

Jim Watson forced to defend record on climate change action this morning?

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (OTTAWA) from ORGANIZING FOR JUSTICE- Mayor Jim Watson will speak at Carleton University on the city's progress and plans regarding the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

With the release earlier this week of the IPCC report on climate change, and unprecedented-in-recent-memory local tornadoes in September and flooding of last year, he may find himself challenged by audience members on his and the city's disappointing record.

WHAT: Mayor Jim Watson speaking at Engineers Without Borders event on Sustainable Development

WHEN: 10am-11am, Thursday October 11

WHERE: Tory Building lobby, Carleton University

ALSO: Eco Gala, 6pm Thurs Oct 11, Lansdowne Horticulture Building, hosted by Ecology Ottawa

Climate experts are calling for even more drastic action than the IPCC, with emissions needing to peak by 2020, be reduced to 45% by 2030, and be net zero by 2040.

Meanwhile, Ecology Ottawa has noted that, under the second term of Watson's leadership, "City Hall is essentially punting the decision about meaningful policy change commitments and significant new investments into the next term of council – more than five years after the original promise was made!"(*1)

Watson has avoided public challenge to his record of inaction, including skipping the recent mayoral candidates debate on the environment, and a public transit debate at Carleton. He responded recently on CBC radio that he doesn't feel obligated to attend such events (*2).

But this event, focused on sustainable development and with an open audience and media in attendance, will be an opportunity to raise the issue of whether the city will heed the need for urgent action.

Ecology Ottawa hosts their annual Eco Gala tonight, celebrating and raising support for the city's largest grassroots citizen work on the environment and climate change. Watson is likely to not honour this work either. This morning though, he may be pressed to defend such skewed priorities.

CONTACTS

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*1: Quote from <https://ecologyottawa.ca/urgent-action-needed-to-put-the-city-of-ottawas-renewable-energy-strategy-back-on-track/>

*2: CBC Watson interview <https://www.facebook.com/CBCOttawa/videos/261112404543999/>

Urgent plea on climate change from coalition of local groups to Watson, Dec 2017

<https://ecologyottawa.ca/2017/12/12/joint-letter-to-mayor-watson-december-12-2017/>

10am event: Jim Watson at Carleton University <https://newsroom.carleton.ca/2018/carletons-engineers-without-borders-to-host-mayor-jim-watson-to-discuss-un-sustainable-development-goals/>

Eco Gala this evening at Lansdowne

<https://ecologyottawa.ca/events/annual-events/join-us-for-the-eleventh-eco-gala-on-october-11/>