



## **Administrative Report**

### **Office of the Chief Administrative Officer**

**To:** Warden McNamara and Members of Essex County Council

**From:** Mike Galloway, MBA, CMO  
Chief Administrative Officer

**Date:** Wednesday, March 02, 2022

**Subject:** Essex County Counts Campaign

**Report #:** 2022-0302-CAO-R02-MG

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#### **Purpose**

The County of Essex is a unique and diverse region with issues that are specific to our residents and our businesses when it comes to the upcoming provincial election, slated for June 2, 2022. The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to launch an information campaign about six priority issues so that residents can take into account the positions of the respective candidates. A similar campaign was undertaken by the County of Essex for the federal election in September of 2021.

#### **Background**

The County of Essex identified four priorities for the federal election and shared those priorities with residents on the County of Essex website and social media channels, including Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, where a short video of Warden Gary McNamara articulating the priorities was posted.

The four priority issues identified as part of the Essex County Counts information campaign were:

- Sustainable and resilient infrastructure;
- Strategic business investments;
- Universal access to high-speed internet
- Affordable Housing

Briefing notes on each of these priorities was published on the County of Essex website and residents were asked to assess their local candidates in

light of these issues to better ensure the election of MPs who understood local issues and who would go to work for Essex County on Parliament Hill.

Administration is seeking Council approval to launch a similar campaign for the provincial election, leveraging our website and social media channels. The six priorities identified in consultation with our local municipalities and a review of issues papers published by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers are:

- Windsor-Essex Hospitals System
- Infrastructure
- Affordable Housing
- Broadband
- Climate Change
- Municipal Liability and Insurance Costs

Background briefing notes on each of these issues that would be published to the County of Essex as part of the campaign are included as an attachment to this report.

## **Discussion**

Federal and provincial elections are often focused on broad issues and the party and party leader as opposed to local candidates and local issues.

The Essex County Counts campaign seeks to elevate the importance of local issues in the upcoming provincial campaign because Essex County residents are not just electing a party or premier, they are electing an MPP to represent the interests of the region and, in particular, the three ridings that include County of Essex residents: Essex, Windsor-Tecumseh and Chatham-Kent-Leamington.

The message to our residents and the candidates vying to represent them at Queen's Park is simple: Essex County counts. The population of Essex County is approaching the 200,000 mark, having grown 6.1 per cent from 181,530 in 2016 to 192,700 in 2021. We are home to the largest vegetable greenhouse cluster in North America and are the beating heart of Canada's automotive technology sector.

We have issues that are specific to our unique and diverse region and it is vital these issues are understood by local candidates and championed at Queen's Park, where representatives from other regions will no doubt be advocating for their constituents. The Essex County Counts will encourage

residents to ask the candidates about these issues and to consider them when they cast their vote.

The six priority issues were identified in consultation with the local municipalities, each of which was asked for input, and also on election position papers put out by the [Association of Municipalities of Ontario](#) and the [Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers](#).

The position papers on the six local priorities were drafted by the County of Essex Communications Department and are attached to this report. With Council approval, they will be posted to the County of Essex website when the election campaign commences and shared on social media.

The Warden would record another short video highlighting the priorities and encouraging residents to get out and vote. This message would be shared along with the position papers on the County's social media channels. All local municipalities will also be asked to utilize each of their social media and communication channels.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications should Council choose to move forward with the Essex County Counts campaign. All writing, video, graphics and social media outreach can be handled in-house by the County of Essex Communications and Organizational Development division.

## **Consultations**

Director of Council and Community Services reached out to all members of Essex County Council asking them for their contributions to this advocacy strategy. Additionally, the Communications and Organizational Development Department consulted with the CAO and election position papers released by the [Association of Municipalities of Ontario](#) and the [Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers](#).

## **Recommendation**

That Essex County Council support the Essex County Counts advocacy strategy for the 2022 Provincial election campaign.

## Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,

*Mike Galloway, MBA, CMO*

Mike Galloway, MBA, CMO, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix Number	Title
Appendix I	Essex County Counts Campaign