



City of Rossland Declaration

The Right To A Healthy Environment

June 2018

Whereas the City of Rossland understands that people are part of the environment, and that a healthy environment is inextricably linked to the well-being of our community;

Whereas the City of Rossland recognizes the mutual importance and interconnectedness of a healthy environment, a strong economy and a healthy society as we move toward sustainability;

Whereas the City of Rossland recognizes that environmental protection is a fundamental value held by its citizens;

Whereas the City of Rossland recognizes that our world and all of its inhabitants are faced with the growing and increasingly urgent impacts of climate change, air and water pollution, and loss of biodiversity;

Whereas the City of Rossland recognizes the importance of protecting citizens' health from environmental hazards such as air pollution, contaminated food and water, and toxic chemicals;

Whereas the City of Rossland has a structured sphere of influence and a defined jurisdiction;

Whereas in proclaiming this declaration, Council is articulating public policy principles, but not creating or guaranteeing any legal rights or obligations;

Whereas the City of Rossland supports the recognition of the right to a healthy environment in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;

Whereas the City of Rossland, through the Official Community Plan and its policies, reflects the values of its citizens and demonstrates a commitment to protecting the environment and moving toward a more sustainable future;

Now therefore the Council of City of Rossland declares that:

1. Council believes that all people have the right to live in a healthy environment, including the right to:
 - breathe clean air;
 - drink and access clean water;
 - eat safe and healthy food;
 - access nature;
 - know about pollutants and contaminants released into the local environment; and
 - participate in decision-making that will affect the environment.

2. Within its jurisdiction, the City of Rossland has certain authority to respect, protect, fulfill and promote these rights and commits to encouraging the respect, protection, fulfillment and promotion of these rights.
3. The City of Rossland shall apply the precautionary principle by taking measures to prevent the degradation of the environment and protect the health of its citizens where threats of serious or irreversible damage to human health or the environment exist.
4. The City of Rossland will consider costs to human health and the environment when evaluating reasonably foreseeable costs of proposed actions and alternatives.
5. The City of Rossland will endeavour to apply the principles of full cost accounting. When evaluating reasonably foreseeable costs of proposed actions and alternatives, the City of Rossland will consider costs to human health and the environment.
6. The City of Rossland will look to specify objectives, targets/timelines and actions the City will take, within its jurisdiction, to address the residents' right to a healthy environment under Section 1, including priority actions to:
 - a. distribute environmental benefits and burdens within the municipality, preventing possible cumulative health impacts of exposure to environmental contaminants;
 - b. consider whether infrastructure and development projects protect the environment, including air quality;
 - c. address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and implementing adaptation measures;
 - d. responsibly increase density in accordance with growth and servicing strategies that respect the objective of a healthy environment;
 - e. prioritize walking, cycling and public transit as healthy and economical modes of transportation;
 - f. prioritize infrastructure and protected water sources for the provision of safe and accessible drinking water;
 - g. promote the availability of safe, local foods;
 - h. reduce solid waste and promote recycling, re-use and composting;
 - i. establish and maintain accessible green spaces in residential neighbourhoods, and protect and conserve nature in public open spaces;
 - j. attract and invest in green businesses, green energy, clean tech and jobs of tomorrow.

7. The City of Rossland will continue to regularly monitor, report on, and integrate environmental objectives in planning, decision-making and operational activities when and where applicable.
8. The City of Rossland will consult with citizens as part of the process of evaluating progress towards fulfilling this declaration and toward its broader goals and objectives.