

Energy Transition Climate Resilience Committee - 2025 Work Plan

Mandate of Energy Transition Climate Resilience Committee (ETCRC)

The mandate of ETCRC is to:

- (a) promote the City's climate change plans and energy transition strategy to each member's professional and community networks;
- (b) share with, and receive from the City Manager, information regarding the implementation of the City's climate change plans and energy transition strategy;
- (c) provide broad independent advice to Council about the City's climate change plans and energy transition strategy; and
- (d) assist Council in developing performance measures for the City's climate change plans and energy transition strategy.

ETCRC Goals for 2025

The ETCRC helps Council meet one of its six priorities, as set out in the City of Edmonton 2023-2026 Operational Budget:

Climate Action and Energy Transition

Advancing the transition to a low carbon future, and enabling residents, organizations and businesses to take action to preserve the environment.

Committee members are experts in various fields related to the energy transition and climate adaptation. Collectively, their perspective is non-partisan and focused solely on the betterment of the city and the quality of life of its residents.

The Committee provides subject matter expertise to Council directly, as well as to Administration on work related to the actions laid out in Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy and Climate Resilient Edmonton: Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan. Their work helps to ensure the city is reducing its carbon emissions, both in the community and the corporation, and increasing its resilience to the changes ahead.

The ETCRC's priorities for 2025 are as follows.

1. Support to Advance Climate Resilient Planning and Development: Substantial Completion

The Substantial Completion Standard determines how and where the City plans and allows growth outside currently developing areas. It will significantly affect emissions from transportation and buildings. Put simply, a new home in the core will produce 40-70 per cent fewer emissions than a new home in the suburbs¹, without adding to the very significant economic costs to the City and tax payers of developing in the suburbs. Substantial completion is critical to the success of the goals outlined in the City Plan and the Energy Transition Strategy, to reduce emissions and get on a pathway to net-zero.

2. Support to Advance Emissions-Free District Energy

Buildings account for 34 per cent of Edmonton's greenhouse gas emissions². The potential for emissions-free heating for buildings is substantial, affordable, and will help us avoid locking into long-term, significant emissions, depending on the infrastructure choices we make today.

District energy and distributed heating systems that can be connected into future district energy systems, alongside electrification via heat pumps and supported by distributed solar generation, are vital tools. The City is planning numerous new neighbourhoods, such as Exhibition Lands and River Crossing, and ought to invest in expanding downtown district energy as well.

The City can commit to emissions-free district energy through bylaws, and low carbon energy standards for future developments. Some funding is required for feasibility work and to run competitions for the private development of these new systems. It is very important to engage in all the steps required as soon as possible, since every new development with conventional energy locks us into significant emissions that are hard to reduce.

¹ Location Efficiency and Housing Type, United States Environmental Protection Agency

² Edmonton's 2023 Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory

3. Support the Development of a Report Card and Success Tracking on the Energy Transition

It is challenging to keep track of the City's goals and results around energy transition and climate resilience, and the community's access to information and awareness of this effort appears limited. It would be very helpful strategically for the ETCRC, Council and the Administration to prepare a report card on each of the four pathways and associated actions to track progress, highlight the best opportunities for improvement, and bring profile to the City's efforts to reduce emissions and build a sustainable future.

4. Support to Advance Emissions-Neutral Buildings

New buildings and neighbourhoods are being built every day that lock us into very costly-to-reduce emissions for long periods of time. This challenge is solvable with existing technologies and solutions at the neighbourhood or individual building level. The timing of our work will depend on capacity and our assessment of capacity relative to other priorities.

Work Plan

Goals	Timeline	Action Items	Expected Outcomes	Partners/ Stakeholders
Goal 1: Support to Advance Climate Resilient Planning and Development - Substantial Completion	Start date: January 2025 Completion date: December 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to request to speak at related Council Committee meetings and answer questions. • Provide data and information to Council on the impacts of development patterns, density and the style of development. • Look for additional opportunities for the ETCRC to provide input. 	Success will be measured by tangible limits to suburban growth.	City Council, Administration including Urban Planning and Economy
Goal 2: Support to Advance Emissions-Free District Energy	Start date: January 2025 Completion date: December 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a memo (or more detailed report) to Council on the importance and benefits of this work, providing ideas on how to implement it. • Request to speak at related Council Committee meetings, Public Hearings, or bylaw proposals that can advance this file. • Host a presentation to discuss the ETCRC's position 	Success will be evident by increased support for Blatchford and its vision, as well as the fruition of other opportunities for district energy in the City.	City Council, Administration including Integrated Infrastructure Services and Urban Planning and Economy

		<p>with Council and Administration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a memo to Council recommending they explore a utility partnership that can fund and install district energy systems and distributed heat pumps. • Explore and facilitate distributed systems. 		
<p>Goal 3: Provide a Report Card and Success Tracking on the Energy Transition</p>	<p>Start date: January 2025</p> <p>Completion date: December 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request a presentation from Administration re: progress on the Energy Transition Strategy pathways and actions. • Invite any required expertise to an ETCRC subcommittee meeting to grade progress and construct a report card, which includes grading equity, justice, and health and well being, and recommendations toward closing gaps. • Make recommendations on data requirements and reporting progress on the energy transition. 	<p>Success for this work will be a complete report card for the pathways and actions of the Energy Transition Strategy, which will help identify where more resources are needed and maximize opportunities for success.</p>	<p>City Council, Administration</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote successes. For example, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase the profile of successful solutions and projects, ○ Celebrate the positive aspects of the energy transition, ○ Model the actions that citizens, businesses, and the City are taking to inspire others. ● The ETCRC will assess its information needs and the benefits of the strategic timing of the release of this work to determine a timeline (Fall 2024 might be a logical target due to the timing of the 2025 municipal election). 		
<p>Goal 4: Support to Advance Emissions-neutral buildings</p>	<p>Start date: January 2025</p> <p>Completion date: December 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Request a presentation from Administration on progress towards using incentives in planning, permitting, zoning, and taxes; education; and other strategies to progress to 	<p>Success will be meaningful policy on incentives and tools that will improve the energy efficiency of buildings in Edmonton.</p>	<p>City Council, Administration</p>

		<p>net-zero.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collect and consolidate the recommendations the ETCRC has already made; prepare a hierarchy of ideas that will help move the needle in a memo to Council. ● Request a presentation from Administration with an update on progress at Blatchford and current strategies for success; discuss ideas for celebrating and creating a higher profile for the development, and discuss and highlight ideas that are transferable to other areas of the city. ● Review the current National Building Code and the pathway to net-zero. Consult with municipal compliance and other appropriate teams, and bring some profile to the importance, benefits and barriers to success. Include this information in a memo 		
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		<p>on buildings to profile the importance of this process, even if it depends on other levels of government to adopt.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Request a presentation from Administration on current progress and strategies, including CEIP, to encourage, celebrate and support energy retrofits of older buildings and offer feedback and ideas for scaling up our efforts.		
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Sub-Committees for Council's Consideration

Name of the Sub-Committee	<i>Rationale</i>	<i>Composition of the Sub-Committee</i>
<p>Action and Response Subcommittee</p>	<p>Council approved an Action and Response Subcommittee for 2024, and three subcommittee meetings were held between May and December 2024. The Committee used these meetings to collaborate on focused work, as directed by the full ETCRC. For example, writing memos to Council and providing Administration with fulsome recommendations for climate targets. Subcommittee meeting time was very useful in helping the Committee complete their work.</p> <p>The ETCRC requests Council's approval to use a subcommittee in 2025.</p> <p>Because all members are not able to attend a subcommittee meeting with short notice, the ETCRC would like the flexibility to meet with a minimum of six members to increase the Committee's ability to respond to situations quickly.</p>	<p>Membership of this subcommittee will be limited to ETCRC members, although key guests may be invited to participate (but not vote).</p>