

MACC Questionnaire: Question 2

2. As a member of Council, would you support the City's involvement with a wood burning / biomass District Energy System? If so, what options do you think would be inappropriate regarding location? What would be acceptable / not acceptable regarding emissions offsets?

Mayor

Rogers:

Certainly not in the form and model in which it was previously announced. Setting the table that would see any increase in additional industrial traffic into the bowl doesn't make sense (Trucking in wood waste/biomass). The concept of a District Heating System makes perfect sense and there are benefits but unless it is attached to a current facility that has "waste" heat that could be utilized then I would be hard pressed to support any new free standing system that would contribute fine particulate into the bowl.

Zurowski:

Yes I support participating in a wood burning/biomass District Energy System because I support the use of renewable and sustainable energy. A District Energy System should provide a minimum of a one to one offset to either permitted point source emitters or research based one to one offset non point source emitters. Ideally the offsets would be greater however we should not stop the use of green energy because of a required three to one offset. Our community should take every responsible opportunity to use carbon neutral and sustainable energy.

The location should be thoughtful, considerate and researched.

Council

Arcand:

A District Energy System is not a bad idea in and of itself – but the concerns about pollution and adding particulates to our already unhealthy airshed can't be ignored. As technology around biomass improves, it may be an option for the City to explore, but not to be placed in a residential area, or even in the bowl.

The only acceptable emissions level would be net zero – no additional particulates at all. Dollar savings at the cost of PG residents' health is no savings at all.

Basserman:

I support the City's involvement with a wood burning/biomass District Energy System with a number of provisos, including but not limited to the following:

- 2.1 Based on sound science recognized by a range of specialists and practitioners.
- 2.2 The net result would require substantially less particulate entering our airshed.
- 2.3 Real economic benefit to both public and private interests can be clearly shown.
- 2.4 The placement of the facility recognizes the interests of residents.
- 2.5 That existing biomass consumption is considered as a starting point for a community energy system.
- 2.6 Supply requirements of the system is non-intrusive to current transportation interests.

Cranston:

As a member of Council, I would support the City's involvement with an energy system that did not emit pollutants and that saved big dollars on energy bills. I don't believe that there should be any carbon footprint otherwise there is no point to this exercise. In my research, the cleanest form of energy is nuclear and even that source gives off waste. The difficulty is that to transport the energy long distances will undo any good a lesser carbon footprint would leave. I would suggest that no changes be made currently at city hall until everyone is happy with it...and that would include town hall meetings to ensure that everyone is notified of any involvement with an alternate energy system.

Derrick:

I would not support such an endeavor. I would support the possibility of using geothermal energy to help offset the need to heat city buildings but Air Quality needs to be a main concern.

Frizzell:

Apparently, the technology exists to eliminate identifiable particulate levels from emissions, but apparently the price tag for implementing the technology is high.

A decision of this magnitude should not be taken with any range of uncertainty. As a councillor I would do my due diligence to weigh the value to the community against the cost to the community.

I would not support a new woodburning energy project if it hurt healthcare. I would not support it if the impact of transporting the fuel had not been considered. I would not support it if due diligence had not been done to ensure: communication with adjacent

neighbourhoods, emissions control options, and a clearly stated financial benefit to the community.

I will not speculate on location until I have reviewed available options, but you do not choose a location that hurts healthcare, that causes transportation problems, or that makes the project a financial burden to the community. These types of project have likely worked in other communities, and they have likely failed in other communities. I would support a vision of this that worked for health, for environment, and for financial benefit to the citizens. Does that exist for Prince George? It is possible.

Green:

I do not support a wood burning energy system located in the bowl as long as we continue to have poor air quality in this community. Whatever system we have cannot produce more emissions in our bowl. However, energy systems are being looked at in many communities looking to find ways to change their energy dependence and I support our effort to find ways to do that. It can be a positive inducement to new development to be able to hook into the system. We need to support the UNBC project and rely on their expertise and research as to how it will work best in our city.

Kauk:

I am not a supporter of the City's proposal for the Community Energy Project. I oppose the project because of its potential to affect our airshed further than it has been impacted already. The project proposes to use offset emission reductions (ie. a wood stove exchange program) to balance against the increase in emissions experienced by this new project. Although the proposal is for a "net-reduction" in emissions, I support a total reduction in emissions. If we reduce emissions with a wood stove exchange program, I can support that initiative. However, I would oppose any additions to current emission levels.

In my view, the only location possible for the stacks of a project such as the one proposed would be across the Fraser River in the BCR site. Unfortunately, water travelling that far through a pipeline will have cooled too much to provide effective heating to the building in the downtown core.

Krause:

Yes, this technology is being used around the world as a means to reduce emissions, and appears to make sense environmentally. The facility should be located outside of the "bowl" or developed in collaboration with existing industry. Every effort must be continued to clean up air quality in the bowl and indeed beyond. However, as I stated in the PACHA questionnaire, I need to become better educated about environmental issues and projects of this nature, and I'm positive that there are those in the community that would assist with that.

Munoz:

Converting energy from waste is a good idea and building a wood-burning/biomass District Energy System makes sense, especially when considering the abundance of beetle-killed wood waste in and around Prince George. The major concern I have regarding a wood burning/biomass District Energy System is the location of it. It must be appropriately located, outside of the bowl and away from sensitive receptors such as; residential areas, schools, churches or any area where people live work or play. Human health impacts, topography, wind channels, thermal inversions, possible cumulative impacts, and proximity to sensitive receptors, all need to be considered when deciding location of such a plant. If emission off sets are considered with a ratio of 3 to 1 then they need to be real and measurable. New wood waste combustion plants should be designed using the latest and most effective pollution control and emission reduction technologies available.

Nakamura:

I would definitely not support a wood burning energy system that would further pollute an overloaded air shed. Inappropriate locations would be anywhere in the bowl. Prime example would be the most recent proposal which would have been of huge consequence to the Millar Addition residents and other residents in the bowl. Any proposed energy system must have regulations for emission levels.

Skakun:

I have been very vocal about my concerns going back 4 years ago. I do not think even with the best technology that a plant of that type should be located in the bowl at all! This type of plant should not be located near schools, residential areas or parks. The idea of offsets is great but it does not go far enough. I think we need to keep our focus and ensure there are no new sources of pm2.5 and pm10 and not just think about offsets

Stoltz:

As I have stated in the public forums, I do not support a biomass District Energy System in the downtown bowl. It makes no sense to add additional PM2.5 to an area that already has the worst air quality in our city. In addition, I object strongly to the city risking our tax dollars on a venture that it has been unable to find a partner in - regardless of the location. I would recommend that we approach Canada's Green University, UNBC, and offer to partner with them as they are already proceeding with their Bio-energy plant.

Ulch:

I would not support biomass burning for energy at the location pointed out in or near your Green Corridor. I could picture burning for other energy like electricity at a mill yard, where that industry is burning anyway with no benefit.

Wilbur:

I oppose the location in the downtown and the bowl areas of any industrial process that contributes fine particulate (Zero tolerance policy) to an already challenged airshed. I opposed the city's aborted plan to locate an energy system plant in the city works yard. UNBC, at its location on Cranbrook Hill which is clearly outside the bowl, plans on testing an energy system with a tight monitoring of its particulate release. I would not support the introduction of a system anywhere within the city before the scientific results of that study are known, and which results demonstrate a strong environmental case for proceeding. We also need to see a business plan which demonstrates viability and decades of committed access to fiber. If the conclusions of scientific research support building a BIOMASS Energy System or any other alternate energy system it should be located away from any residential area and logically close to its source of fiber.