

1. What are specific policies you would implement to help reduce Corner Brook's greenhouse gas emissions?

According to its web site, the City of Corner Brook completed milestones 1 and 2 of the Partners for Climate Protection's 5 milestone program for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This happened in 2011. Nothing has happened since. I would push us to complete Milestone 3, which involves the creation of a Local Action Plan. This plan would detail specific actions to achieve the targets identified.

Unfortunately, these targets were set in 2011 with the expectation that reduction tactics would be put in place to achieve the targeted results by 2018. The report created in 2011 by AMEC suggests a 20% reduction for City properties and processes and a 6% reduction for the community overall.

We may have lost some time, but I think we should revisit the process and establish a plan. This plan should involve a great deal of community consultation, but ideas worth considering include...

- Upgrading City-owned property to be more energy efficient
- Limiting City vehicle usage through policy and better planning based on data from the newly acquired automatic vehicle locator (AVL) system that is to be installed on the City fleet
- Reducing water consumption through better district monitoring and leak fixing
- Increasing public transit usage
- Encouraging walking and bicycling by improving trail system throughout City
- Limiting household waste, by encouraging home composting and neighbourhood composting
- Encouraging recycling through better curbside recycling options and partnerships

2. What are your ideas for how the City of Corner Brook can support food security and sustainability in western Newfoundland?

I would like to encourage community gardening and composting. The project that WEC has started on Humber Heights could be a model employed around the rest of the City. Imagine neighbourhood based gardens and commercial composters on City-owned land all around Corner Brook. Given our aging population, I would imagine that there would be a number of interested volunteers to support such gardens. Of course, we would have to work in collaboration with experienced community groups to manage such projects. Neighbourhood gardens would provide an opportunity to grow more of our own food, provide a social outlet for the volunteers, and hopefully encourage more general engagement in the neighbour and community.

3. How do you think waste management should be improved in Corner Brook?

We are about to pay a lot more for our garbage disposal. Some estimates see the cost per tonne doubling when garbage begins to be transported to central Newfoundland. I think this will provide an excellent opportunity to promote composting and recycling efforts, and hopefully move toward a separated waste solution at the curbside. If we can reduce the amount of waste going into the landfill, we can reduce costs. Also, I think we need to re-examine how we're disposing cardboard and other recyclables. Current arrangements are costly—is there a better way?

4. If you are mayor, how do you plan to consult/work with environmental groups in the City?

In meeting with Katie Temple, I mentioned my interest in setting up some kind of standing working group for environmental issues. Such a group would include representation from groups like WEC and Climate Change NL, ACAP Humber Arm, city staff and hopefully a Council representative. I think having a solid link between the City and community groups is important. Groups like WEC have expertise that City Hall does not, and it makes sense for us to pool that knowledge and effort for the good of the community. I am also interested in exploring this model of sports and recreation and social service groups in the city.

5. Do you have suggestions on how to contribute to sustainable transportation Corner Brook, including improvements to the public transit system, and making the city more cyclist- and pedestrian-friendly?

In my discussions with members WEC, community groups, riders and even transit drivers, I have come to the realization that the best initial course of action with regard to our transit system is incremental improvement, not immediate radical change. Transit is essential for many of our citizens. Transit will not be an overnight success, but if we work to improve the service for our primary audiences first (students and low income individuals), we will see better adoption. Through regular schedule and route monitoring, evaluation and revision, we can boost ridership. Deploying transit for special events shuttling is another way to introduce the system to new riders. We also need better signage at bus stops to help new users navigate the system. There is also a problem with snow clearing at many stops.

There is a lot of opportunity for better cycling and walking trails throughout the city. These trails would not only have an environmental benefit, but an economic one as well, as tourism amenities. I think it would be possible to build a better cycling link through the core of the city (north to south) between the university and the downtown. In addition to trail development, improved signage could go a long way. Many people walk the city for exercise and enjoyment. If we were able to brand routes through the city and provide wayfinding and distance information, it could encourage even more use.

6. Currently the City does not have any bylaws around wind or solar energy generation. Would you push to have those policies developed so that people can avail of the net metering opportunity in Corner Brook?

Given the new provincial regulations around net metering I think it's imperative that the city formulate development regulations on home wind and solar energy generation. We need to get these in place as soon as possible so as not to impede potential early adopters and wind energy companies. Of course, there is a great deal of sensitivity around residential windmills so it is important to have a solid set of regulations. The good news is that many Canadian cities have already developed such bylaws and it shouldn't be hard to find best practices. Of course, to regulate such developments, we may require changes to our Integrated Municipal Sustainability Plan and or the City of Corner Brook Act. Regardless, we must pursue any necessary changes very soon.

7. How would you suggest that Corner Brook achieve compliance with federal waste water regulations?

We need to get this done. We can continue work on the storm sewer/waterwater sewer separation and continue with the site selection planning process, but without provincial and federal government help we cannot finish the job. We've got to aggressively engage the other levels of government to provide some clarity on funding for a waste treatment facility and the related infrastructure.