

Hello Nanaimo City Councillors and Mayor.

We are coming to you to ask for your agreement in principal and your support to work jointly with us on two items:

- The establishment of a Youth Climate Action Network advisory group that works in tandem with the city.
- Investigate the feasibility of free bus passes for youth in the city of Nanaimo.

We are a group of students who are passionate about the environment and believe it is time to act. The recent UN reports on climate change and biodiversity would have us believe our future is looking bleak without taking drastic action for change. In the face of this crisis, it is easy to feel hopeless and insignificant. Many of our peers care about this issue, as evidenced by the recent Fridays for the Future - Climate Change strikes, and as students we'd like to see something productive come from this concern for our future. This is why we need to form a Youth Climate Action Network.

In the past there has been a Nanaimo Youth Advisory Council which acted as an intermediary between students and the city. We are asking to re-establish something similar, but with a targeted goal towards climate and environment. This is a group that would be able to connect youth to one another and advocate for them to become more active within the community. We aim to empower youth, because we believe youth can make a difference.

To make sure this group continues for years to come, we are asking for a part time coordinator within the City. They can help us organize events, raise awareness, and help promote youth involvement. Many youth say they want to take action, but they have no idea how. This group would give them opportunities to make a difference in their communities.

The second item we'd like to bring to you this evening is investigating the possibility of providing free bus passes to the youth of Nanaimo. The city of Nanaimo has just declared a climate emergency, and it is time for us to exact change and take action. One action that would make a huge impact within our schools and community would be free bus passes for youth 18 and under. Using public transit lowers Nanaimo's greenhouse gases, builds lifelong habits of sustainable transport, and reduces congestion. Other Canadian cities such as Victoria and Vancouver have already approved motions to provide youth 18 and under with free transit passes, setting a precedent for Nanaimo.

Now is a critical time in which action must be taken. We hope that our community will see this need for change, and act upon it. We would love to meet again to discuss this further. Thank you for taking the time to hear the voices and concerns of Nanaimo's youth.