

**From:** Ron Voss <rvoss@lightspeed.ca>

**Subject:** Agenda Item 5h, Withdrawal from ICLEI and PCP

**Date:** September 6, 2025 at 10:24:52 PM MDT

**To:** Jeff Genung <Jeff.Genung@cochrane.ca>, Marni Fedeyko <marni.fedeyko@cochrane.ca>, Alex Reed <alex.reed@cochrane.ca>, Tara McFadden <tara.mcfadden@cochrane.ca>, Susan Flowers <susan.flowers@cochrane.ca>, Morgan Nagel <morgan.nagel@cochrane.ca>, Patrick.Wilson@cochrane.ca

Dear Members of Town Council,

On February 18, 2025 I made a presentation, “Cochrane’s Participation in the Partners for Climate Protection Program - Serving Local or Global Priorities?”, as a delegation to Council requesting that a member of Council come forward with a motion to remove the town from its membership in the Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program.

After a four-month delay, on June 23, 2025, finally a councillor, Councillor Wilson, brought a ‘motion’ forward to Council related to my request.

Councillor Wilson’s ‘motion’ as per the Town of Cochrane Council Report for agenda item 6a is shown below:

*That Council directs Administration to cease participation in ICLEI programs or similar externally-driven initiatives, unless explicitly mandated by our Elected Body and after full disclosure of their funding sources, objectives, and implications.*

*That Council directs Administration to develop and implement clear guidelines restricting participation in externally influenced initiatives, ensuring transparent reporting on all collaborations with external entities – most especially through grant funding initiatives and further that Council affirms its commitment to democratic transparency, autonomy, and prioritizing local interests over multinational corporate or external agendas;*

On the mayor’s recommendation, the first motion was deferred to the town’s Natural Environment Protection (NEP) Task Force to bring a recommendation on the matter back to Council before the council votes on the matter.

Administration’s Town of Cochrane~ Environmental Task Force report prepared for the task force’s meeting on July 15, 2025 identified agenda item 4b as “Notice of Motion RES #138/06/25 ~ Withdrawal from ICLEI and PCP”.

The positions offered up to the task force in the Administration’s report were:

Option 1: Recommend to Council that withdrawal from ICLEI and the PCP program is appropriate at this time.

Option 2: Recommend to Council that the Town maintain its memberships in ICLEI and the PCP program.

Option 3: Acknowledge receipt of the Notice of Motion without providing a recommendation.

For your upcoming meeting on Monday, September 8, 2025, the Administration is recommending, “That Council maintain current memberships, including the Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program, and direct Administration to prepare a draft policy establishing clear guidelines for evaluating participation in externally influenced initiatives.”

It is rather interesting how the story in the Executive Summary for the reports for the NEP Task Force meetings (“Council has received a Notice of Motion proposing that the Town of Cochrane withdraw from ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and the Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program.”) has changed dramatically for the Executive Summary in the report that you have received for agenda item 5h. Note, as well, how the explanation of what came forward in Councillor Wilson’s motion in the Executive Summary differs from the explanation found in the Background of Administration’s report you received for agenda item 5h.

Some things I would like you to consider with respect to the options before you with respect to agenda item 5h at the Regular Council meeting to be held this Monday.

At the July 15, 2025 NEP task force meeting it was decided “that Item 4b be tabled and brought forward to the August meeting, as not all members were present for the discussion”. While once more “not all members were present for the discussion” at the August 25th meeting, with Councillor Morgan Nagel and a public-at-large task force member being absent, nonetheless, the discussion continued. Now understandable why the presence of two public-at-large task force members missing from the July 15, 2025 meeting, Ms. Jennifer Janzen and Mr. Robin Wentze, was considered important as these two strong advocates for addressing the notion of man-made climate change, carried the day to convince the task force to vote in favour of Option 3, that is, “Recommend to Council that the Town maintain its memberships in ICLEI and the PCP program” despite this matter being “outside the Task Force’s approved Terms of Reference.

Administration’s indication that the town is currently not actively taking any action related to the PCP Program “*at this time*” is seemingly presented as an argument for the town to remain as a member of the PCP program. However, don’t forget according to the PCP secretariat that the town has reached milestone 3 – Developing a Plan - of the 5-step Milestone Framework and substantial costs will arise as one moves on to milestone 4 – Implementing the Plan. The program is currently only paused at milestone 3. The Administration should stop playing games. If it is genuinely not interested in the program, then a motion by Council to remove the town from the program makes sense and is not an argument to remain in the program. As far as, “Any future projects requiring funding would need to be approved through the Council budget process”, I

don't recall the purchase of the four EV charging stations across from the Station coming back for Council approval. Likewise for the costs incurred for the study to electrify the COLT buses.

So far nearly all of the current Council members, except one, have indicated that they will be running again in the upcoming municipal election in October. How you vote on this matter will be important for electors to know. My presentation to Council on February 18, 2025 was entitled "Cochrane's Participation in the Partners for Climate Protection Program - Serving Local or Global Priorities?". ICLEI's Climate Neutrality Framework, "defined as the targeted reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and GHG avoidance in own operations and across the community in all sectors to an absolute net-zero emission level at the latest by 2050", not mentioned in the Background section of Administration's report, provides another indication of what ICLEI strives to achieve.

**Will the members of Council commit the town to address global priorities advanced by a United Nations-associated organization like ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives), which is headquartered in Bonn, Germany, or focus on basic local priorities by voting to cease being a member of the Partners for Climate Protection program (managed in part by ICLEI), and thereby, as well, demonstrate that they are not subservient to the will of the town Administration?**

Sincerely,

Ron Voss