

Climate Emergency Action Plan Report | February 5, 2025

Prepared by the Environmental Stewardship and Action Community Advisory Committee

Executive Summary

This report was prepared in response to a series of staff presentations in 2024 related to Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) progress and in September 2024 related to the Climate Change Adaptation Discussion Primer. It also includes a communication checklist that was developed by the CEAP working group following consultations with city staff and subject matter experts in the community.

The report contains 2 sections:

1. Climate communication checklist;
2. General feedback on CEAP with respect to communications, engagement and adaptation.

This report aims to aggregate ideas, opinions, and questions of members of ESACAC as well as contacts consulted in the community. Recognizing the City of London already has a comprehensive Climate Emergency Action Plan, this report aims to identify gaps, conflicts and opportunities related to its implementation, and suggest potential solutions.

What feedback were we asked to provide?

In September 2024, ESACAC received a presentation by city staff containing the following prompts:

How can ESACAC Help City Staff?	
1. Engagement with the public	
- Do you have advice on how to reach more Londoners (beyond the approaches already being taken by the City and the community)?	
2. Engagement with your Network(s)	
- Do opportunities exist within your network(s)?	
3. Framework details	
- Are members aware of leading climate change adaptation approaches (proven best practices) in other jurisdictions that may be valuable to evaluate as the Framework develops?	
4. Measuring Adaptation in a Community	
- How do we know if we are moving in the right direction; What does progress look like?	
Categories - By theme	Categories - Other Common Words Used
Built Environment Natural Environment People Engagement and Collaboration	Infrastructure Environmental Social Economic Governance

ESACAC prepared the following responses to each of these prompts. Building off the 2024 CEAP progress report, which found that community greenhouse gas emissions are not declining fast enough to meet the City of London's science-based targets for 2050, the recommendations focus largely on public communications related to emissions reductions as well as adaptation to changing norms.

Section 1. Climate communication checklist

For internal use by City of London corporate communications staff. The purpose of this checklist is to help screen existing and/or new communications related to implementation of the City of London's Climate Emergency Action Plan. The checklist may be filled out for individual pieces or campaigns. By tracking completion of the checklist over time and across projects, the City may identify gaps and opportunities to diversify its communication strategies.

When referring to climate action in official City of London communications...

1. Action orienting

- Explicitly identify desired actions for the reader: *e.g., "here's what you can do"*
- Compare encouraged and discouraged practices with examples: *e.g., what to do vs. what not to do*
- Provide sharable tools that audience can easily adapt, reuse and distribute: *e.g., infographics, prompts to support starting conversations with others*
- Encourage audience to form personal connections with their neighbours and local community

2. Understanding

- Ensure the key message can be understood without reading English: *e.g., intuitive visual aids*
- Refer audience directly to where they can learn more about a topic
- Situate item within its broader context: Why does this matter? How does this help London/Ontario/Canada/humanity meet specific goals?
- Acknowledge linkages between what we do in London and climate impacts being experienced elsewhere in the world: *e.g., elevated food prices, natural disasters associated with global warming being caused by industrial and individual collective GHG emissions*
- Celebrate successes and progress on CEAP implementation where London is doing well
- Identify what London needs to improve on to meet our goals: *e.g., community GHG emissions*
- Share key climate statistics in simplified terms that are directly relevant to Londoners

3. Framing

- Address the audience using 'You' or 'Your'
- Use inclusive language to frame collective responsibility: *e.g., our, share, together, everyone*
- Use language of empowerment: *e.g., strength, hope, passion, care, value, change*
- Use language of safety: *e.g., safety, stability, security, protection*
- Emphasize economic benefits for individuals, especially linkages to affordability
- Acknowledge negative emotions associated with climate change: *e.g., scary, difficult, upsetting*
- Identify ways that climate actions can be undertaken incrementally: *e.g., every bit counts*
- Thank the reader for taking action(s)
- Compare popular perception versus reality about a topic

4. Representation and connection

- Feature a friendly face to deliver a message verbally
- Model by example an individual or group making a personal positive change
- Amplify voices of elected representatives addressing constituents about climate topics
- Amplify voices of diverse Londoners discussing climate topics: *e.g., community leaders*
- Format and message are tailored to appeal to youth audiences
- Represent and centre experiences and circumstances of equity-deserving groups and individuals
- Acknowledge difficulties/barriers to climate action disproportionately faced by vulnerable people

Section 2. General feedback

The 2024 report "[A Climate Impact Assessment Comparative Analysis for the City of London](#)" by the Climate Risk Institute included the following 6 recommendations, which ESACAC generally supports:

1. Leveraging [PCCIA](#) information on Southwest region risks, adaptive capacity and adaptation best practices at the scale that aligns with the City of London needs and existing practices and measures.
2. Presenting/incorporating results of the comparative analysis during the engagement process to inform the development of the City of London Climate Change Adaptation Plan. Specifically, grouping Adaptation and Resilience Best Practices by type and/or specific areas of importance to City of London could help identify and prioritize appropriate adaptation strategies.
3. Further and deeper exploration of indirect, cascading and cross-sectoral impacts and identification of areas where impacts cascade or amplify can help prioritize resilience needs and target adaptation responses.
4. Ensuring the incorporation of the most up-to-date climate risk information into the Official Plan, the Corporate Strategic Plan, the Corporate Asset Management Program, and other documents and tools developed and used by London to plan for the future.
5. Ensuring the inclusion of perspectives of all parties and aspects in society, incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and experience during the development and implementation of policies and programs, capital and operational expenditures, research and technological development.
6. Regular communication and coordination of activities across a complex corporation with diverse interests, service areas, and resources are needed to ensure the sustainability of service delivery, minimized disruption and reduction of unnecessary expenses.

2.1 Priority topics for engagement with the public

The following topics are suggested as priorities to address through future communications, outreach and collaborations. These represent perceived knowledge gaps and topics that are essential to bringing the community along to achieve the City of London's climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives:

1. Make explicit that the current City Council, and future Councils, are invested in implementing the CEAP (which was adopted by the previous Council). Each Council should reaffirm their commitment to CEAP at the start of a term and consider specific objectives it aims to meet. Lack of political will in support of climate action is one of the greatest threats to CEAP implementation.
2. Help Londoners recognize their agency – what specifically can they control to make positive change and/or to avoid negative change? Need to distinguish across profiles: *i.e.*, different actions for high income versus low income households, students, renters, business owners, landowners.
3. Foster household connections to immediate neighbours and neighbourhoods as a vital safety net. Everyone who lives in London should have at least one connection to another nearby household.
4. "Speak about climate change without speaking about climate change." Wherever possible, link climate to affordability, housing, health care and other co-benefits. Don't focus just on climate action.
5. Highlight the relevance of the local food system to climate change planning: *e.g.*, informing Londoners about resources for growing, sharing, and diverting waste of food
6. Reinforce Canada's & London's "Fair Share" based on responsibility, capability, equality ([source](#))
7. Grow awareness of [floodplain mapping information](#) for residences and flood preparedness overall.
8. Grow awareness of urban [heat island locations](#) and actions supporting mitigation, especially among land owners.
9. Changes in climate variables and impacts across time at a London local and/or regional scale: *e.g.*, compare current trends to baseline conditions and to future changes under different emissions reduction scenarios, such as using Representative Concentration Pathways
10. Promote ongoing opportunities for public feedback related to climate change planning and implementation: *e.g.*, identify what specific types of feedback the City is looking for in advertisements; indicate how the audience can reach out to request supports to amplify and help communications reach into their community.

Suggestions of specific climate communication tools and improvements

1. CEAP toolkits for specific stakeholder types who can help amplify communications and engagement with key audiences in different contexts: e.g., *CEAP action-orienting for university and college classes, classroom educators, realtors, lending companies, landscaping companies*.
2. Through partnerships, develop a framework for helping Londoners to cope with climate anxiety: e.g., *London-adapted version of [this handbook](#)*.
3. Expanding on EarthFest, pilot a city-wide “Climate Action Week” with different themes ([example](#)); concentrate adaptation priorities that require one-time community-led actions within these weeks and incentivize employers and industry partners to promote participation among their networks: e.g., *workshops on DIY home retrofits, installing rain gardens, creating profiles on Project Neutral*
4. The City should exercise caution around climate change disinformation associated with engagement on social media. For instance, current trends in management and the user base of X (Twitter) make it unsafe for Londoners to access reliable public information from the city about climate change on that platform. Generally speaking, the experience of using Twitter to access information about City services does not seem to align with Council’s strategic plan and exposes Londoners to unsafe conditions. Is the City open to adopting alternative social media platforms?
5. Exercise caution and avoid describing extreme weather events as “natural disasters” which can undermine understanding of the root (artificial) causes and effects of climate change ([source](#)).
6. The City should invest in creating more social media reel content (*i.e., short instructional videos*) related to climate action as this format is more accessible to younger audiences and can be readily shared across platforms. These videos can be produced in collaboration with students.
7. Could the City benefit from creating separate social media profiles from its primary City of London accounts specifically for delivering climate/environmental information? e.g., *expand [CityGreen](#)*
8. Social media “takeovers” create opportunities for curated content to be delivered by community voices who can reach specialized audiences.
9. Elected representatives could take on a greater role in communicating climate action information through their outreach to constituents; this is currently highly uneven across wards. Providing councillors with templates they can use for social media, newsletters, etc. may be beneficial.
10. Identify CEAP action priorities that could be promoted using educational infographics in print and displayed in public spaces, such as in retail settings ([examples](#)).

Recommended Reading:

MacIntyre, E., Khanna, S., Darychuk, A., Copes, R., & Schwartz, B. (2019). Evidence synthesis Evaluating risk communication during extreme weather and climate change: a scoping review. *Health promotion and chronic disease prevention in Canada: research, policy and practice*, 39(4), 142. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/reports-publications/health-promotion-chronic-disease-prevention-canada-research-policy-practice/vol-39-no-4-2019/evaluating-risk-communication-during-extreme-weather-climate-change-scoping-review.html>

2.2 Engagement with our network(s)

In general, the City should aim to make CEAP information resources and tools more accessible to partners so they can use them within their social contexts to assist with outreach. Informal networks and allies are very beneficial. It might be helpful to map out what these stakeholder relationships look like for CEAP implementation in London and provide this information in an accessible format (*i.e., beyond a table buried in a progress report*). Mapping this out visually could help residents to situate themselves and organizations they affiliate with in the work.

What are the biggest information needs of the City when it comes to climate change planning, and how can academic researchers help to fulfil those? Western University and the City of London signed a [Memorandum of Understanding for CEAP](#) but still lack the outlined Academic Agenda for Action on Climate Change. Western is currently developing its [Climate and Sustainability Strategy](#) and could be engaged via the [Presidents Advisory Committee on Environment and Sustainability](#) for further dialogue with the City about how to fulfill shared priorities. Indeed, the University is increasingly focussing on impact and supporting local initiatives, yet alignment with CEAP remains unclear.

Under the MOU, the City and University have the ability to share data openly; however, awareness of tools like the [Open Data Portal](#) seems poor. The University community is generally not aware of what the City is doing and how they can be involved. Within the University, researchers we consulted (including existing partners of the City) described facing major structural barriers to further supporting joint initiatives. These barriers could be reviewed through a consultation process facilitated by the City and the University. Moving forward, it may be advantageous for complementary advisory bodies (*e.g., ESACAC*) to exist within the University in addition to committees facilitated by the City of London.

Local real estate and lending companies (*e.g., credit unions*) could be engaged to provide information to clientele at key stages when they can set themselves up for making climate-conscious purchasing decisions: *e.g., targeting homebuyers with a due diligence checklist and links to relevant information about [financial supports for energy retrofits](#), [purchasing an e-bike](#), etc.* The City should engage with the business and financial sectors to explore opportunities for targeted outreach (*e.g., under the new [Memorandum of Understanding with the London Chamber of Commerce](#)*). In general, we recommend that information for the public needs to be provided where the public is at. This means that employers and businesses like retailers and service providers can play a big part in shifting consumer awareness.

The [Thames Valley District School Board](#) and [London Catholic District School Board](#) sustainability frameworks should be reviewed to find synergies with CEAP implementation. Further joint initiatives could take advantage of school facilities (*e.g., tree planting, low-impact development, community food gardens in schoolyards*) and help to disseminate information to participating student households (*e.g., CEAP education toolkits for all ages*). ESACAC would be glad to facilitate connections with key staff contacts.

The following recommendations are based on feedback that we heard during consultations with the community about existing and historical partnerships with the City of London related to CEAP:

1. It is beneficial to communicate clearer expectations with participating partners in advance in terms of how contributions will be acknowledged: *e.g., how to give credit for work/support*.
2. Where the City will be supporting communications associated with joint projects, clarify a standardized process for partners to work with corporate communications to distribute information materials through official City of London channels.
3. Clarify the process for authorizing use of corporate branding (*e.g. logo*) in third party-produced materials.

2.3 Framework details

DATA AND NARRATIVES TO SUPPORT EVIDENCE-BASED FUNDING ALLOCATIONS The money invested in reserves dedicated to responding to and/or preempting climate change risks should be determined based on evidence and risk analysis. How much money is required to maintain an acceptable level of service, and what information is this based on? (e.g., a specific model to compare with, as in how London measures its infrastructure gap in the [Corporate Asset Management Plan](#); see [FCM Guide for Integrating Climate Change Considerations into Municipal Asset Management](#)). While it is impossible to predict specific future events, information about costs associated with climate change risks needs to be translated in a manner that is more transparent and accessible for Council and the public, especially around the timing of budgetary decisions. It seems likely that the City of London is underinvesting in reserves for disaster preparedness, yet it is difficult to assess the magnitude of the shortfall and provide recommendations for prioritization.

EXPERIMENT UNDER PROCUREMENT LIMITS Climate change planners in other municipalities we consulted recommended testing ideas through pilot investments with project costs remaining under procurement limits. It is possible to accomplish and learn a lot with funding amounts under what will require higher levels of approval to go out to market. The basic principle is: play within that limit to things done, try new things at a speed that allows you to experiment and potentially fail, and prove the case for the thing you want to bring to a larger scale later.

PLAN TO SCALE UP 'PILOT' SOLUTIONS It is necessary to be transparent about the magnitude, extent or scale of investment required to meet CEAP goals. The City supporting small-scale startup initiatives, while beneficial, may not be sufficient; reports should not give a false impression of such initiatives meeting a city-wide target in its entirety. Where projects are undertaken as pilots, their future scalability should be considered at each stage – planning, implementation and analysis. For example, if a new program provides project-specific climate resiliency incentives to a small number of households, consider how those funds can be stretched and how funding increases can be justified (using clear performance indicators) to support a greater number of households in the future. How many households need to take similar action for the target to be met? When the City intends to fund community-led startup projects on a short-term basis, it would be beneficial to discuss long-term scalability prospects with partners at the outset.

LEARN FROM OUR PEERS How does the City of London learn from other municipalities? It seems much of the dialogue happens at the staff level through consultations and attending meetings, but lessons are not communicated. It may be worthwhile to create spaces that bring subject matter experts from other jurisdictions to London to discuss lessons learned in a forum that is accessible to local practitioners and members of City Council; the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference in London was a great example of an opportunity to host a learning session on municipal climate action. One approach moving forward could be to identify comparable “sister cities” to London that have similar systems (e.g., mobility, stormwater) and face equivalent challenges (e.g., climatic variables, legacy infrastructure). For example, comparing London to Toronto or Vancouver may be less relevant than comparing London to Hamilton in terms of demographics. By bringing together municipalities that align with London in terms of shared needs and capabilities, dialogue can focus on solutions that are relevant and feasible.

ADVOCATE FOR VITAL FUNDING FROM ALL PARTIES AT SENIOR LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT Climate change planners in other jurisdictions emphasized the importance of always being prepared to pivot. Plans should be mutually understood by stakeholders as subject to change. This is especially important given the volatility of funding for climate action. In particular, ESACAC is concerned about [potential future loss of federal funding streams](#) that have enabled the City to proceed with its past adaptation projects, such as the West London Dykes supported by the National Disaster Mitigation Program. Council may wish to reach out to the federal government and opposition parties to remind them of the importance of maintaining these funding streams to support long-term planning of infrastructure necessary for keeping Londoners healthy and safe.

EXPLORE NEW ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS Climate change planning involves managing vast quantities of complex data. ESACAC encourages the City to explore opportunities to apply emerging artificial intelligence technologies. For example, staff have indicated they are undertaking analyses related to Urban Forestry that use AI; another example is the Chronic Homelessness Artificial Intelligence (CHAI) tool. Western University researchers may be able to assist with project design and implementation. As the use of artificial intelligence in City planning and operations grows, it may become necessary to enact new policies and create dedicated staffing positions. Artificial intelligence tools may also be capable of improving delivery of and access to city services, such as integrating an optional virtual assistant into the City’s website. It is noted that artificial intelligence tools may also entail potentially significant environmental footprints that should be accounted for in decision making to the fullest extent possible. Recommended reading: [Artificial Intelligence for the Resilient City](#) (case studies)

USE BY-LAWS TO LIMIT HARMS AND RISKS Municipalities like London have the authority to enact bylaws that can help to advance climate change adaptation locally by regulating activities and industries that have the potential to cause harm (see [legal backgrounder](#)). Adoption of Green Development Standards into site plan control is a great example: for a municipality of its size, London is relatively late to implement mandatory requirements for green buildings compared to other jurisdictions in Ontario and internationally. We suggest that the business licensing bylaw could be used to a similar advantage, especially with respect to businesses operating in the city being required to disclose climate-related information to customers or to display information on their premises. For instance, some of the most problematic invasive species affecting London’s Natural Heritage System enter the environment through horticulture and the pet trade, and the risk of invasive species becoming established is expected to increase under climate change. London could require that information about invasive species be displayed at points of sale under its business licensing bylaw (e.g., see [Business-licensing-law-I-131-16](#), “Powers of the license manager”).

2.4. Measuring Climate Change Adaptation

This section provides recommendations for measurable actions as well as measurement approaches related to various aspects of climate change adaptation. We considered measurement by the city in terms of climate change planning as well as perception of adaptation by the public.

COMMUNICATE RELEVANCE OF WORK ALREADY BEING DONE We believe that many Londoners could be better informed about linkages between climate action and city projects. The City could produce a geographic map of projects that are related to adaptation and tell their stories in terms of how and why they make London safer and healthier in a changing climate. Existing projects (e.g., *infrastructure improvements*) have implications for adaptation that are not widely communicated in terms of the specific adaptive benefits they provide. It is also important for Londoners and members of Council to understand how these projects were funded and the economic value they provide (e.g., *in terms of protection against damages, jobs created*). This information could be compiled into an interactive tool like an ArcGIS Storymap. Moreover, communications about projects (e.g., *social media, GetInvolved pages*) should explicitly identify how depicted projects align with specific targets within the CEAP (e.g., *which specific risks are being adapted to and how*). It might be beneficial to develop adaptation-related keywords that can be referenced consistently and used to tag projects, reports, etc. across divisions of the corporation.

USE EVIDENCE-BASED INDICATORS The City could establish evidence-based indicators of adaptation progress that can be tracked over time and compared against baseline data: e.g., *present-day conditions or “do nothing” scenario like RCP 8.5, or maintaining current level of service*. For example, in their 2022 report “[Introducing Indicators: A First Look at Using Indicators to Measure Adaptation Progress](#)” ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability Canada includes sample indicators (Pages 19-22) which could be adapted for the City of London. In a 2016 report “[Measuring effective and adequate adaptation](#)” the International Institute for Environment and Development provides a template table that could be adapted for tracking progress on adaptation efforts by the City of London (this report was written primarily for a

national scope). Establishing and regularly communicating baseline data is helpful for informing decisions about the value of climate adaptation measures (relative to the costs of doing nothing). We would recommend checking out the [Climate Adaptation Maturity Scale by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities](#) (FCM), a tool intended to assist municipalities in assessing their adaptation progress across various competencies including planning, implementation, and monitoring. Each competency is broken down into five levels, forming a progressive scale from initial concept through continuous improvement. London can use this scale to identify its current stage and plan steps to advance adaptation efforts. Statistics Canada uses a [Climate Change Adaptation Indicator](#) to measure the proportion of municipal organizations that have integrated climate change adaptation into their decision-making processes. The Community Solutions Network provides a [Climate Risk and Resilience Self-Assessment Tool](#) for Communities including components focussing on climate disaster preparedness, understanding the community's willingness and resilience, and capital resources and funding.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS The City should clarify, quantify and continue to proactively communicate its strategies for the corporation and partner agencies to respond to evolving climate risk scenarios, including extreme weather, power outages, infectious disease outbreaks, mass evacuations and sudden influxes of displaced people. The [London Emergency Response Plan](#) and the website information about emergency response at london.ca/emergency should be evaluated using the Climate Emergency Screening Tool and the Equity Tool (if this has not already occurred). It may be helpful to include more plain language information for the public in the plan or on the website related to roles and responsibilities in extreme weather events, with practical information for residents on mitigating risks and responding to various emergency scenarios. For example, there is minimal actionable information about responding to downed trees. It seems many Londoners are unaware of contingency plans for mass-evacuations and specific procedures for evacuation of elderly people and people with disabilities.

It is unclear how many people have taken the [Citizen Academy Course on emergency preparedness](#). It could be beneficial to create an internal registry of community liaisons who have taken this course, as well as to promote and incentivize completing the course more widely to ensure people in each community have taken it. The City's [online series of videos on emergency preparedness](#) seem to attract a limited audience (<100 views each over the past few months). These videos offer critically important information yet they are of low production value and seem to be relatively inaccessible. Producing shorter, more visually appealing versions of these videos for social media sharing would make them more accessible. It should be noted that representing police in videos about emergency response (as is current practice) may have implications for the accessibility of information reaching marginalized communities.

PREPARE TO RESPOND TO HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS AT GREATER SCALE

Adaptation priorities must also include improving access to and maintenance of air filtration in communal areas and private residences. For example, devices for measuring indoor air quality should be used in public and other communal facilities to meet minimum standards. The public should be made aware of simple tools that may be needed to respond to smoke day, such as HEPA filters (*e.g., how to assemble a Corsi-rosenthal box*). The public and City staff working outdoors need to be made continually aware of air quality advisories, appropriate use of PPE and when to avoid work outdoors. We observed signs of inadequate preparation for and response to smoke associated with wildfires in summer of 2023 that resulted in staff working unprotected outdoors in apparently unhealthy conditions.

The City should make it easier for residents to access information about locations and features of [warming centres](#), [cooling centres](#), resources for poor air quality days, drinking water, etc. such as using an interactive map with hyperlinks on the city's website ([example](#)). This information should be consolidated centrally and made more accessible especially to vulnerable people: *e.g., advertised in lower-income neighbourhoods, areas that are disproportionately impacted by heat islands, targeted to people experiencing homelessness*

London should explore opportunities to protect tenants from extreme heat through municipal bylaws enforcing temperature maximums in rental units, similar to the City of Hamilton ([source](#)).

FLOOD RISK TRANSPARENCY Having evidence-based contingency plans in place is one way to measure adaptation. For example, pending the ongoing floodplain mapping update, the City of London could develop long-term plans to transition flood-prone areas that are currently developed and inhabited and may not be sustainable or safe in the future. For instance, in their 2024 report “[Turning the Tide: How flood risk transparency can drive equitable outcomes in Canada](#)” the Canadian Climate Institute provides suggestions of land-use and development planning measures to create an enabling environment for the participation of equity-deserving groups in post-disaster relocation and strategic retreat (page 23).

LONG TERM FOOD SUPPLY RESILIENCE The [Fall 2024 video](#) about climate change adaptation posted on the City’s website includes the following quote from Mike Fabro, Manager of Climate Change Planning: *“These days, Canadians benefit from an economic system that makes goods from all over the world readily available. But as climate change continues, the impacts may drive up prices of goods that come from far away, and some might not be available. Our food system is particularly vulnerable to impacts from climate change because of its globalized nature and the fact that growing food is heavily dependent on having the right weather at the right times and in the right locations.”*

The City should consider developing a framework in case it needs to respond in the future to sudden, lasting disruptions to global food supply chains. Currently, food insecurity is being addressed in terms of meeting residents’ immediate needs. Emergency kits include a minimum 3-day supply of food. We should consider the range of stressors already acting on international food supply chains today that could become compounded by future disasters (e.g., *drought, crop disease, geopolitical instability, solar flares*) that could result in lasting disruptions. It is unclear how our existing food system in London would withstand pressure tests and there does not appear to be contingency plans for what happens after. For instance, the [Thunder Bay Emergency Food Plan](#) includes provisions for community food organizations, identifying them as essential during emergencies.

While preparing this report, ESACAC consulted with Indigenous community members. Dayna Elijah of the Turtle Clan of Oneida Nation of the Thames shared that in their community, there is a teaching around food sovereignty and security that says a clan or group or nation should have enough food in its reserves to feed all of the people for 7 years. By food they refer to not just preserves, but also seed storage, which get replenished every year during harvests to build up stock. This tradition stands in stark contrast to our hyper-individualized food system and dependency on higher levels of government for emergency response.

Simple, proactive organizing could help prepare London for the possibility of future disruptions to food supplies. How can London make better use of public land for urban agriculture? For example, [CEED Gardens](#) in Toronto utilize hydro corridors for community food production. In all likelihood London would not be able to feed its population on its own; food security must be planned at a regional level in coordination with higher levels of government and with organizations in the agricultural sector. These preparations would have immediate benefits in terms of identifying actions to adapt to present-day and forecasted conditions (see [Ontario Provincial Climate Change Impact Assessment 2023](#) or PCCIA) and immediate actions would be of low cost (e.g., *increasing support for new community food gardens, developing a permitting framework for small businesses to keep chickens and sell eggs*). Initial steps could include modelling local agricultural capacity (e.g., [using existing county and conservation authority profiles](#)) relative to forecasted population growth and looking at ways to retain more farms close to London, increase local redundancies for key global supply chains and prepare a template emergency plan to pivot to growing more food crops in the event of an emergency.

Existing infrastructure for sharing food resources like local food banks and aid facilities should be studied in terms of their ability to increase their scale of operations to fulfill sudden growth in public need. For example, the [London Food Coalition](#) aims to divert food waste to organizations that serve people in need; however, the coalition's operations appear to face ongoing conflicts that result in inefficiencies and waste.

PUBLIC AWARENESS It is essential that Londoners have a solid grasp of basic climate change literacy, especially information related to emergency response and actions to support mitigation and limit risks. The current extent and depth of public awareness of priority topics is unclear. Measuring awareness could represent a set of indices of adaptation and preparedness. The City could quantify awareness of key topics through focussed surveys and collaborations with educators and local businesses. This information can also help to inform approaches to designing new communication campaigns and tools.

LONG TERM RISK MONITORING The Climate Change Adaptation Discussion Paper Appendix 6 suggests "Risks/Vulnerabilities to Monitor" include:

1. **Climate Sanctuary City** – *monitor the long-term impacts of global and regional populations shifts to anticipate the growing pressure for increased services for an increasing population.*
2. **Cascading Effects** – *study the interdependence between infrastructure systems to minimize cascading effects of climate change.*

ESACAC is concerned that both of these have potential to overwhelm and undermine CEAP progress in the future. The City of London is currently reacting to unprecedented growth through massive investments in development and growth plans towards 2050. Notwithstanding many positive steps being taken, it is unclear how ongoing growth practices (*e.g., building construction, mobility planning, land use planning*) are aligned with meeting CEAP targets. The rate of London's recent population growth has dramatically exceeded previous forecasts that informed the London Plan policies. Amid the ongoing development of long-term plans such as the Mobility Master Plan, it is unclear how the city would accommodate growth pressures additional to its projections while maintaining course to meeting emissions targets.

Recently, Council decided to exceed the staff recommendation for the Land Needs Assessment (land to move from outside to inside the Urban Growth Boundary to enable it to be zoned for development). This decision went beyond the Ontario Ministry of Finance projections for future population growth. It is unclear what evidence was used to inform this decision.

ESACAC recommends that the two risks/vulnerabilities identified above should be explored further in the adaptation plan, possibly including high-level modelling of different scenarios (*e.g., "do nothing" baseline versus 20-50% over forecasted growth*) and consider possible contingencies and plans to pivot where necessary (*i.e., process-based indicators of adaptation progress*).

KEY QUESTIONS

1. What information does Council require to assess whether its existing investments are meeting the scale required to adapt to climate change conditions successfully?
2. Does Council agree with the current provincial population growth forecast?
3. What will happen to CEAP implementation if population growth vastly exceeds existing projections, such as due to climate change-fuelled mass displacement?
4. To meet London's CEAP targets, further supports will be required from current and future federal and provincial governments. What are these supports, and how is the City advocating for them? What happens if these supports do not materialize? If there is advocacy already happening in the background, it would be helpful for the community to receive periodic updates.