our communities. By doing so we can:

- ensure that taxpayers are not the only ones on the hook for the ever-rising costs of preparing for (and recovering from) the impacts of climate change;
- impact the global fossil fuel companies that are contributing most to climate change, and their investors, giving them an incentive to move towards a more sustainable economy; and
- generate a conversation about the role of the fossil fuel industry in harming the health and economies of our communities and shift support to alternative restorative solutions.

Communities across British Columbia are committing to hold fossil fuel polluters accountable by sending climate accountability letters to twenty of the world's largest fossil fuel companies, asking them to pay their fair share for climate costs that are being incurred by each community.

We wanted to ensure Mayor and Council were apprised of the efforts underway as the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) has forwarded a resolution on Climate Accountability to be considered at the upcoming Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), for which Whistler is the host community. We believe this is an opportunity for climate advocacy as called for in the implementation approach in the Community Energy and Climate Action Plan.

We would request that Mayor and Council review the attached information regarding the Climate Accountability campaign and hope that:

- Whistler will support the resolution on Climate Accountability at UBCM; and that
- the Resort Municipality of Whistler will join this initiative and send climate accountability letters¹.

¹ Letters can be customized to specifically address the climate impacts that Whistler is currently planning for, such as changes to precipitation and snowfall, wildfire risk, increased flooding, and local impacts to wildlife and can include the specific steps the municipality is taking and costs that are being incurred.

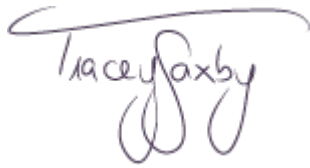
In order to support your decision making please find attached the following resources:

- 1) A brief intro to climate accountability campaign;
- 2) Several example letters that have been sent by other communities;
- 3) A draft climate accountability letter for the Resort Municipality of Whistler;
- 4) More info on the climate accountability campaign is available online here:
<https://www.wcel.org/program/climate-law-in-our-hands>

If you have any questions, or wish for support in drafting a climate accountability letter, please feel free to contact us on the numbers below.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Tracey Saxby
Co-Founder and Executive Director
My Sea to Sky
Email: tracey@myseatosky.org
Phone: (604) 892-7501



Claire Ruddy
Executive Director
AWARE
Email: cruddy@awarewhistler.org
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CLIMATE ACCOUNTABILITY LETTERS

AN INTRODUCTION FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Andrew Gage, Staff Counsel

“Wildfires. Drought. Flooding. Rising sea levels. Climate change is already reshaping and impacting BC communities in profound and frightening ways. As unchecked fossil fuel pollution continues to push global temperatures ever higher, we are frightened for our communities, for communities around the world, and for the world we leave our children. Vulnerable groups - the poor, Indigenous communities, women and children - are often hardest hit by climate impacts.” – Letter from BC Community Groups to Local Governments, 25 January 2017

On 25 January 2017, over 50 community groups from around BC – organizations focused on health, faith, human rights and environment – wrote to all of BC’s local governments asking that they take action to hold the fossil fuel industry accountable for its role in causing climate change and in the climate costs being caused by fossil fuel pollution.

In the short term, we are asking your municipality (or regional district) to send “Climate Accountability Letters” to 20 of the world’s largest fossil fuel companies asking them to pay for climate costs that are being incurred by your community. This brief will answer some questions that you may have about why your community should send these letters.

Why does it matter to your community?

All our communities are facing a rising tide of costs, debt and claims for disaster relief arising from the many effects of climate change. With more frequent wildfires, 100-year storm events now coming every 25 years, snowpacks and aquifers disappearing, our communities are spending scarce taxpayer dollars to prepare for and respond to climate change. The situation is only going to get worse.

As it stands, the costs of building climate resilient communities fall to the taxpayer, as do the costs of re-building communities after floods or fires. Municipal governments bear much of the burden for these climate costs, because municipal infrastructure is frequently affected. In at least one case, municipalities in the U.S. were sued (by their insurers) for failing to prepare adequately for known climate impacts.¹

It is time to ask whether taxpayers alone should be solely responsible to pay climate adaptation and damage costs, or whether costs should be shared with the companies that have made billions of dollars creating this situation. The products and operations of the **20 fossil fuel companies** are collectively responsible for roughly 30% of the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere today. That greenhouse gas pollution is changing the climate, and costing your community money as it is forced to respond and adapt.

It is essential that we have this conversation now. Communities need to know how much they can expect the fossil fuel industry to pay for their climate costs. The fossil fuel industry and its investors need to be able to make informed decisions about the future of the industry once they factor in the real costs of their activities.

Why does it matter to our planet?

Fighting climate change only works when everyone does their fair share. We all share the same precious atmosphere.

Right now the world's largest fossil fuel companies are making hundreds of billions of dollars from products that cause greenhouse gas pollution and put communities around the world at risk. There are powerful economic incentives for those companies, their investors and the governments of the world to continue producing fossil fuels without regard to the consequences for our planet. In many cases these companies have known since the late 1960s that their products were likely causing climate change. Since that time many have funded climate misinformation and lobbied hard against global rules that would protect our communities from climate change.

When companies make massive profits from pollution and products that cause pollution, this is known as an “externality.” It creates an economic system where some parties make money while the rest of us pay for the harm that they cause. Conversely, when companies are made to pay for the harm they cause, they, and their investors and governments, will start to have questions about the profitability of the industry.

Our efforts to reduce the greenhouse gases of our own communities (or even our own country) will only be a small drop in the global bucket. But if our communities demand accountability from **global** fossil fuel companies, the industry will finally have an incentive to stop opposing climate action – or, better yet, to start working for a sustainable future.

What is a Climate Accountability Letter?

A Climate Accountability Letter is a letter written by the representatives of a community to a fossil fuel company asking them to be accountable for the harm caused to that community by their operations and products. These letters are extremely flexible. A community can decide which climate impacts they wish to highlight, whether to demand that the company pay its fair share of current, or future, climate impacts or demonstrate its accountability in some other way.

We provide templates for accountability letters for your community to adapt on the climate law in our hands website.ⁱⁱ We also provide a spreadsheet with the addresses and share of global greenhouse gas emissions of 20 of the world's largest fossil fuel companies.

Is this within local government jurisdiction?

Municipalities and regional districts are incurring and will continue to incur costs related to climate change. Prudent management of their financial resources requires local governments to at least consider the possibility that some of those costs can be recovered from fossil fuel companies and, if appropriate, to take steps to do so.

One of the purposes of municipalities (according to the BC Community Charter) is “fostering the economic, social and environmental well-being” of the community – so Council also has a clear mandate to play its part in addressing climate change globally.

Why target fossil fuel companies?

Some argue that we're all responsible for climate change, but if so, surely we can agree that some of us are more responsible than others?

In 2013 a peer-reviewed paper "Tracing anthropogenic carbon dioxide and methane emissions to fossil fuel and cement producers, 1854–2010"ⁱⁱⁱ estimated the emissions from the operations and products of 90 entities – primarily fossil fuel companies. Just 20 of those fossil fuel companies – the 20 that we are asking you to write to – are responsible for almost 30% of the fossil fuels in the global atmosphere today.

But for the actions of these companies in extracting fossil fuels from the ground, and (in many cases), processing, transporting, marketing, and selling them for use by end consumers, these emissions would not have

ended up in our atmosphere. That's doubly true if you consider the impact of some of these companies in lobbying against action on climate change and in funding public misinformation on climate science. Had these companies acted, when they learned of the science of climate change in the 1960s, to shift the economy towards renewable energy, we would live in a very different, and more sustainable, society.

In addition, a focus on local impacts caused by fossil fuel companies creates new opportunities for local communities to have a global impact. Rather than focusing only on reducing the comparatively small amounts of greenhouse gases created in our own communities, we can also have a conversation about 30% of global emissions.

Shouldn't the Canadian (or BC) government be taking action?

Yes, of course all levels of government should be taking action to fight climate change. But the Canadian and BC governments still rely on the fossil fuel industry in many ways – from campaign contributions to hopes of economic growth.

The fact that the senior levels of government have not yet taken action to hold fossil fuel polluters accountable does not mean that local governments cannot take action to recover their own climate costs. Indeed, a community concerned about local costs of climate change may be more willing to show leadership to protect its residents and environment, and may be more willing to

have a discussion about the role of the fossil fuel industry in contributing to those costs.

Sometimes when people look to the provincial or federal governments for climate leadership, they are looking for regulation of sources of greenhouse gases. While such regulation is important, such laws can only regulate emissions or other activities that take place in Canada (or in BC). The claims for compensation related to climate accountability that we recommend use legal tools that can cross borders and address global sources of emissions.

Do you drive cars (or use gas)?

In response to the 25 January 2017 letter, three mayors independently wrote to us with variations on the message that if we use fossil fuels, we cannot ask for the fossil fuel industry to be held accountable.

We are not denying that individuals play a role in reducing their own greenhouse gas emissions (while recognizing that the options available to individuals to entirely eliminate their fossil fuel use in today's society are limited). Nor are we suggesting that fossil fuels could be eliminated tomorrow.

What we are suggesting is that the responsibility of fossil fuel companies is at least as great as that of the individual, and they should pay their fair share of the costs. We are further suggesting that once the industry realizes that it may be required to pay its fair share, there will be a powerful incentive for the system to change – creating more options for individuals seeking to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. This is a crucial step in helping society as a whole move away from gas-powered vehicles (and uses of fossil fuels involving combustion).

In the fight to phase out ozone-destroying HFCs, no one ever told those concerned about the ozone layer: “Yeah, but do you own a refrigerator?”

Am I signing up for a lawsuit?

By sending Climate Accountability Letters, your community is simply initiating a conversation, not a lawsuit, about the role of the fossil fuel industry in causing climate harm to your community.

In the 25 January 2017 letter sent to your government, we did also encourage you to consider the possibility of a class action by all BC local governments against some fossil fuel companies. However, sending letters to the fossil fuel companies does not commit your government to participate in or support such a court case.

If your community is interested in exploring the possibility of a lawsuit against the fossil fuel industry, please do contact us for more information.

How do I find out more?

Contact Andrew Gage at agage@wcel.org or 250-412-9784 or learn more on the Climate Law in our Hands initiative website at www.climatelawinourhands.org.

ⁱ <http://www.eenews.net/stories/1059999532>; The insurance company subsequently dropped the lawsuit, but the case stands as a warning to local governments that fail to prepare for climate change.

ⁱⁱ www.climatelawinourhands.org/demand-accountability

ⁱⁱⁱ Heede, R. "Tracing anthropogenic carbon dioxide and methane emissions to fossil fuel and cement producers, 1854–2010" *Climatic Change* (2014) 122: 229. doi:10.1007/s10584-013-0986-y



TOWN OF VIEW ROYAL

45 View Royal Avenue, Victoria, BC, Canada V9B 1A6

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January 26, 2018

Royal Dutch Shell plc
Attn: CEO
PO Box 162 2501 AN
The Hague
The Netherlands

Dear Sirs/Mesdames:

Re: View Royal's Climate Costs and Royal Dutch Shell plc's Fair Share

We write as the Mayor and Council of the Town of View Royal, on southern Vancouver Island, Canada, to ask about your company's willingness to take responsibility for climate costs associated with the use of your product.

Our Official Community Plan, adopted in September 2011, recognizes that the impacts of climate change must be a "key determinant" in our community's planning:

Consider the impacts of climate change as a key determinant in community planning and land use management decisions.¹

This commitment recognizes that decisions made now, and infrastructure designed and built now, need to consider not just our current climate, but also climate for the next 20-50 or more years. We are increasingly having to prepare our community for progressively more serious impacts of climate change, and build resilient infrastructure that can withstand an increasing range of climate impacts.

As a coastal community we are concerned about rising sea-levels. Our community is bordered on two sides by tidal waters (Esquimalt Lagoon and the Gorge Waterway), and we have low-lying land on both sides. Increased winter precipitation is impacting our roads and stormwater management, while summer drought over the past several years has affected our residents.

Planning for and addressing these impacts brings real costs for us as a municipality. Costs like these will only rise as global temperatures increase.

Fossil fuel pollution is the largest cause of climate change and these new risks and costs facing our community. We live in a society which is very fossil dependent, and we recognize

¹ View Royal Official Community Plan, September 2011

our role in that, even as we strive to reduce our dependence. We know that we will end up paying for our share of the costs of climate change.

At the same time, we hope that you will recognize that you too must take responsibility for your company's role in causing climate change – particularly given the considerable profits that you have made as a result of selling fossil fuels. Your industry has known for decades that your products would compromise the global health of the atmosphere and would create risks to communities around the world. During that time you have continued marketing your products, and have not aggressively moved to a different, more sustainable business model.

Just as other industries take cradle-to-grave responsibility for their products, we believe it is only fair that you commit to pay a share of the costs resulting from climate change being borne by View Royal and other communities like ours.

It has been estimated that the emissions from your products and operations amount to fully 2.06% of historic human-caused greenhouse gas emissions,² and we suggest that this figure is a reasonable basis for estimating your company's fair share of costs incurred due to climate change. If you feel that another figure is more appropriate, we would invite you to tell us what proportion you believe is your fair share, and why.

We expect your industry to take cradle to grave responsibility for your product – and that starts by taking responsibility for its effects in the atmosphere and the resulting harm to communities.

In addition, we look forward to hearing what steps you plan to take to reduce or eliminate the future impacts of your company's products on our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Screech". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

David Screech
Mayor

cc Honourable George Heyman, Minister of Environment & Climate Change Strategy,
 Province of British Columbia
 Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment & Climate Change,
 Government of Canada

² Heede, R. "Tracing anthropogenic carbon dioxide and methane emissions to fossil fuel and cement producers, 1854–2010" Climatic Change (2014) 122: 229. doi:10.1007/s10584-013-0986-y, updated to 2013 at http://climateaccountability.org/carbon_majors_update.html, last accessed 31 October 2017.



File: 5280.30

June 30, 2017

Chevron
6001 Bollinger Canyon Road
San Ramon CA 94583
USA

Attn. CEO of Chevron

Dear Sirs/Mesdames:

Re: Chevron Fair Share of Climate Costs in Highlands, BC, Canada

We write as the Mayor and Council of the District of the Highlands, a municipality on the south end of Vancouver Island. Like other communities around the world, we are increasingly concerned about the harmful effects that climate change will have on our community and on other communities around the world.

We are being forced to prepare for progressively more serious impacts. We are already facing increased fire risk, summer droughts (most of our residents' are on wells) and extreme winter rain events. Increased winter precipitation is impacting our roads and stormwater management and increasing our costs as a local government. A coastal community, we are concerned about rising sea-levels and coastal erosion as well, although most of our lands are well above sea-level.

We expect the climate-costs facing our community to rise as global temperatures increase and as we examine how best to help our residents withstand the current and expected impacts. Climate change – as a result of fossil fuel pollution – is now inevitable, and growing more severe as you continue to market your products without aggressively moving to a different, more sustainable business model. Because of this pollution, we need to plan for and adapt to ongoing changes in our local climate, caused by rising global temperatures, so as to avoid future economic and other impacts of climate change on our District.

As we move forward with preparing our community and infrastructure for climate change, we will be incurring additional costs and inconvenience as a result of the increased severity of climate change attributable to your products and operations.



While we recognize that individual consumers, and our community, do play a role in the fossil fuel economy, your company has had the power to lead the transition away from that economy, but has instead profited to the tune of many billions of dollars from products that you have known, or should have known, would harm our communities.¹ You cannot make billions of dollars selling your product, knowing that it is causing significant financial harm to communities around the world, and not expect to pay at least some of that harm.

All communities will expect you to pay your fair share of the costs associated with preparing the Highlands for climate change. It has been estimated, by the source noted below, that the emissions from those products and operations amount to fully 3.34% of historic human-caused greenhouse gas emissions,² and we suggest that this figure is a reasonable basis for estimating your company's fair share of costs incurred due to climate change.

We expect your industry to take cradle to grave responsibility for your product – and that starts by taking responsibility for its effects in the atmosphere and the resulting harm to communities. In addition, we would like to hear what steps you plan to take to reduce or eliminate the future impacts of your company's products on our community.

We know that our community will end up sharing some of the costs of climate change, even if you and other fossil fuel companies do pay your fair shares. These would include costs that cannot be recovered. We will do our part to minimize those costs and impacts, and we look forward to your confirmation that you will do your part as well.

Sincerely,

Original Signed

Ken Williams
Mayor

¹ <https://www.smokeandfumes.org/fumes>, last accessed 23 September 2016.

² Heede, R. "Tracing anthropogenic carbon dioxide and methane emissions to fossil fuel and cement producers, 1854–2010" *Climatic Change* (2014) 122: 229. doi:10.1007/s10584-013-0986-y, updated to 2013 at http://climateaccountability.org/carbon_majors_update.html, last accessed 23 September 2016.





The Corporation of the District of Saanich | Mayor's Office

770 Vernon Avenue Victoria BC V8X 2W7 | T 250-475-5510 | F 250-475-5440 | www.saanich.ca

October 3, 2017

Chevron
6001 Bollinger Canyon Road
San Ramon, CA 94583

Dear Sir/Madam:

Re: Fossil Fuel Industry Climate Accountability

We write as the Mayor and Council of the District of Saanich, a municipality of 114,000 residents on the south end of Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada. Like other communities around the world, we are concerned about the increasingly harmful effects that climate change is having on our district, region and global community and the lack of accountability by the fossil fuel industry for their actions contributing to it.

Over the last decade, Saanich has been recognized as a leader for our consistent approach to greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions, contributing to the climate action culture now established in our community. This is evident through the adoption of our Climate Action Plan¹, targets to achieve a 33% reduction in community GHG emissions by 2020 and an 80% reduction in community GHG emissions by 2050 (from 2007 levels) and the recent motion to become a 100% Renewable Energy community by 2050.

The Climate Action Plan includes a framework and strategies to move towards the 2020 targets and great progress has been made over the last decade as the District, local businesses, non-profits, community groups and residents implement projects, sometimes with funding support from the provincial and federal governments and local utility companies (BC Hydro and FortisBC). These projects have ranged from the installation of bike lanes and electric vehicle charging infrastructure, to residential organics collection and composting; from expanding community gardens and farmers markets supporting food security and local food production, to Passive House developments and building energy efficiency upgrades.

Despite this, climate change, as a result of fossil fuel pollution, is still inevitable and growing more severe as fossil fuel companies continue to market their products without aggressively moving to a more sustainable business model or paying for the impacts and full costs of climate change.

¹ District of Saanich (2010) *Climate Action Plan*. Available at:
<http://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local-Government/Documents/Corporate-and-Annual-Reports/2010-climate-action-plan-web.pdf>

In 2011, we adopted our Climate Adaptation Plan², which identified 87 prioritized actions to address the projected impacts of climate change and increase the resiliency of our community. The key challenge has been finding the required funding and resources to implement the identified work. Despite recognition of the value and urgency of climate adaptation measures (including research to identify the projected climate impacts and then planning and implementing the strategies to address them), municipal resources are insufficient to address the community needs, even with potential support from provincial and federal grants and utility rebates.

Since adoption of the Climate Plans, climate research has progressed, as have the climate changes impacting our global and local community. Increasingly extreme weather events are not only experienced around the world but in our own community. This summer has seen record breaking temperatures for British Columbia and the Victoria Region³, contributing to extensive wildfires, resulting in air pollution and strain on our water sources. 2017 also saw severe winter storms and snowfall with additional costs for snow removal, wastewater overflows and localized flooding, a greater burden on our emergency services and an impact to local businesses.

The Capital Regional District (CRD) recently presented an updated Climate Projections report⁴ for our region. The study projects a considerable change to our local climate including triple the number of summer days above 25°C, a considerable increase in the length of dry spells in summer and increasingly extreme flooding events by the 2050's. These projections will have significant implications for our building stock requirements, cooling needs, storm water management, water supply and agricultural sector as well as both our future emissions and need for climate change adaptation measures.

These impacts are not only fiscal, but also social, environmental and economic. Extreme summer heat impacts our residents, particularly the more vulnerable members of our community who may be more susceptible to the health impacts associated with extreme heat, air pollution from forest fires or less able to install and pay for air conditioning. It impacts our local farming economy, which may benefit from longer growing seasons, but may struggle with limited water resources. And, it impacts our environment and ecosystem; from tidal impacts and water erosion at our parks to damage and disease of our urban forest due to increased storm events and destruction of habitat due to wildfires.

As such, we are being forced to prepare for increasingly serious impacts of climate change and have a responsibility to our citizens to ensure that our infrastructure and services are developed and maintained in ways that will be able to withstand the "new normal" that climate scientists have predicted for our region. We expect climate-costs facing our community to rise as global temperatures increase and as we examine how best to help our residents withstand the current and expected impacts.

More research is needed to fully evaluate and quantify the actions required to prepare for these expected climate changes. However, as a starting point, the actions outlined within the Saanich Climate Change Adaptation Plan require considerable resources and funding to implement. Some examples include the costs for increased drainage infrastructure, investment in habitat and ecosystem restoration, building energy upgrades, building drainage and cooling retrofit programs, emergency management programs, emergency

² District of Saanich (2011) *Climate Adaptation Plan*. Available at: <http://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Corporate~and~Annual~Reports/Climate%20Change%20Adaptation%20Plan.pdf>

³ https://weather.gc.ca/warnings/weathersummaries_e.html

⁴ Capital Regional District (2017) *Climate Projections for the Capital Region*. Available at: https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/climate-action-pdf/reports/2017-07-17_climateprojectionsfortheCapitalRegion.pdf?sfvrsn=bb9f39ca_10.

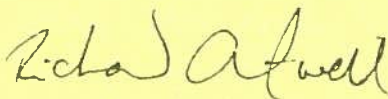
water conservation measures, development of rainfall design criteria, design of risk management approaches and robust climate adaptation tools, vulnerability assessments, policy and guideline development, public awareness campaigns and engagement, further research, monitoring and reporting.

While we recognize that individual consumers in our community do play a role in the fossil fuel economy, this role has, in large part, resulted from a lack of citizen knowledge, industry transparency and full-cost accounting related to the considerable negative impact of the use of fossil fuels. Your industry has been aware of the role of fossil fuels in causing climate change and the associated impacts on our communities for decades⁵ and, as such, has had the power to lead the transition away from that economy. Instead, Chevron has continued to market fossil fuels and foster uncertainty around their negative impact, which has delayed the transition to a carbon free economy⁶.

As a municipality, we expect you to pay your fair share of the costs associated with preparing our community for climate change. It has been estimated that the products produced by Chevron amount to fully 3.34%⁷ of historic human-caused GHG emissions, and we suggest that this figure is a reasonable basis for estimating Chevron's share of the costs Saanich bears to adapt to climate change. In addition, we would like to hear the actions you will take to eliminate the future negative impact of your company's products on our community.

There will be additional costs of climate change that cannot be prevented through adaptation measures and which our community will have to shoulder. However, we know that by planning for and adapting to climate change now, we can reduce these future economic, social and environmental impacts. We are committed to doing our part as the District of Saanich to minimize those costs and impacts and we look forward to your confirmation that you will support our community in their efforts and pay the share of the costs for which you are accountable.

Yours truly,



Richard Atwell
Mayor, District of Saanich

RN/sd

cc. Council

Paul Thorkelsson, Chief Administrative Officer

Angila Bains, Legislative Manager

Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change

Honourable George Heyman, BC Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

Robert Lapham, Chief Administrative Officer, Capital Regional District

⁵ Robinson, E., & Robbins, R.C. (1968). *Sources, abundance, and fate of gaseous atmospheric pollutants. Final report and supplement to the American Petroleum Institute*. United States: Stanford Research Institute. Available at: <https://www.osti.gov/scitech/biblio/6852325>, last accessed 11 September, 2017.

⁶ Mulvey, K., & Shulman, S. (2015). *The Climate Deception Dossiers: Internal Fossil Fuel Industry Memos Reveal Decades of Corporate Disinformation*. Union of Concerned Scientists. Available at: <http://www.ucsusa.org/global-warming/fight-misinformation/climate-deception-dossiers-fossil-fuel-industry-memos#.WbcomrKGNuQ>, last accessed 11 September, 2017.

⁷ Heede, R. (2014). Tracing anthropogenic carbon dioxide and methane emissions to fossil fuel and cement producers, 1854–2010. *Climatic Change*, Volume 122, Issue 1-2, pp229-241. Available at <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10584-013-0986-y>, last accessed 11 September, 2017.



Chevron
6001 Bollinger Canyon Road
San Ramon, CA 94583
USA

November 28, 2017

Attn. CEO of Chevron

Dear Sirs/Mesdames:

As Mayor and Council of the City of Victoria, in British Columbia, we are writing to secure your commitment to pay your fair share of the costs of climate change that face our community. Climate change is the direct result of pollution caused by the burning of fossil fuels, including from your products.

We are beginning to see the impacts of climate change directly affect our region and the infrastructure and services that we provide as a local government to our residents (detailed below). It would be financially irresponsible of us to assume that our taxpayers will bear the full costs of these impacts of fossil fuel pollution, while your shareholders continue to benefit financially from the sale of fossil fuels.

We know that individual consumers, and our community members, use fossil fuels. However, your industry has played a large role in creating the risks and costs that we now face as a community. Your company has made many billions of dollars from products that you presumably knew would harm our communities.¹ You have had the power to move your company towards a more sustainable business model since you first became aware of the impacts of climate change, decades ago, but have not done so. You cannot make billions of dollars selling your product, knowing that it is causing significant financial harm to communities around the world, and not expect to pay for at least some of that harm.

When James Douglas of the Hudson's Bay Company selected the southern tip of Vancouver Island as the site of Fort Victoria, the region's Garry Oak meadows reminded him of the cultivated fields of England. He didn't realize at the time that this unique ecosystem had been managed for thousands of years by the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations, who harvested Camas bulbs from the meadows as an important food source.

¹ <https://www.smokeandfumes.org/fumes>, last accessed 23 September 2016.

The Garry Oak Meadow ecosystem – although unfortunately much diminished and one of the most endangered ecosystems in the world – remains a central feature of the City of Victoria, and we take seriously our responsibility to pass it on to future residents. Numerous studies have shown that that climate change will put that goal at risk² – and that our work to ensure that the ecosystem can survive shifts in our regional climate is urgent.³

Of course, climate change brings with it other, direct impacts on our infrastructure and services, and on our residents. We offer the example of the Garry Oak Meadow ecosystem to illustrate an important climate impact, and associated costs, that are unique to our region.

In addition, like other coastal communities in BC and around the world, sea-level rise is a serious concern. Our Inner Harbour, a central feature of our downtown, is the point of arrival for many tourists and a source of pride for our residents. For this business and tourism district, higher sea-levels, especially when combined with storm-surge events, will mean huge economic cost. It has been estimated that 1 metre of sea level rise in combination with a storm surge would result potential business disruption losses of Cdn \$415,557 per day (based on annual averages).⁴

Outside of the downtown, much of our coastline is characterized by cliffs, much of it soft and vulnerable to increased coastal erosion. The needed protection efforts will likely result in significant costs to our community.

Drought and increased winter storms associated with climate change are also predicted for our region.

Planning, building and maintaining local infrastructure is made more costly by climate change. Victoria is in the process of developing a Climate Leadership Plan to do our part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, buildings and waste. The City is also investing in our own infrastructure to ensure we are able to maintain resilience and adapt to the changing climate and the impacts to our operations, utilities and services. At present we are only beginning to understand the potential magnitude of increased local costs for both climate change mitigation and adaptation. We know that cities didn't cause the climate problem on their own and we can't solve it on our own. And we know that costs will increase as climate change impacts worsen.

As a community Victoria has committed to work towards 100% renewable energy by 2050. We recognize that everyone is going to need to do their part to address climate change. We

² Pellatt MG, Goring SJ, Bodtke KM, Cannon AJ (2012) Using a Down-Scaled Bioclimate Envelope Model to Determine Long-Term Temporal Connectivity of Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*) Habitat in Western North America: Implications for Protected Area Planning. *Environ Manage* 49:802–815; Bachelet D, Johnson BR, Bridgman SD, Dunn PV, Anderson HE, Rogers BM (2011) Climate Change Impacts on Western Pacific Northwest Prairies and Savannas. *Northwest Sci* 85:411–429.

³ Pellatt, M.G. & Gedalof, Z. *Biodivers Conserv* (2014) 23: 2053. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10531-014-0703-9>.

⁴ AECOM. Capital Regional District: Coastal Sea Level Rise Risk Assessment (Victoria, BC: Capital Regional District, 2015), p. 36.

are asking you to take responsibility for the harm caused by your products and to take action to move to a more sustainable business model.

The peer-reviewed research of Richard Heede reveals that 3.34% of the greenhouse gas emissions already in the global atmosphere originate from your company's operations and products.⁵ In our view, this represents your fair share of the costs facing Victoria. Will you confirm that you are willing to pay 3.34% of Victoria's climate-related costs going forward?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Helps', written over a faint, stylized background graphic of a mountain range.

Lisa Helps
Victoria Mayor

⁵ Heede, R. Climatic Change (2014) 122: 229. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-013-0986-y>; See also http://climateaccountability.org/carbon_majors_update.html.

To: [INSERT NAME OF FOSSIL FUEL COMPANY]

Dear Sirs/Mesdames:

Re: Accountability for climate costs in Whistler, BC

I write on behalf of the Resort Municipality of Whistler to request that [INSERT NAME OF COMPANY], begin taking financial responsibility for the climate-related harm caused in our community by your products.

Climate costs in Whistler

The Resort Municipality of Whistler, in British Columbia, Canada, came into being as a ski destination. As Mayor and Council of the Resort Municipality, we are proud of the many people and businesses who call Whistler home, and of the year-round recreational opportunities that our region offers, but we are known around the world for our snow, skiing, and winter sports.

Shifts in our climate are a huge concern for us. Climate change is expected to increase our winter precipitation, but it is also increasing the temperatures, shortening the ski-season and causing more of that precipitation at the valley level to fall as rain.

In 2010, the eyes of the world were on Whistler as a major venue of the 2010 Winter games, and we found our snow melting in unusually high temperatures, forcing us to take dramatic steps to ensure that there was enough snow for the athletes – at considerable effort and expense.

Summer seasons are becoming longer, hotter and dryer increasing the risk of forest fires. Our 2018 budget included a \$1.4 million investment in community wildfire protection activities. All of which has us wondering about our future and how we, as a community, will pay for the climate costs that we face – whether those associated with winter sports, or other impacts such as drought, flooding, wildfire risk, or extreme weather. We are already incurring costs due to climate change.

These challenges and costs will only be greater if fossil fuel companies continue to work to develop further fossil fuel reserves, ignoring the scientists who tell us that we cannot safely develop all of the existing reserves, and instead need a dramatic shift away from fossil fuels and carbon pollution.

[INCLUDE PROJECTED CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS FOR WHISTLER]

[INSERT CLIMATE COMMITMENTS AND INITIATIVES THAT WHISTLER IS UNDERTAKING TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND PREPARE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE]

A fair share

We recognize that climate change is a many-faceted challenge. All levels of government, industry and individuals bear some responsibility for solving this challenge and for paying for climate impacts that have already occurred.

However, we suggest that the responsibility of our community or our residents pales next to the role of [INSERT NAME OF COMPANY], and your industry more generally, in causing climate change. Richard Heede estimates that the emissions associated with your products and your operations amount to [%] of the total human-caused greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere today and this letter is being sent to 20 companies that are collectively responsible for almost 30% of greenhouse gas emissions.¹

Your industry has been aware that its products would warm the planet since the 1960s at latest, and since that time has rapidly increased its production of fossil fuels, making massive profits while doing so, while working to block global action on climate change.

It has never been morally acceptable (or some argue legally permissible) to sell a product that you know will destroy land and harm communities.

Right now, taxpayers are paying 100% of the costs associated with your product, while you pay nothing. It's time for that to change, and that you start making business decisions that reflect your responsibility for climate change.

We are writing to ask you to commit to pay a fair share of the costs of climate change being experienced by Whistler. We can discuss what that fair share is, but Heede's suggestion that your products and operations have caused approximately [%] of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions to date seems like a good starting point for this discussion.

Communities around the world are increasingly expecting you to take responsibility for your products. We look forward to hearing from you how you will do so.

Sincerely,

¹ Heede, R. Climatic Change (2014) 122: 229. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-013-0986-y>; See also http://climateaccountability.org/carbon_majors_update.html.