



Essex County Council, Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 15, 2025

6:00 PM

Council Chambers, 2nd Floor

360 Fairview Avenue West

Essex, Ontario N8M 1Y6

<https://video.isilive.ca/countyofessex/live.html>

- Council:
- Joe Bachetti, Deputy Warden
 - Tracey Bailey, Councillor
 - Sherry Bondy, Councillor
 - Kimberly DeYong, Councillor
 - Chris Gibb, Councillor
 - Hilda MacDonald, Warden
 - Gary McNamara, Councillor
 - Crystal Meloche, Councillor
 - Michael Prue, Councillor
 - Dennis Rogers, Councillor
 - Rob Shepley, Councillor
 - Larry Verbeke, Councillor
 - Kirk Walstedt, Councillor
 - Mark Carrick, Councillor, (Alternate Member)
- Absent:
- Michael Akpata, Councillor
 - Tony Gaffan, Councillor, (Alternate Member)
 - Brian Houston, Councillor, (Alternate Member)
 - John Kerr, Councillor, (Alternate Member)
 - Diane Pouget, Councillor, (Alternate Member)
 - Paul Tiessen, Councillor, Municipality of Leamington (Alternate Member)
 - Kimberly Verbeek, Councillor, Town of Essex (Alternate Member)
- Administration:
- Allan Botham, Director, Infrastructure & Planning Services
 - Katherine Hebert, County Clerk
 - Justin Lammers, Chief, Essex-Windsor EMS
 - Darrel Laurendeau, Director, Information Technology

Don McArthur, Manager, Communication and Organizational Development
Kyla Pritiko, Director, Human Resources
Melissa Ryan, Director, Financial Services / Treasurer
Natasha Sheeler, Director, Health and Community Services/Administrator
David Sundin, Director, Legislative and Legal Services / County Solicitor
Crystal Sylvestre, Manager, Records and Accessibility / Deputy Clerk
Sandra Zwiers, Chief Administrative Officer
Kaitlyn Baggio, Administrative Assistant - Legislative and Legal Services
Jerry Behl, Manager, Transportation Planning and Development
Rebecca Belanger, Manager, Planning Services
Karyn Templin, Manager, Design & Construction

1. Closed Meeting

A Closed Meeting was held at 4:00 PM on October 15, 2025.

292-2025

Moved By Dennis Rogers

Seconded By Chris Gibb

That Essex County Council move into a Closed Meeting, as permitted, and pursuant to Section 239 (2) (b), (c), (d),(e), and (f) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended for the following reasons:

- (b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees;
- (c) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board;
- (d) labour relations or employee negotiations;
- (e) litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality or local board;
- (f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;

Carried

299-2025

Moved By Chris Gibb

Seconded By Larry Verbeke

That Essex County Council adjourn and rise from the Closed Meeting of Essex County Council for October 15, 2025 at 5:03 PM.

Carried

2. Moment of Reflection

3. Singing of 'O Canada'

4. Land Acknowledgement Statement

We acknowledge the land on which the County of Essex is located is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomie Peoples.

We specifically recognize Caldwell First Nation and other First Nations which have provided significant historical and contemporary contributions to this region.

We also value the contributions of all Original Peoples of Turtle Island, who have been living and working on this land from time immemorial.

5. Recording of Attendance

Warden MacDonald and members of Council attended the meeting at the County of Essex Administration Building, Council Chambers.

Michael Akpata was absent. Mark Carrick attended as an alternate member for the Town of LaSalle.

6. County Warden's Welcome and Remarks

Warden Hilda MacDonald opened the meeting by praising municipal workers ahead of Local Government Week, calling them "the heart and soul" of the County of Essex and its local municipalities.

As the level of government closest to the people, municipal government is where residents have a voice, and where collaboration and discussion build the foundation for stronger, safer, and more vibrant communities. The Warden encouraged high school and university students to consider a career in the municipal sector and also encouraged residents to be involved in their local communities by attending council meetings, volunteering to serve on committees and even running for office.

7. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest raised.

8. Adoption of Regular Meeting Minutes

300-2025

Moved By Larry Verbeke

Seconded By Chris Gibb

That the minutes of the October 1, 2025 Regular Meeting of Essex County Council be adopted as presented.

Carried

9. Delegations and Presentations

9.1 Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI)

[Ontario PlanON Awards](#)

Susan Wiggins, Executive Director, Ontario Professional Planners Institute provided a presentation regarding the County of Essex Official Plan

On behalf of the OPPI Board of Directors, Susan Wiggins presented the Vision Award of Excellence and the Project of the Year Award to Mary Lou Tanner and Larry Silani of MPG Planning Consultants and to Rebecca Belanger, Manager, Planning, County of Essex. The Vision Award of Excellence recognizes planning excellence in Ontario that make communities stronger.

Adrian Leigh, Board Chair, provided pre-recorded greetings explaining the nomination process and the criteria for winners of this exceptional achievement, the prize, for which the criteria is so stringent, does not get awarded every year. A thorough examination of projects is undertaken as well as deliberations by a seven member jury. The Project of the Year award was ultimately granted in 2025, to the County of Essex Official Plan.

Congratulations were extended to the Planning Team and to County Council for their efforts to develop and adopt an Official Plan that was bold, exemplary and forward looking.

10. Communications

10.1 Correspondence

301-2025

Moved By Rob Shepley

Seconded By Mark Carrick

That the correspondence listed on the Regular Agenda for October 15, 2025, be received and any noted action approved.

Carried

10.1.1 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)

- [AMO Watchfile Newsletter](#)
- [AMO Policy Advocacy Updates](#)
- [AMO Education Workshops](#)
- [AMO Training Events](#)

10.1.2 Border Mayors Alliance (BMA)

BMA Progress Report - September 2025

10.1.3 Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority (EWSWA)

- EWSWA Board Resolution 80-2025 RE Green Bin Program Promotion and Education
- EWSWA Board Resolution 81-2025 RE Circular Materials Response Re. Single-Stream Recycling

10.2 Resolutions

There were no Resolutions for consideration for October 15, 2025.

11. Consent Agenda

302-2025

Moved By Crystal Meloche

Seconded By Joe Bachetti

That the recommendation in the Administrative Report listed as items 11.1 on the Consent Agenda for October 15, 2025, be approved and further that the information items and minutes listed as items 11.2 through 11.4 on the said Consent Agenda be received.

Carried

11.1 Summary of Outstanding Reports - October 15, 2025

Report number 2025-1015-LLS-R52-KH, Summary of Outstanding Reports for October 15, 2025, from Katherine Hebert, County Clerk

11.2 Pathway to Potential

- Community Services Standing Committee Decision Number 292

- Council Decision Number CR388/2025
- Council report C75/2025 re: 2024 Pathway to Potential (P2P) Annual Impact Report Update
- 2024 P2P Annual Impact Report

Councillor Bondy requested that representatives of the P2P be invited to County Council to report on the efforts the organization is making in the County.

11.3 Essex County Library Board (ECL)

Minutes of the Essex County Library Board Regular Meeting dated July 30, 2025

11.4 Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority (EWSWA)

Minutes of the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority Board Regular Meeting dated July 9, 2025

12. Reports and Questions

12.1 2026 Pre-Budget Discussion

Report number 2025-1015-FIN-R30-MR, 2026 Pre-Budget Discussion, dated October 15, 2025 from Melissa Ryan, Director, Financial Services/Treasurer

Melissa Ryan outlined the preliminary status of the County's 2026 budget and provided context on key considerations, drivers, and decisions that will inform deliberations.

At the time of the report, the Draft 2026 Budget reflected a tax rate increase of approximately 3% before deliberations.

The draft budget book would be available for review in early November with deliberations beginning on December 3, 2025.

303-2025

Moved By Gary McNamara

Seconded By Rob Shepley

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-1015-FIN-R30-MR, 2026 Pre Budget Discussion as information.

In Favour (14): Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

Carried

12.2 Staffing Requests- 2026 Budget

Report number 2025-1015-HR-R11-KP, Staffing Requests- 2026 Budget, dated October 15, 2025 from Kyla Pritiko, Director, Human Resources

Kyla Pritiko explained that this new process is designed to offer Council the opportunity to deliberate and discuss the proposed positions ahead of budget deliberation day. Approving the positions in principle ensures that the draft budget will include the financial resources allocated for each approved roll, for further discussion and approval on the day that the budget is considered.

Twenty-five positions in total, were requested across the organization through the departmental business case submissions. The Senior Leadership Team reviewed and debated the urgency and feasibility of those positions, and came up with the list of eleven positions proposed for inclusion. The costs for all eleven positions have been included in the 2026 Draft Budget figure (i.e. 3% increase) previously noted by the County Treasurer.

Approval 'in-principle' means that the costs associated with the additional proposed positions would be included as part of the Final 2026 Draft Budget for Council, for further debate and/or approval.

304-2025

Moved By Larry Verbeke

Seconded By Mark Carrick

That Essex County Council approve in principle the hiring of the following positions so that they may be included in the 2026 budget deliberation process:

1. Four (4) Primary Care Paramedics;
2. Four (4) Advanced Care Paramedics;
3. One (1) Manager of Physical Resources, EMS;
4. One (1) HR Generalist- EMS/SPH; and
5. One (1) Human Resources Assistant.

In Favour (13): Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, and Mark Carrick

Opposed (1): Kirk Walstedt

Carried

12.3 State of Good Repair Program

Report number 2025-1015-IPS-R24-KT, State of Good Repair Program, dated October 15, 2025, from Karyn Templin, Manager, Design and Construction

Joe Bachetti left the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Karyn Templin presented the annual report regarding the State of Good Repair (SOGR) Program. The report outlined repair and maintenance activities related to County infrastructure, such as roadways, bridges and culverts, active transportation facilities and other infrastructure assets.

As part of the report, it was outlined that the early release of two projects; one on County Road 42 and the other on County Road 50 is advised by Administration. The County Road 42 project schedule would benefit from beginning as early as February, requiring a tender release in November and beginning the County Road 50 project early in the season seeks to minimize impacts to businesses who have borne disruptions in traffic due to other infrastructure projects in 2025. The two projects requested for advanced approval made up 23% of the entire SOGR Program; the remaining works would be deliberated at the December budget meeting.

305-2025

Moved By Rob Shepley

Seconded By Sherry Bondy

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-1015-IPS-R24-KT, State of Good Repair Program Report, having an estimated value of \$21,157,850, for information;

And that the projects identified as BC0043 Lonsberry Drain Culvert and BC0036 Big Creek Bridge, noted in Appendix 7.0, having an estimated combined value of \$4,760,000, be pre-approved for the 2026 budget.

In Favour (13): Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

Carried

12.4 Road Safety Management Program Plan

Report number 2025-1015-IPS-R25-JB, Road Safety Management Program Plan, dated October 15, 2025 from Jerry Behl, Manager, Transportation Planning and Development

Jerry Behl explained that the Road Safety Management Program was developed with the goal of identifying safety concerns, developing possible solutions, and through analysis and consultation, prioritizing projects. A priority list of intersections has been developed, and shared with the local lower-tier municipalities. Discussions are underway to determine how to effectively and efficiently implement some of the simplest solutions as quickly as possible, and then to address those that require design work would be in the new year.

306-2025

Moved By Chris Gibb

Seconded By Crystal Meloche

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-1015-IPS-R25-JB, Road Safety Management Program Plan, as information.

In Favour (13): Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

Carried

12.5 County Road 46 Environmental Assessment

Report number 2025-1015-IPS-R23-JB, County Road 46 Environmental Assessment, dated October 15, 2025 from Jerry Behl, Manager, Transportation Planning and Development

Steve Taylor, Project Manager, BT Engineering, provided information regarding the Environmental Assessment (EA) conducted along County Road 46 from the City of Windsor limit to County Road 19. The EA was performed in collaboration with the

Ministry of Transportation, the City of Windsor and the Town of Tecumseh.

Preliminary design alternatives were outlined, as well as the recommended solution for each segment of the roadway. It was noted that next steps will include a mandatory 30-day public review of the EA report and proposed solutions.

307-2025

Moved By Kimberly DeYong

Seconded By Chris Gibb

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-1015-IPS-R23-JB, County Road 46 Environmental Assessment as information; and,

That County Council endorse the recommendations of the Environmental Study Report Executive Summary; and,

That County Council direct Administration to initiate the mandatory 30-day public review period of the Environmental Study Report.

In Favour (13): Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

Carried

12.6 2026 Land Ambulance Response Time Performance Plan Approval

Report number 2025-1015-EMS-R07-JL, 2026 Land Ambulance Response Time Performance Plan Approval, dated October 15, 2025 from Justin Lammers, Chief, Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services

Justin Lammers presented the annual report outlining the land ambulance response time statistics of the Essex-Windsor EMS as it compares to the legislated response time criteria.

It was noted that response time statistics were improving, however, call volume increases are hindering the progress on meeting existing targets. There are no changes recommended at this time, however when the service transitions to the Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS) in 2026 there may be an opportunity to reexamine the targets.

308-2025

Moved By Gary McNamara

Seconded By Rob Shepley

That Essex County Council receive report 2025-1015-EMS-R07-JL and approve the 2026 Land Ambulance Response Time Performance Plan for Essex Windsor EMS as required by Ontario regulation 257/00 (as amended by regulation 267/08).

In Favour (13): Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

Carried

13. Unfinished Business

There were no matters of Unfinished Business for October 15, 2025.

14. New Business

14.1 Social Housing Service Manager - Invitation to Attend Council Meeting

At the October 1, 2025 Regular Meeting of Essex County Council, Councillor Sherry Bondy brought forward the following Notice of Motion:

309-2025

Moved By Sherry Bondy

Seconded By Michael Prue

That Essex County Council direct Administration to invite the City of Windsor, as the provincially designated Service Manager for various social services in the City of Windsor and County of Essex, including social housing, to an upcoming meeting of County Council to discuss concerns and opportunities related to our social housing stock and social housing operations.

In Favour (11): Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, and Mark Carrick

Opposed (2): Tracey Bailey, and Kirk Walstedt

Carried

14.2 Public Reporting of Closed Meeting

Council met in a Closed Meeting at 4:00 PM this afternoon as permitted, and pursuant to Section 239 (2) (d) and (e) of the Municipal Act, 2001, to receive information related to report number 2025-1015-EMS-R08-JL, Essential Ambulance Services Agreement Updated.

Council also met in a Closed Meeting as permitted, and pursuant to Section 239 (2) (b) of the Municipal Act, 2001, to receive information related to report number 2025-1015-EMS-R09-JL Service Delivery Review Results.

Council further met in a Closed Meeting as permitted, and pursuant to Section 239 (2) (d) of the Municipal Act, 2001, to receive information related to report number 2025-1015-HR-R10-KP, Options for County-Wide Service Delivery Review and Workforce Strategy.

Council provided Administration with direction and instruction to continue operationalizing departmental Service Delivery Reviews to address department-specific needs, and that 2026 and 2027 budget deliberations include funds to continue this process.

And finally, Council met in a Closed Meeting as permitted pursuant to Section 239 (2)(c) and (f) of the Municipal Act, 2001, to receive information and legal advice related to report number 2025-1015-LLS-R53-DMS, Correction of Historic Issue of Title to Bevel Line Road.

Council provided administration with direction and instruction to transfer title to certain portions of Bevel Line Road to the Corporation of the Municipality of Leamington to address historic issues related to title.

As a result of discussions and deliberations, the following recommendation was before Council:

310-2025

Moved By Rob Shepley

Seconded By Crystal Meloche

That Essex County Council authorize the transfer to the Corporation of the Municipality of Leamington title to the property known as Bevel Line Road and more particularly described as follows:

Legal Description:

PT LTS 8 TO 10

CON A - TWP OF MERSEA - PT OF PT 1 EXR-10,
AS IN LT269, S/T MS35781; MUNICIPALITY OF LEAMINGTON
PIN:75113-0221 (LT)

Carried

The Closed Meeting Adjourned at 5:03 PM.

Council also met on October 8, 2025 at 9:00 AM pursuant to Section 239 (3.1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, for a planned educational and training session for Council as follows:

A meeting of a council or local board or of a committee of either of them may be closed to the public if the following conditions are both satisfied:

1. The meeting is held for the purpose of educating or training the members.
2. At the meeting, no member discusses or otherwise deals with any matter in a way that materially advances the business or decision-making of the council, local board or committee.

At said Closed Meeting, Council received training from Andrea Moffat, a Communication Strategy expert, in a session entitled Communication Essentials: Taking your Leadership to the Next Level. No County business was discussed during the session.

The Closed Meeting Adjourned at 3:00 PM.

15. Adoption of By-Laws

311-2025

Moved By Gary McNamara

Seconded By Kirk Walstedt

That By-laws 2025-42 and 2025-43 be given three readings, and having been read a first, second and third time, be finally passed and enacted.

In Favour (13): Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

Carried

15.1 By-law Number 2025-42

Being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of the Council of the Corporation of the County of Essex for the Closed Meetings of October 8, 2025 and October 15, 2025 and the Regular Meeting of October 15, 2025

15.2 By-law Number 2025-43

Being a By-law to authorize the disposition of land known as Bevel Line Road to the Corporation of the Municipality of Leamington

16. Notice of Motion

There were no Notices of Motion brought forward for October 15, 2025.

17. Adjournment

312-2025

Moved By Michael Prue

Seconded By Kimberly DeYong

That the Essex County Council meeting for October 15, 2025 be adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Carried

Hilda MacDonald,
Warden, County of Essex

Katherine J. Hebert,
County Clerk