

**DELEGATION TO**  
**CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL – SEPTEMBER 23, 2025**

**TOPIC: Comments on the ECDM Plan  
and PCP Program**

**PRESENTED BY: Peter Hyman, M.A. (Econ)**

**Introduction**

Good evening Mayor and Council. My name is Peter Hyman. I'm a Cambridge resident and taxpayer and I wish to thank you for the opportunity to speak about the 2025-2029 Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan, or ECDM, and our continued involvement in the Partners for Climate Protection program, known as PCP.

**ECDM Plan and PCP**

This ECDM Plan update, required under Ontario Regulation 25/23, tracks energy use in city facilities - buildings, fleet vehicles, streetlights. But it's important to be aware of what the province actually requires: **municipalities must publish a plan**, yes—but the regulation **does not mandate GHG targets**, and it imposes **no penalties for non-compliance**. Municipalities retain full discretion to shape their plans according to local needs.

This brings me to the PCP program. While it's often presented as a helpful framework, PCP is a **voluntary**, non-binding initiative managed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and ICLEI Canada. There is **no requirement to participate** in PCP to meet Ontario's energy reporting laws. In fact, PCP has its **own reporting obligations**—entirely separate from the ECDM—and adds **extra staff workload and costs** without helping us meet provincial reporting requirements.

That's not just my interpretation. Last year, the City of **Thorold** reviewed the same concerns and voted **7 to 1 to withdraw from PCP**, citing unclear costs, intangible benefits, and a growing sense that local priorities were being sidelined by global policy agendas.

Thorold's decision reflects a fair question:

**Are we allocating limited local resources to serve our residents, or to fulfill global benchmarks that were never debated or consented to by the people of Cambridge?**

**Is There a Climate Crisis? (See Chart 1)**

One could even question the urgency driving our ECDM and PCP goals. Two very recent peer-reviewed studies provide helpful context. On March 21, 2025, a study appeared in the *Science and Climate Change* journal. It reviewed decades of data and **found no clear evidence that current climate trends are an emergency**. Another study from Sept 20, 2024 in the journal *Science*, looked at 485-million-years of climate history. It found that **we are actually at a temperature low compared to much of that period**.

## Cambridge's Global Impact (See Chart 2)

Now let's talk about impact. As you can see from the graph, Canada contributes only about 1.5% of global GHG output and Cambridge's share is a tiny fraction of that. So **Cambridge represents only about 0.005% of the global total**. Meanwhile, countries like **China produce 26%** of global emissions and continue expanding coal power. Given that scale, I think it's fair to ask: **Will our local sacrifices—tens of millions in projected costs—make any meaningful difference globally?**

## ECDM Costs

Now let's look at the costs. The 2025–2029 ECDM plan is estimated to cost **\$10-15 million**, and the projected cost to 2050 may reach **\$40–60 million**. That's a major investment, and yet, when I filed a Freedom of Information request to access PCP-related expenditures, I was told it would take significant staff time and come with high search and prep fees—raising serious transparency concerns.

At the same time, Cambridge is facing real, visible, and urgent challenges:

- Road maintenance and traffic
- Flooding along the Grand River
- Housing affordability
- Economic development and downtown revitalization

These are the areas where our funding, staff time, and policy focus should be going—not toward satisfying external benchmarks that come with unclear costs and questionable benefit.

## In Conclusion

This is not a call to ignore environmental responsibility. But it **is** a call for measured, transparent, and **locally accountable policymaking**.

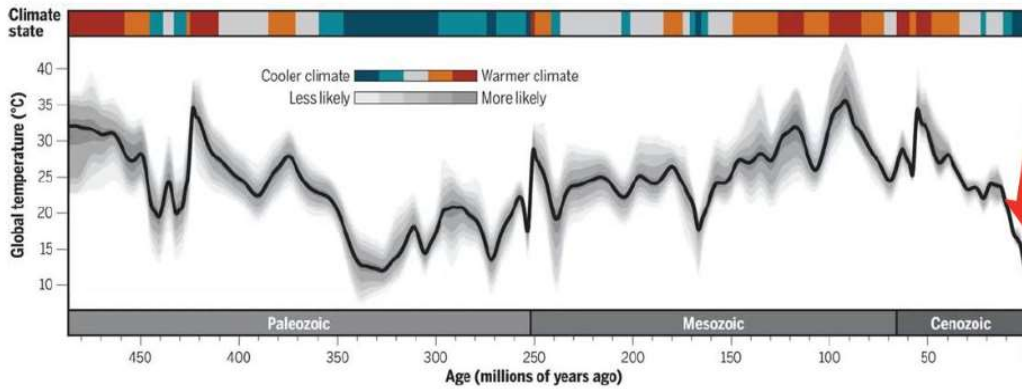
I respectfully ask that Council:

1. Reconsider Cambridge's continued involvement in the PCP program
2. Align the ECDM plan with provincial minimum requirements
3. Request a full cost accounting of all PCP- and ECDM-related spending
4. And consider following Thorold's example—taking a principled stand for local control, transparency, and fiscal responsibility.

Thank you for your time and service to our city.

# 485-million-year study

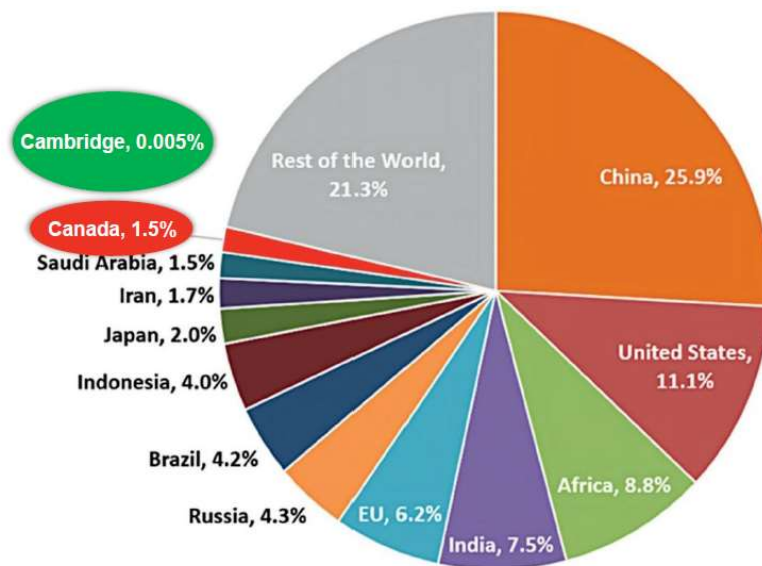
PRESENT DAY



PhanDA global means surface temperature across the last 485 years. The grey shading corresponds to different confidence levels, and the black line shows the average solution. The coloured bands along the top reflect the climate state, with cooler colours indicating icehouse (coolhouse and coldhouse) climates, warmer colours indicating greenhouse (warmhouse and hothouse) climates and the grey representing a transitional state.

Judd, et al. *Science* 385 1316 (2024) 20 September 2024

## Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Nation 2022



Canada produces only 1.5% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.

Source: Ron Davison, Friends of Science Society, based on data from Our World in Data.