

# A YEAR IN REVIEW

2018 was an eventful year for the Ontario Climate Consortium. Steadfast in its commitment to climate change research and knowledge mobilization, the Consortium continued its support of various adaptation and mitigation projects, taking the lead on a number of relevant and time-sensitive initiatives that have gained considerable traction in efforts to combat climate change. This year, the OCC was pleased to host over 40 workshops and provide over 30 presentations on topics related to energy, water, conservation and resilience. We gained over 200 followers and made 187,000 impressions through our social media platforms, welcomed more than 100 new subscribers to our newsletter, and gained new partners from Ryerson University and OCAD University. Below are a few highlights from 2018.

## 2018 Ontario Climate Symposium



Adaptive Urban Habitats by Design, hosted at OCAD University, marked the 6<sup>th</sup> Ontario Climate Symposium. With the goal of showcasing real-life examples of how technology, policy, green infrastructure and strategic design can transform cities, the 2018 Symposium brought together over 150 speakers, attendees and volunteers from across Canada to engage in important discussions surrounding the role that art and design plays in developing adaptive, low-carbon cities. With interactive

panels to engaging workshops to art installations and film screenings, the 2018 Symposium was proud to facilitate solutions-focused dialogue with diverse voices and opportunities to interact. A summary report is being written and will be available on the OCC website in early 2019.

## Incorporating Climate Change into Source Water Protection

In 2018, the Ontario Climate Consortium collaborated with Conservation Ontario, Conservation Authorities and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks to develop a science based guidance document and assessment tool to enable the assessment of climate change impacts on the quality of municipal drinking water sources. This Guidance document and Assessment Tool provide an approach to assess local climate change impacts, determine vulnerability of drinking water systems to climate change, and highlight areas where actions may be needed to further protect the health and safety of source water quality across Ontario.

The primary benefits of project outputs include:

- a. Providing clear guidance on how climate change science can be built into the existing source water quality risk assessment approach in Ontario;
- b. Building consistency across the province;
- c. Producing qualitative information that can inform the development of source protection policies that may be required for a drinking water system; and
- d. Supporting staff at the Province of Ontario as they work to develop, understand, and establish frameworks for addressing climate change within source protection plans and/or policies in the future.

In the Fall of 2018, OCC and Conservation Ontario also hosted a series of workshops and webinars to discuss and obtain input among stakeholders across the Province. Following feedback and revisions, the final products were submitted and are now under consideration by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

## Climate Change in Richmond Hill



The OCC supported the Town of Richmond Hill throughout 2018 as they undertook important processes to spur climate change action in their municipality. Early in the year, the Town

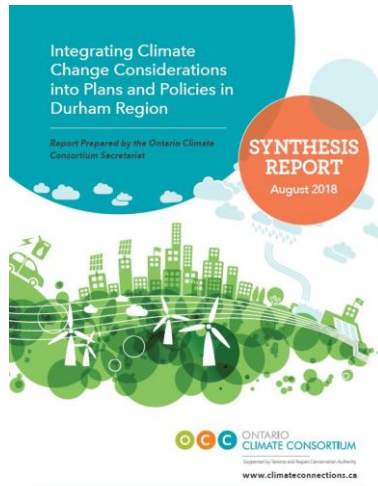
undertook a corporate climate change risk scan in collaboration with the OCC where over 100 municipal staff were engaged in workshop settings for brainstorming, discussing and prioritizing potential climate risks to important services provided by Town staff. Information obtained through this process was summarized and made available to all divisions within the Town, and was meant to establish a baseline to inform the development of a potential climate change framework and support future opportunities for strategic decision making. Shortly after, the Town undertook a scoping workshop in collaboration with the OCC that engaged staff to brainstorm and scope a climate change planning framework. The climate change framework was identified as ideally considering both climate change adaptation and mitigation priorities, and discussions as part of this process led to (1) themes and action areas being identified, (2) key stakeholders and partners to be involved, and (3) engagement approaches to enable the prioritization of actions.

## Establishing Climate Change Priorities in Essex Region

Through late 2018, the Ontario Climate Consortium worked with Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) to identify initiatives to accelerate and better coordinate climate change response across the region. This ongoing collaboration culminated in a one-day workshop bringing together a range of participants for an open discussion addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts in the Essex Region. The event included a presentation by

Dianne Saxe, Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, followed by panel presentations and interactive break-out activities. The workshop will help to set the stage for the formalization of a regional collaborative effort to drive climate action across the region. A post-workshop report is currently being developed. The recommendations developed through this report will help to inform Essex Region's next steps in moving towards forming a regional collaborative.

## Integrating Climate Change Considerations in Plans and Policies in Durham Region



In 2018, the OCC collaborated with Durham's Natural Environment and Climate Change Working Group to examine how climate change considerations are being incorporated in the region's natural environment policies and plans. Since the release of the report this past August, the OCC has had the opportunity to present these findings to various groups including the CitiesAlive! Conference, the Ontario Urban Forest Council Conference, the Region of Peel Research Fair, as well as three presentations within Durham Region. Through this research, the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority received funding through the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation to undertake updated climate modelling for the region. This work is expected to begin in 2019.

## Measuring Impact of Low Carbon Social Mobilization Initiatives

As a partner of the Community Energy Knowledge and Action Partnership (CEKAP), the OCC is pleased to work with a number of Canadian Universities, local and regional governments, and civil society organizations. As part of the CEKAP partnership, the OCC was instrumental in planning and executing a workshop entitled "Measuring Impact of Low Carbon Social Mobilization Initiatives". On October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018, academic researchers and social change practitioners came together to explore approaches to evaluating the impacts of low carbon social mobilization initiatives.



This workshop examined the role academic researchers could play to support and/or enable ongoing experimentation and measurement of the impacts of existing and emerging models. Some key takeaways from this workshop include:

- Workplace engagement on sustainability behaviours can be an important channel to leverage, given the amount of time people spend at work and the power of social norms in work environments.
- Top-down policy change on its own is insufficient; it needs to be complemented by bottom-up community development efforts to motivate behaviour change and socialize new pro-sustainability norms
- Long term social- cultural change can be achieved by seeing changes in structures and it will be intergenerational also, new technologies are encouraging greater social and cultural shifts (e.g. Renewable Energy).

To learn more about the workshop, the key takeaways and to read the final report, visit [www.cekap.ca/resources-workshops.php](http://www.cekap.ca/resources-workshops.php)

The Ontario Climate Consortium thanks its partners and supporters for their ongoing efforts in climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives in Ontario. To learn more about the OCC and our past and present projects, please visit our website at [www.climateconnections.ca](http://www.climateconnections.ca)

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