



Recommendations for Official Plan Update

Earth Works, West Grey

July , 2023



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The planet is warming fast,
in fact it's burning in places

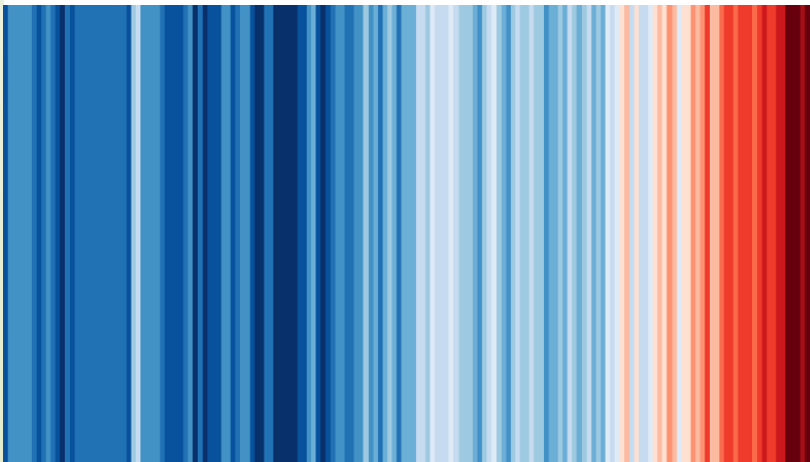
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West Grey holds part of the solution!

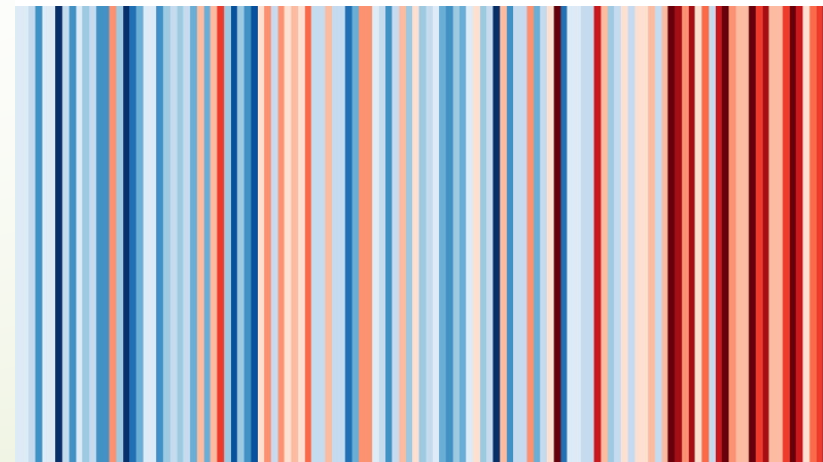
Climate Change is Happening

- ▶ Heat records have been broken around the globe in June and July this year
- ▶ Canada-wide forest fires, spring 2023
 - ▶ Over 10 million hectares consumed as of July 16th*
 - ▶ 'due to climate change and are expected to become more frequent'

Globe 1850 - 2021



Canada 1901 - 2021



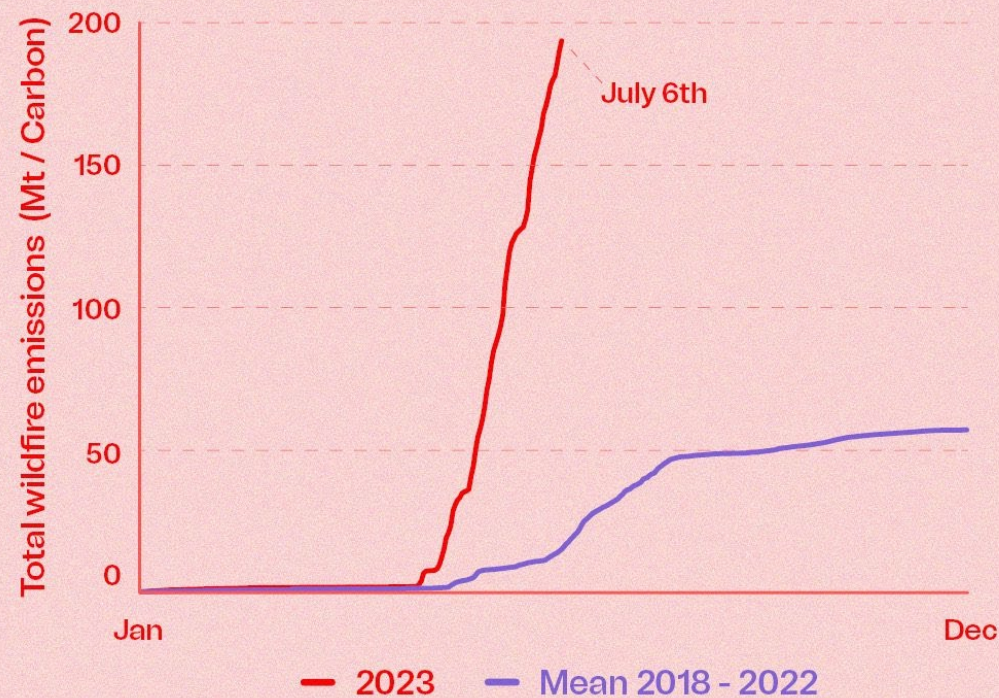
Climate Change in Grey County

- Climate Change is happening right here in Grey
- It will mean longer droughts and heavier rainfalls challenging farmers' ability to grow and bring in their crops
- Built water management infrastructure will adapt poorly to these extremes
- Southern Ontario warming roughly twice as fast as the rest of the world - expect average annual warming of 3-6 degree Celsius by end of century



Putting it another way...

Carbon emissions from Canadian wildfires have more than tripled in 2023—and it's only July.



Source: Copernicus

THE Breach



Official Plan – what can we do?

- Land-use planning has a crucial role in both mitigation of climate change and adaptation
- Mitigation – nature-based solutions
 1. Minimize destruction of wetlands, woodlands, grasslands, farmlands
 - These natural assets all store large amounts of carbon in trees, plants and soil. Development releases that carbon to the atmosphere adding to Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions
 2. Naturalize open spaces, parks and urban landscapes – plant trees, pollinator gardens, reduce mowing.
 - Trees, plants, undisturbed soil, all absorb carbon dioxide, helping to reduce GHGs in the atmosphere



Official Plan – what can we do?

■ Adaptation

- Incorporate key natural areas into planned landscapes
 - In addition to storing and sequestering carbon, **wetlands** absorb floodwaters, clean and filter them before restocking aquifers (groundwater)
 - Besides storing and sequestering carbon, woodlands absorb floodwaters; trees provide shade for cooling in parks, along boulevards and for homes
 - Grasslands also store and sequester carbon, absorb floodwaters, and clean and filter water over land and through the ground
- **These are called Nature-based solutions and are estimated to offer services* valued at \$17k/ha for wetlands, \$4.5k/ha for forest, \$1.7k/ha for pasture, and between \$13k/ha and \$55k/ha for rivers and open water^{3,4,5}**
- **Protecting forests and habitat supports Action 1 in the Grey County Climate Change Action Plan, and Conservation and Protection of Wetlands is Action 2 in the CCAP**



Official Plan


- Good start in latest draft: Climate Change and Natural Systems sections

BUT To make it more effective

- Surely we must write policies that protect natural assets like woodlands and wetlands directly into the sections on growth and land development
- We must develop and incorporate by-laws that explicitly protect natural assets in new and in-fill developments and
- Policies for densified and walkable communities must surely be included in appropriate sections of the plan.



Official Plan - some suggestions

- In section C1; General Goals; add a goal aimed at preserving and enhancing existing natural assets for the purposes of mitigating and adapting to climate change.
 - In Section E; add or re-write policies so that natural assets such as existing wetlands and woodlands are explicitly protected and incorporated into infill and new developments within the proposed urban boundaries
 - In Section E2; add policies to encourage affordable, mixed-use and walkable communities; eg. In E2.6 make a point that medium and high-density development should be encouraged near shopping and commercial areas for walking to stores and to work.
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We look forward to..

- Working with you to achieve a climate and people friendly official plan in West Grey

Questions?



Thank you



Earth Works, West Grey

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