



## **Essex County Council, Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, October 1, 2025**

**6:00 PM**

**Council Chambers, 2nd Floor**

**360 Fairview Avenue West**

**Essex, Ontario N8M 1Y6**

**<https://video.isilive.ca/countyofessex/live.html>**

- Council: Joe Bachetti, Deputy Warden  
Tracey Bailey, Councillor  
Sherry Bondy, Councillor  
Chris Gibb, Councillor  
Hilda MacDonald, Warden  
Gary McNamara, Councillor  
Crystal Meloche, Councillor  
Michael Prue, Councillor  
Dennis Rogers, Councillor  
Rob Shepley, Councillor  
Larry Verbeke, Councillor  
Kirk Walstedt, Councillor  
Mark Carrick, Councillor, (Alternate Member)
- Absent: Michael Akpata, Councillor  
Kimberly DeYong, Councillor
- Administration: Claire Bebbington, Deputy County Solicitor  
Jerry Behl, Manager, Transportation Planning and Development  
Allan Botham, Director, Infrastructure & Planning Services  
Katherine Hebert, County Clerk  
Justin Lammers, Chief, Essex-Windsor EMS  
Darrel Laurendeau, Director, Information Technology  
Don McArthur, Manager, Communication and Organizational Development  
Kyla Pritiko, Director, Human Resources  
Melissa Ryan, Director, Financial Services / Treasurer  
Crystal Sylvestre, Manager, Records and Accessibility / Deputy Clerk  
Sandra Zwiers, Chief Administrative Officer

**1. Closed Meeting**

A Closed Meeting was held at 5:00PM on October 1, 2025.

**270-2025**

**Moved By** Gary McNamara

**Seconded By** Kirk Walstedt

That Essex County Council move into a Closed Meeting, as permitted, and pursuant to Section 239 (2) (b), (d), (e) and (f) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended for the following reasons:

(b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees;

(d) labour relations or employee negotiations;

(e) litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality or local board;

(f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;

**Carried**

**275-2025**

**Moved By** Crystal Meloche

**Seconded By** Larry Verbeke

That Essex County Council adjourn and rise from the Closed Meeting of Essex County Council for October 1, 2025 at 6:00 PM.

**Carried**

**2. Moment of Reflection**

**3. Singing of 'O Canada'**

**4. Land Acknowledgement Statement**

We acknowledge the land on which the County of Essex is located is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomie Peoples.

We specifically recognize Caldwell First Nation and other First Nations which have provided significant historical and contemporary contributions to this region.

We also value the contributions of all Original Peoples of Turtle Island, who have been living and working on this land from time immemorial.

**5. Recording of Attendance**

Warden MacDonald and members of County Council attended the meeting at the County of Essex Administration Building, Council Chambers.

Michael Akpata and Kimberly DeYong were absent.

Mark Carrick attended as an alternate member for the Town of LaSalle.

**6. County Warden's Welcome and Remarks**

Warden MacDonald announced that new double-lane roundabout at County Road 42 and Manning Road was completed on time and under Budget. Gratitude was expressed to the County's Infrastructure and Planning Services team along with the teams at Lakeshore and Tecumseh for their efforts to see this project to fruition.

The roundabout site was part of a multi-year, multi-phase project to enhance the corridor to accommodate the construction of more homes and maximize the economic potential of historic growth as outlined in the County's updated Official Plan – One Land, One Climate, One Future, Together. The new Official Plan was recognized as the best in Ontario by the Ontario Professional Planners Institute. Congratulations was offered to the County of Essex Planning Services team for this exceptional achievement.

**7. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest raised.

**8. Adoption of Regular Meeting Minutes**

**276-2025**

**Moved By** Gary McNamara

**Seconded By** Rob Shepley

That the minutes of the September 17, 2025, Regular Meeting of Essex County Council be adopted as presented.

**Carried**

**9. Delegations and Presentations**

**277-2025**

**Moved By** Rob Shepley

**Seconded By** Chris Gibb

That Agenda Item *12.1 Draft County of Essex Development Charges By-law*, be considered immediately following item 9.1 Development Charges Delegations.

**Carried**

## **9.1. Development Charges**

### **9.1.1 Mike Piche**

Resident, Essex County, provided Council his concerns regarding the proposed draft Development Charges by-law.

Mike Piche provided a summary of concerns related to the implementation of Development Charges, including the impact to the affordability of housing in the region for youth and seniors.

### **9.1.2 Windsor Essex Home Builders Association (WEHBA)**

Norbert Bolger, Vice Chair, and Brent Klundert, Chair, Windsor Essex Home Builders Association (WEHBA) provided comments on behalf of the Association, regarding the Proposed County of Essex Development Charges By-law.

The delegation discussed their recent experience at the Ontario Home Builders Conference and the Provincial call to reduce Development Charges as part of the plan to work towards building more houses in general and more affordable housing opportunities in Ontario. It was sited that the implementation of Development Charges at the County of Essex, on top of those already being charged at the local municipalities would negatively impact the home building industry and attainability of homeownership in the region. Concerns noted were such that additional costs could further slow a once-booming industry, already struggling with increasingly narrow profit margins, and pressures of holding land assets until there is more economic certainty and a rebounding of demand for new build homes in the region.

Warden MacDonald noted that this was a Public Meeting under the Development Charges Act, and called for any other members of the public present who wished to come forward to make a representation with regard to the proposed Draft Development Charges By-law. None were noted.

Agenda Item 12.1 Draft County of Essex Development Charges By-law, was considered immediately following item 9.1 Development Charges Delegations.

## 10. Communications

### 10.1. Correspondence

**279-2025**

**Moved By** Joe Bachetti

**Seconded By** Larry Verbeke

That the correspondence listed on the Regular Agenda for October 1, 2025, be received and any noted action approved.

**Carried**

#### 10.1.1 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)

- [AMO Watchfile Newsletter](#)
- [AMO Policy Advocacy Updates](#)
- [AMO Education Workshops](#)
- [AMO Training Events](#)

#### 10.1.2 Hydro One

[Notice of Completion of Environmental Study Report - Longwood to Lakeshore Transmission Line Project](#)

The draft ESR is available for a public comment period from September 15, 2025 to October 15, 2025.

The report summarizes the Class EA process, which was conducted in accordance with the approved Class EA for Transmission Facilities (2024) under Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act.

#### 10.1.3 Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC)

- WOWC Newsletter - September 2025 (attached)
- [WOWC News and Announcements](#)

### 10.2. Resolutions

There were no resolutions for consideration for October 1, 2025.

## 11. Consent Agenda

**280-2025**

**Moved By** Chris Gibb

**Seconded By** Mark Carrick

That the recommendations in the Administrative Reports listed as items 11.1 and 11.2 on the Consent Agenda for October 1, 2025, be approved and further that the minutes listed as 11.3 on the said Consent Agenda be received.

In Favour (13): Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

**Carried**

### **11.1. Non-Fire Mutual Aid Asset Inventory Initiative**

Report number 2025-1001-CAO-R09-SZ, Non-Fire Mutual Aid Asset Inventory Initiative, dated October 1, 2025, from Sandra Zwiers, Chief Administrative Officer

### **11.2. Summary of Outstanding Reports - October 1, 2025**

Report number 2025-101-LLS-R51-KH, Summary of Outstanding Reports, dated October 1, 2025, from Katherine Hebert, County Clerk

### **11.3. Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation (WECHC)**

Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation - Board Meeting Minutes dated:

- February 20, 2025
- April 24, 2025

## **12. Reports and Questions**

### **12.1. Draft County Development Charges By-Law**

Report number 2025-1001-FIN-R26-MR, Draft County Development Charges By-Law, dated October 1, 2025, from Melissa Ryan, Director, Financial Services/Treasurer was considered immediately following Agenda item 9.1 Delegations.

Melissa Ryan outlined that the draft Development Charges By-law was intentionally designed to support County specific growth-related costs and proposed to be implemented with a phased in approach beginning in 2027.

Stefan Krzeczunowicz, Associate Partner of Hemson Consulting Ltd provided an overview of the public consultations that had taken place in this stage of the process and explained that the amendments to legislation brought forward by Bill 17 had been

implemented into the study. It was further noted that any other further amendments to legislation impacting the County of Essex would be taken into account and implemented as needed over the ten-year span of the By-law.

Considerable discussion took place regarding the Provincial call to reduce Development Charges in an effort to bolster affordable housing developments. It was noted that under the proposed County model, affordable housing projects would be exempt of development charges. Further discussions included timing of the effective date and the options for a phased in approach, which would be prepared by Administration and presented to County Council at the meeting where the by-law is to be debated.

**278-2025**

**Moved By** Chris Gibb

**Seconded By** Crystal Meloche

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-, Draft County Development Charges By-law as information.

In Favour (10): Joe Bachetti, Sherry Bondy, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Larry Verbeke, and Mark Carrick

Opposed (3): Tracey Bailey, Rob Shepley, and Kirk Walstedt

**Carried**

**12.2. Transportation Master Plan Update**

Report number 2025-1001-IPS-R22-JB, Transportation Master Plan Update, dated October 1, 2025, from Jerry Behl, Manager, Transportation Planning and Development

Jerry Behl outlined for Council the Transportation Master Plan work that has been completed to date and an update on the work that will be done in the future.

Alvaro L. Almuina, Vice President, Transportation Planning of RJ Burnside provided details regarding the County's current transportation system.

Council was advised that numerous public consultation sessions had been held and as a result a number of solutions were being considered that fit the objectives of the study and public interest including multi modal systems.

A final round of consultations is pending, and then the study would be completed and made available to inform other work and projects.

**281-2025**

**Moved By** Dennis Rogers

**Seconded By** Crystal Meloche

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-1001-IPS-R22-JB Transportation Master Plan Update as information; and,

That Council approve the funding of the projected shortfall of approximately \$10,000 from the Rate Stabilization Reserve.

In Favour (13): Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

**Carried**

**12.3. Transit Working Group Update**

Report number 2025-1001-IPS-R21-AB, Transit Working Group Update, dated October 1, 2025, from Allan Botham, Director, Infrastructure and Planning Services

Allan Botham provided information regarding the current state of regional transit and the potential for enhancing the transit system throughout the County of Essex. It was identified that there is not sufficient specialized expertise at the local level to make an appropriately informed decision regarding the feasibility and practicality of a regional transit system. It was further explained that a feasibility study along with the Transportation Master Plan recommendations would provide the County with the additional required data to provide for informed decision-making.

Considerable discussion took place with regard to previous regional transit activities and whether this is a service that is appropriate for consideration by the County of Essex and funding through the upper-tier.

**282-2025**

**Moved By** Chris Gibb

**Seconded By** Crystal Meloche

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-1001-IPS-R21-AB, Transit Working Group Update as information;

In Favour (13): Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

**Carried**

**283-2025**

**Moved By** Rob Shepley

**Seconded By** Mark Carrick

That County Council direct Administration to continue discussions with the Transit Working Group regarding recommendations of the Transportation Master Plan related to Regional Transit;

In Favour (9): Joe Bachetti, Sherry Bondy, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Larry Verbeke, and Mark Carrick

Opposed (4): Tracey Bailey, Gary McNamara, Rob Shepley, and Kirk Walstedt

**Carried**

**284-2025**

**Moved By** Chris Gibb

**Seconded By** Joe Bachetti

That County Council approve \$100,000, funded by the Rate Stabilization Reserve in the 2026 Budget, to begin a Transit Feasibility Study;

In Favour (8): Joe Bachetti, Sherry Bondy, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Larry Verbeke, and Mark Carrick

Opposed (5): Tracey Bailey, Gary McNamara, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, and Kirk Walstedt

**Carried**

**285-2025**

**Moved By** Larry Verbeke

**Seconded By** Joe Bachetti

That County Council approve up to \$130,000 in the 2026 Budget toward funding the Leamington to Windsor Transit operating deficit from the Rate Stabilization Reserve.

In Favour (6): Joe Bachetti, Sherry Bondy, Hilda MacDonald, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, and Larry Verbeke

Opposed (7): Tracey Bailey, Chris Gibb, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

**Lost**

#### **12.4. Approval of the 2026 Conferences for County Council Members**

Report number 2025-1001-LLS-R49-KH, Approval of the 2026 Conferences for County Council Members, dated October 1, 2025, from Katherine Hebert, County Clerk

**286-2025**

**Moved By** Gary McNamara

**Seconded By** Crystal Meloche

That Essex County Council receive Report Number 2025-1001-LLS-R49-KH, Approval of the 2026 Conferences for County Council Members as information, and approve the 2026 Conferences for Council attendance in accordance with Policy Number 2022-003 – Travel, Meetings, and Conferences – Council, Committees, Agencies and Boards.

In Favour (13): Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

**Carried**

#### **12.5. Approval of the County Council Meeting Schedule for 2026**

Report number 2025-1001-LLS-R50-KH, Approval of the County Council Meeting Schedule for 2026, dated October 1, 2025, from Katherine Hebert, County Clerk

**287-2025**

**Moved By** Larry Verbeke

**Seconded By** Chris Gibb

That Essex County Council receive Report Number 2025-1001-LLS-R50-KH, Approval of the County Council Meeting Schedule for 2026, and approve the proposed Schedule as outlined in **Appendix A** attached to this Report; and,

That this Administrative Report and **Appendix A** be circulated to the Clerks and CAOs of the lower-tier municipalities as information.

In Favour (13): Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

**Carried**

### **13. Unfinished Business**

There were no matters of unfinished business for consideration.

### **14. New Business**

#### **14.1. Public Reporting of Closed Meeting**

- Essex County Council met in a Closed Meeting at 5:00 PM this evening as permitted and pursuant to Section 239 (2)(e) and (f) of the Municipal Act, 2001, to receive information related to report number 2025-0917-LLS-R43-DMS, Summary of Outstanding Legal Matters.
- Council also met as permitted, and pursuant to Section 239 (2) (d) of the Municipal Act, 2001, to receive information related to report number 2025-1001-HR-R07-KP, Recommendations for Non-Union Employee Benefit Plan Enhancements and Options for Implementation.

Council provided administration with direction with regard to that matter.

- Finally, Council met as permitted, and pursuant to Section 239 (2) (b) and (d) of the Municipal Act, 2001, to receive information related to report number 2025-0917-HR-R-R08-KP, Creating Consistency between 35- and 40- Hour Work Weeks among Non-Union Leadership Staff.

Council provided administration with direction and instruction to implement the recommendations outlined in the Report.

The Closed Meeting Adjourned at 6:00 PM.

**14.2.Run for Windsor**

Councillor McNamara provided information regarding the 'Run for Windsor' on behalf of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at (AMJ) Windsor who is hosting their 5th Annual Run, on October 25, 2025, at Malden Park.

The Run for Windsor has successfully raised close to \$80K over the years in support of the Windsor Regional Hospital Foundation.

**15. Adoption of By-Laws**

**288-2025**

**Moved By** Rob Shepley

**Seconded By** Gary McNamara

That By-law 2025-41, be given three readings, and having been read a first, second and third time, be finally passed and enacted.

In Favour (13): Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Mark Carrick

**Carried**

**15.1.By-law number 2025-41**

Being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of the Council of the Corporation of the County of Essex, Regular and Closed meetings, for October 1, 2025

**16. Notice of Motion**

**16.1. Joint Meeting with City of Windsor Agenda**

Sherry Bondy brought forward the following Notice of Motion:

That Essex County Council direct administration to invite the Service Manager for Windsor/Essex social housing to an upcoming meeting of County council to discuss concerns and opportunities related to our social stock and operations.

**17. Adjournment**

**289-2025**

**Moved By** Michael Prue

**Seconded By** Chris Gibb

That the Essex County Council meeting for October 1, 2025 be adjourned at 9:15 PM.

**Carried**

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Hilda MacDonald,  
Warden, County of Essex

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Katherine Hebert,  
County Clerk

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Date Signed