



Report to Council

Department: Development Services

Division: Planning

Date: February 16, 2021

Prepared by: Niharika Bandaru, Climate Change Analyst

Report Number: Planning-2021-01

Subject: Climate Ready – A Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the Town of Essex.”

Number of Pages: 4 + Attachments

Recommendation(s)

That Council adopt the Town of Essex Climate Change Adaptation Plan entitled “ *Climate Ready – A Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the Town of Essex 2021- 2026*” and direct Administration to begin the implementation process identified in said Plan, and

That Council appoint the Chief Administrative Officer as the Climate Change Adaptation Champion for the Town of Essex, to lead outreach activities and help solidify the awareness and long-term commitment to *Climate Ready – A Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the Town of Essex 2021-2026*, and

That the Town of Essex hereby declare a Climate Emergency as follows:

WHEREAS the Town of Essex is desirous of adopting a Climate Change Adaptation Plan;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Essex has invested in the creation of the Essex Region Community Energy Plan, in partnership with the County of Essex, the Essex Region

Conservation Authority, the other County of Essex municipalities, and regional stakeholders, for the purpose of collectively mitigating the risk of climate change by reducing regional emissions and energy consumption;

AND WHEREAS based on current climate projections the future impacts of human caused climate change could be catastrophic to the Town of Essex's local economy and its municipal budget and may further result in significant economic and health burdens for the constituents of Essex particularly our vulnerable populations;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Essex can join the Canadian Federal government and the 444 Canadian municipalities (including the City of Windsor, County of Essex, Town of Amherstburg, Town of Tecumseh, and the Municipality of Chatham-Kent) who as of November 2019 have declared climate emergencies and are advocating for drastic change in order to reduce global carbon emissions to mitigate future climate impacts and adapt to the impacts from climate change;

AND WHEREAS the most recent report by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has indicated that within 10 years, in order to keep the global average temperature increase to 1.5 degree C and maintain a climate compatible with human civilization, there must be a reduction in carbon emissions of about 45% from 2010 levels, reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050; and,

AND WHEREAS taking climate action steps and undergoing the low-carbon transition will also represent opportunity for economic stimulation and growing job opportunities in the new low-carbon economy;

AND WHEREAS climate change will jeopardize the health and survival of many local plant and animal species as well as their natural environments and ecosystems;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Essex and the surrounding region is already experiencing climate change impacts including, but not limited to, overland flooding, heavy rain

event flooding, emergence of invasive species, an increased number of high heat days, the rise of vector borne diseases, the re-emergence of blue-green algae and harmful algal blooms in our lakes and rivers; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Essex declare a Climate Emergency and commit to urgently working towards adapting to the impacts of climate change, mitigating climate risk, and preparing for our climate future.

Purpose

To seek Council's adoption of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan, to identify a Champion for the implementation period, and to declare a Climate Emergency.

Background, Discussion, Financial Impact, and Consultations

Please refer to the attached document, "Climate Ready – A Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the Town of Essex."

The Town of Essex has been experiencing the effects of global climatic changes on a local level in the form of rising average temperatures, more intense precipitation events (leading to effects such as seasonal flooding), seasonal shifts, longer heatwaves etc. Projections indicate that these effects will continue to worsen as we progress further into the century, resulting in increased risk to livelihoods, infrastructure, operations, as well as increased economical expenses. Following a presentation to Council on November 18, 2019, Council directed Administration to develop a Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the Town of Essex. Thorough assessments via public engagement and internal analysis by Administration, through 2020 and 2021, helped develop this plan which is intended to provide guidance to the Town in steadily preparing for the identified effects of climate change through policy, process, infrastructure, and communication developments. The Plan will enable the Town to increase their level of resilience for gradual climate changes, as well as intense events like more frequent 100 year storms, and heat waves. The presented action items in the Plan were developed in a way to

maximize the long-term benefits (i.e. social, economic, and environmental) to the community and stakeholders, and avert damages to public and private assets, operations, services, heritage, economy, and the quality of life of residents.

Link to Strategic Priorities

- ☒ Manage, invest and plan for sustainable municipal infrastructure which meets current and future needs of the municipality and its citizens.
- ☐ Create a safe, friendly and inclusive community which encourages healthy, active living for people of all ages and abilities.
- ☐ Provide a fiscal stewardship and value for tax dollars to ensure long-term financial health to the municipality.
- ☒ Manage responsible and viable growth while preserving and enhancing the unique rural and small town character of the community.
- ☐ Improve the experiences of individuals, as both citizens and customers, in their interactions with the Town of Essex.
- ☐ Improve the Town's capacity to meet the ongoing and future service needs of its citizens while ensuring the corporation is resilient in the face of unanticipated changes or disruptions.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Climate Ready - A Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the Town of Essex 2021-2026 - Planning-2021-01.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Feb 9, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Rita Jabbour, Manager, Planning Services - Feb 9, 2021 - 2:53 PM

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori Chadwick".

Lori Chadwick, Director, Development Services - Feb 9, 2021 - 2:55 PM

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Nepszy".

Chris Nepszy, Chief Administrative Officer - Feb 9, 2021 - 3:02 PM