

CITY CLIMATE PLAN REPORT CARD 2018

Prepared by the Urban Climate Alliance

The Urban Climate Alliance focuses on local engagement and solutions to climate change. We have been learning from each other for over 3 years. Over recent months, we have worked together to explore similarities and differences, challenges and opportunities related to city climate action planning within each of our municipalities. The result is the first of what we hope will become an annual Urban Climate Alliance City Climate Action Plan Report Card.

Members of the Urban Climate Alliance: Citizens Environment Alliance (Windsor), Environment Hamilton, Oakvillegreen Conservation Association, Toronto Environmental Alliance, and Ecology Ottawa.

Assessment Criteria	Hamilton	Oakville	Ottawa	Toronto	Windsor
1. Does your city have a climate change action plan (or other plans that incorporate climate action into them)?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
2. Is it a community-wide action plan informed by BOTH corporate and community emissions data? <i>A community-wide plan considers gHg emission contributions from all sources - not just the municipality. Many municipalities prepare corporate climate action plans - designed to address gHg emissions generated directly by city operations. This is an important and laudable action. But municipalities can also play an important leadership role by pulling together diverse stakeholders to develop community climate action plans. These plans, to be meaningful, must take a holistic look at gHg emission sources in a community. The plan must be owned by all stakeholders - and that includes sharing responsibility for plan implementation.</i>	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
3. Are there gHg emission reduction targets in the plan and are they ambitious? <i>Ambitious targets EXCEED the percentage reduction targets set by higher levels of government. Ontario's targets are 37% by 2030 and 80% by 2050.</i>	N	N	N	Y	N
4. Is the plan accountable and open to the public? <i>Accountable plans include regular (at least annual) reporting back to elected officials and the public regarding progress with plan implementation.</i>	N	N	Y	N	N

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<p>5. Were there multiple efforts made to engage the community as part of the municipal process of developing plans for climate action? <i>(e.g. translation of materials, digital engagement opportunities, community consultations in varying locations)</i> Municipalities using strong approaches to community engagement are those that take steps to reach out 'beyond the usual suspects'. These efforts include: translating outreach materials into other languages, going to the community rather than expecting the community to come to you (pop up outreach, for instance, in everyday locations like street corners or coffee shops), and supporting more traditional methods for engaging community in plan development (advisory committees, stakeholder meetings, working groups, etc.)</p>	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
<p>6. Is there a communications strategy for the plan? <i>A plan with a communications strategy sets out details regarding how plan progress will be formally reported on both to elected officials and to the broader community.</i></p>	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
<p>7. Are there on-going stakeholder and community engagement efforts as part of the process of implementing climate actions? <i>Municipal plans need oversight and action to ensure successful implementation. Good plans have implementation frameworks that include clear direction on how key community stakeholders and the broader community can /should play an on-going role in plan implementation. But planning for this is not enough - the proof is in the emergence of these stakeholder and community engagement efforts on the ground.</i></p>	N	N	Y	N	Y
<p>8. Is consideration given to how the plan benefits or negatively impacts community members? <i>Plans that are sensitive to community impacts include critical reflection regarding the impacts - both positive and negative- of plan implementation. Some changes may negatively impact certain stakeholders, groups or individuals, while other actions may result in tangible benefits.</i></p>	N	N	Y	Y	Y
<p>9. Does the plan explore the potential for climate action to create green jobs in the community? <i>Taking action on climate change can generate positive outcomes including local jobs. Plans that look at climate action as an opportunity will include innovative analysis of how a community's actions can lead to social, economic and environmental benefits concurrently.</i></p>	N	N	Y	Y	Y
<p>10. Is your City working with other cities or collaboratives to address climate change? <i>The impacts of climate change know no boundaries. Municipalities seeking to partner with other jurisdictions or stakeholders are demonstrating an understanding of this reality and the need to organize in new ways to realize necessary change.</i></p>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

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11. Do other city plans avoid contradicting or undermining the commitments in the climate action plan? <i>Solid climate action planning includes ensuring that no other city plans work against the goals of the climate action plan. Even better are municipalities who ensure that other city plans work to further the goals of the climate action plan.</i>	N	N	N	N	N
12. Do all municipal master plans incorporate all relevant commitments set out in the climate action plan? <i>Integration of climate action plan commitments is a powerful way to normalize climate action. Municipalities that take this step are also sending a strong message that they are serious about climate action.</i>	N	N	N	N	N
13. Does your city have an adaptation plan or adaptation efforts integrated into its climate action plan? <i>We are already grappling with the impacts of climate change. Plans that fail to recognize this reality are plans that are not doing enough to prepare and protect communities from the climate crisis.</i>	Y	Y	N	N	Y
14. Are the adaptation activities also helping to reduce gHg emissions? <i>Ideally, adaptation measures are facilitating a community's transition to a 'post carbon society'. This is the best way to ensure that a community is becoming more resilient when it comes to climate change.</i>	Y	Y	N	N	N
15. Does the plan consider how to create benefits for community through climate action? <i>Plans that are committed to generating concrete benefits for community members actually spell out what these benefits are and how they will be achieved. Benefits might include: enhanced public or active transit infrastructure, better housing, or commitments to create green jobs through climate action.</i>	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
16. Has the municipality committed to adequate funding for full implementation of the climate action plan? <i>Municipalities need to do more than facilitate plan development - they need to make sure actions are funded. There must be a budget for each action and then money set aside within each annual budget for full implementation.</i>	N	N	N	N	N
17. Can these commitments be tracked clearly in the annual municipal budget process? <i>This is something that may only become trackable when plan implementation is underway. A good tracking process should include clear indication that a budget item is directly linked to realizing goals of the climate action plan.</i>	N	N	N	N	N

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18. Is emissions data regularly updated using a robust protocol? <i>Good climate action plans need reliable data on gHg emission levels in order to be able to effectively track progress. Consideration needs to be given to where data is being gathered from and whether these sources are reliable. Updating gHg emission data on an annual basis, if possible, is ideal.</i>	N	N	N	N	N
19. Does your plan include clear timelines for implementation? <i>Good climate action plans make it clear what will happen when. Dividing implementation elements up into short/medium/ long term can help to keep people motivated and to communicate variations in the size of each task set out in the plan.</i>	N	N	Y	Y	Y
20. Have these timelines been met so far? <i>Staying on track with timelines is a key indicator of whether a plan is being successfully implemented. Failure to do so is a red flag that attention and action needs to be taken to ensure that a plan doesn't fail.</i>	N	N	N	N	N
21. Is there a robust monitoring and reporting process for the climate actions set out in the plan? <i>Robust monitoring can be linked back to timelines - but should also include a way to evaluate impact on the ground. It is also important that climate action plan implementation includes clear and regular (at least annually) reporting back to community stakeholders and the broader public.</i>	N	N	N	N	N
22. Is there a complete pathway analysis (comprehensive strategy/plan) for how to achieve the plan? <i>Setting out a step-by-step plan for major actions in a climate plan helps to clarify for all involved how implementation will proceed.</i>	N	N	N	Y	Y