

Essex Climate Adaptation Team

Terms of Reference

1. Background

The Town of Essex is in the process of developing of a comprehensive and practical Climate Change Adaptation Plan (CCAP) which will help the municipality plan and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The Plan will include actions and strategies to improve the adaptive capacity and resilience of the community to acclimatize to local climate impacts.

The Essex Climate Adaptation Team (ECAT) is being formed to serve in an advisory role to provide Town staff with assistance towards developing the CCAP, and advise on improving adaptation, reducing vulnerability, enhancing community resilience, protecting resources and infrastructure, and identifying economic cost-savings and opportunities related to the local impacts of climate change.

2. Purpose

The ECAT's purpose is to work towards the goals, strategic direction, and priority actions as mentioned below:

Goal: Increase the ability to adapt to changing climate conditions by supporting and assisting the development of a CCAP for the Town of Essex.

Strategic Direction: Help determine current community vulnerability and risk to expected climate change conditions, and advise on developing action items for improving community resilience.

Priority Actions:

- To help identify and assess current and future vulnerabilities and risks affecting the Town of Essex, based on projections.
- To help establish a vision for the CCAP which will support integrating the adaptation goals into the broader vision of the entire community, as set out in the 2019-2022 Corporate Strategic Plan.
- To help develop action items based on vulnerability and risk data to improve adaptive capacity and reduce risk, assess financial implications, establish a timeline of implementation, and amend the existing Draft Adaptation Plan.
- To provide comments and insights on important action items that are representative of member stakeholder groups.

- To encourage integrated organizational and stakeholder collaboration to assist the CCAP in achieving its outcomes.
- To raise awareness, stewardship, and capacity in the community on the impacts of climate change and potential actions across the municipality, and to improve communal and personal resilience.

Feedback from the ECAT will be used to assist the strategies developed by the Internal Climate Adaptation Team, and will contribute to the final document as submitted to Council for adoption.

3. Membership

Interested individuals shall complete and submit a Volunteer Application Form. Membership on the ECAT will include community representatives that will meet the following pre-requisites:

- Be knowledgeable and interested in climate change related impacts and adaptation strategies
- Have the ability and interest in representing diverse interests of their sectors
- Preferably live or work in the municipal boundaries of the Town of Essex (visit www.essex.ca/maps for a map of the municipality)
- Have the capability to effectively resolve project management issues

The ECAT will be composed of no more than 12 members, and will represent the diverse interests of community stakeholders. Selection of members will be done through an application process, whereby interested individuals from key environmental, business, government, health, agricultural, First Nations, non-profit, and academic sectors will be screened and confirmed prior to the first meeting.

Youth Membership Eligibility Criteria

Youth membership into the ECAT is encouraged. The following pre-requisites shall apply to all youth applicants:

- **Residency**

Youth members should reside in the Town of Essex.

- **Education**

Youth members must be enrolled in Grade 11 or 12 and express an interest in environmental matters.

- **Availability**

It is important that an applicant be able to attend as many ECAT meetings as possible.

4. Length of Term

The length of term for a person appointed to the ECAT shall be for the duration of the official planning process which is expected to be approximately 1 year barring any unforeseen delays.

5. Responsibilities

Meetings – The ECAT will meet 4 times in 2020, as outlined in Section 7. Frequency of the meetings might be altered as per need, and any further determination of ECAT meetings will be determined on the second meeting.

Meeting Location - Meetings will take place at the Colchester Community Centre (100 Jackson St, Harrow, ON N0R 1G0) or any other designated facility, as needed.

Notice of Meeting - Notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date together with an agenda will be forwarded to each member of the ECAT and any other person required to attend, at least 7 working days before the date of the meeting.

Agenda & Minutes – The Chair of the ECAT shall set the agenda. A member of the ECAT shall prepare the note style minutes. Minutes should be distributed within 10 working days of the meeting.

Decision Making – The working group will use consensus to move directions or actions, no voting or quorum are required.

The responsibilities of all the members include:

- Understanding the goal, strategic direction, and priority actions of the ECAT and the planning process.
- Understanding and representing the diverse interests of their respective organizations.
- Identifying emerging trends and how Essex could position itself to maximize future benefits to the community.
- Actively participating in meetings through attendance, discussion, open information, and review of minutes and ECAT documents.
- Communicating positively about the ECAT and ECAT activities at Council Meetings and any other public opportunities.

6. Roles

The Climate Change Analyst, Development Services shall be the Chair and the Team Leader of the ECAT. Should they be unable to attend a meeting, a designate from the Planning Services Division at the Town of Essex will serve as the ECAT Chair. The responsibilities of the ECAT Team Leader are as follows:

- Setting the agenda for each meeting and sending out meeting notices.
- Ensuring that supporting materials are delivered to members in advance of meetings.
- Ensuring that meeting dates and timeline is observed.
- Ensuring that meeting agenda items and objectives are met.
- Encouraging participation from all representatives.

- Providing meeting summaries following each meeting.

Technical support for the ECAT will be provided by:

- The *Climate Change Analyst* and members of the Planning Services Division at the Town of Essex.
- An *Internal Climate Adaptation Team* comprised of representatives from Town departments/divisions (including, Building, Engineering, Finance, Parks & Recreation, Cultural Services, and Planning) will be engaged throughout the process.

7. Meetings

Meeting Date	Purpose
February 2020	Kick-off meeting: Presentation of climate projections for the municipality, followed by a discussion about impacts to all relevant sectors.
March/ April 2020	Summary of impacts: Assessment of vulnerabilities and risks associated with impact statements; establish vision, goals and objectives
June/ July 2020	Adaptation items: Present summary of impacts, vulnerabilities, and risks from previous meetings and Internal Climate Adaptation Team, and develop action items.
October 2020	Draft adaptation plan: Amend existing adaptation plan to reflect new strategy and action items.

Unless otherwise determined, all meetings will be open to the public.

Communications

Meeting summaries will be provided as a matter of record, however minutes are not subject to approval. The outcomes from the meetings will be reported out by the ECAT Team Lead or other Town staff in reports to Council as necessary from time to time.

Proxies

In the event an ECAT member is unable to attend an ECAT meeting, they can send a designate to take their place in the meetings. ECAT members will inform the Team Leader as soon as possible if they intend to send a designate to a meeting, preferably no less than two business days before the scheduled meeting.