

2018 BUDGET



Essex Region
Conservation Authority
sustaining the place for life

SUSTAINING THE PLACE FOR LIFE

The Essex Region Conservation Authority is one of 36 Conservation Authorities across Ontario. The role of Conservation Authorities and their relationship to various partners, including member municipalities and the provincial government derives primarily from their enabling legislation, the *Conservation Authorities Act* of Ontario.

This *Act* provides a broad mandate which allows Conservation Authorities to set priorities in collaboration with member municipalities. Our programs demonstrate an ongoing and consistent response to real and serious problems and challenges in the region - land degradation, natural area coverage, and flooding and erosion – the same challenges we faced upon establishment. Today, new issues such as water quality and the Great Lakes, climate adaptation, and sustainable communities must be considered in meeting the needs of municipalities.

Building from our successes, ERCA's focus continues to be in finding new ways to leverage resources which more effectively address provincial and watershed priorities. Given our daily reliance on our natural resources, the projects, programs and priorities implemented by ERCA are critically important to ensuring the Windsor/Essex/Peel Island region will continue to be **the Place for Life**.

The **Essex Region Conservation**

Authority was established in 1973 to protect, restore and manage the natural resources of the Windsor-Essex region. In keeping with the *Conservation Authorities Act*, ERCA works in partnership with residents, municipalities, the Province of Ontario, Government of Canada, and other agencies to increase natural area coverage through tree planting and habitat restoration, improve water quality across our watersheds and our Great Lakes, protect people and property from flooding and erosion, and further our understanding of the environment through science and education. Our goal is a sustainable future which improves our local environment, helps create a community we can all be proud of, and a more vibrant economy that makes this region **The Place for Life**.

2018 WATERSHED ACTIONS

ERCA has consistently demonstrated a strong business case to member municipalities, and is unique from other organizations and agencies in our ability to leverage funds and partnerships to complete projects in our region. The following are some project highlights for 2018.



WATERSHED MANAGEMENT SERVICES

- **Climate Change [1.1].** A new Climate Change Specialist position will lead the development of a Regional Climate Change Strategy addressing identified impacts and vulnerabilities; implementation needs, priorities, and potential funding supports.
- **Floodline Mapping [2.1].** ERCA will explore the needs and options for updating Floodline Mapping for the region, and consider the need to ensure mapping reflects overland and rainfall-based flooding.
- **Place for Life Policies [11.2].** ERCA will complete consultation and finalize development of its Place for Life Policies which will integrate ERCA's planning, development, and program policies.
- **Watershed Engineering [2.3].** A new Regulations/Engineering Technician will provide added support for stormwater reviews, drainage reviews, and related engineering and infrastructure reviews.
- **Client Services [12.3].** In response to growth in the region and continued increases in numbers of planning and permit applications, existing administrative support will focus on planning and regulatory functions.
- **Flood Forecasting [2.1/11.3/12.3/12.3].** ERCA will work with partners to develop a shared climate station network to assist in providing more timely advance warnings, response, and reporting on storm events
- **Plan Review [10.2].** Complete Official Plan updates for Lakeshore, Kingsville, Tecumseh, Leamington and provide advice and direction to all member municipalities on over 750 Planning Act applications.
- **Development Review [12.1].** Complete reviews of over 1,000 Section 28 permit applications for stormwater management; commercial, industrial and residential development; and large scale greenhouse developments;

over 150 Municipal Drainage Act reviews, and respond to 1,300 general water resource related requests.

- **Water and Erosion Control [11.3].** Apply for WECl funding for projects in the City of Windsor, and Lakeshore, and continue to manage the \$3.2 million Lennon Drain improvement project for the City of Windsor.

CONSERVATION SERVICES

- **Conservation Area Operations [9.2].** The Budget includes additional support for operations and maintenance of ERCA's expanded Greenway network.
- **Capital Plan/Tangible Capital Asset Report [13.1].** ERCA will update its Tangible Capital Asset Report and Capital Plan based on replacement schedules and asset needs as part of the next 5-Year Sustainability Plan.
- **Management Planning [9.2].** ERCA will complete the development of a Management Plan for Cedar Creek Conservation Area and associated properties
- **Business Planning [8.1].** ERCA will develop Business Plans for John R. Park Homestead and Holiday Beach Conservation Areas to identify and support investments in infrastructure and visitor services.
- **Land Acquisition [7.3].** The 2018 Budget restores Clean Water~Green Spaces acquisition funding to support securement of key lands with partnership funding in keeping with the Land Securement Strategy.
- **Restoration and Stewardship [6.1].** ERCA will restore 100 acres of upland habitat and create at least 5 acres of wetland, and complete the Sturgeon Creek Wetland with Caldwell First Nations.
- **Innovation [5.1].** ERCA will complete construction of a 10 acre wetland at Hillman Marsh to enhance habitat reduce phosphorus levels getting into Lake Erie, and monitor water quality improvements with University of Windsor.

- [Source Water Protection \[4.3\]](#). ERCA will prepare Annual Report on behalf of all implementing bodies and consult on updates to the Source Protection Plan including need for additional technical work and potentially new policies and consultations. ERCA will also continue to undertake Risk Management Services on behalf of municipalities.
- [Watershed Science \[5.1/5.2\]](#). The budget includes new supports for research, monitoring, and partnerships; and for managing and maintaining data information systems which is critical for evidence-based decision making.
- [Watershed Reporting \[5.3\]](#). ERCA will release its 2018 Watershed Report Card, which provides a snapshot of health of our watersheds based on a suite of watershed health indicators, communicates trends and highlights watershed actions, and encourages action where improvements are needed most.
- [Domestic Action Plan \[4.1\]](#). Conservation Authorities are the most effective delivery agent for many aspects of the Lake Erie Domestic Action Plan for reducing Phosphorus levels in Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair. The 2018 budget includes funding from the provincial and federal governments to assist in the ongoing monitoring and science associated with this plan.
- [Great Lakes Water Quality \[5.2/14.2\]](#). ERCA will develop a new shoreline management strategy and plans for a 70 acre wetland rehabilitation project on the Canard River.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SERVICES

- [Communications \[14.2\]](#). ERCA will launch a new website to improve customer service, usability and accessibility, while continuing to build on its Place for Life brand.
- [Education and Outreach \[8.3\]](#). ERCA will continue to coordinate outreach projects in the Region with partners and provide curriculum-based outdoor education for more than 10,000 elementary and secondary school students, including delivery of the Special High Skills Major Certifications to allow students to graduate with specialized environmental skills.
- [Program Integration \[14.2\]](#). ERCA and the ERCF will continue to integrate communications, outreach and events to enhance the region as the Place for Life, and build on the strength of this partnership in support of the \$1 million dollars/3 year Place for Life campaign.
- [Regional Collaboration \[15.3\]](#). ERCA will continue to work with Tourism and Economic Development partners and Regional CAOs to share information on ERCA programs

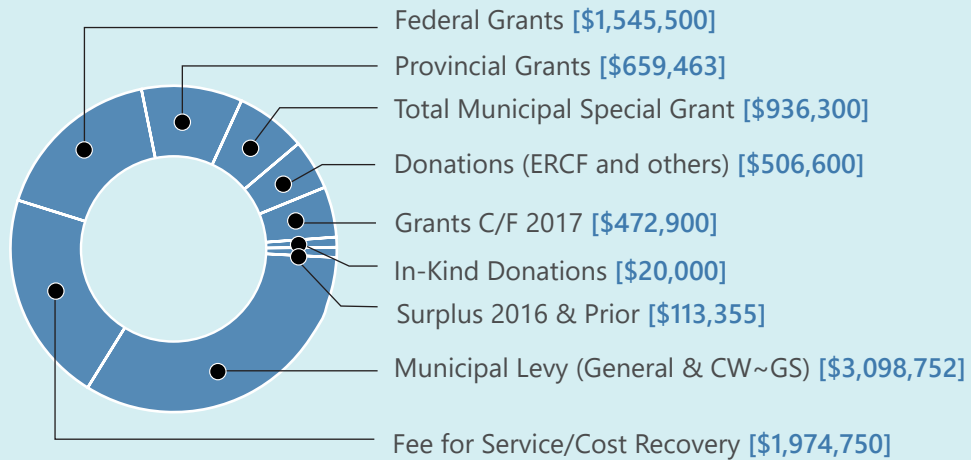
and services and other agencies and partners to ensure programs reflect regional needs and priorities.

CORPORATE SERVICES

- [Customer Service \[14.1\]](#). A new administrative position provides enhanced Client/Customer Service, front desk/reception and related corporate administrative functions.
- [File management \[13.2\]](#). Refine records classification system and records policy/retention schedule to support MFIPPA and other obligations; and begin implementation of new records management system.
- [Operational Policies \[13.3/14.3\]](#). Continue to review, update and centralize all operational and administrative policies to ensure consistency with legislation; public-sector best practice; Authority practices, and develop a new Employee Handbook to promote a fair and equitable workplace.
- [Data Management \[15.2\]](#). Review open data ability and feasibility in context of new website functionality.
- [Sustainability Plan \[13.1\]](#). Develop new 5-Year Sustainability Plan to support initiatives identified in the Strategic Plan and to ensure that ERCA has the appropriate resources, and is managed in the most effective and efficient way, to support watershed outcomes.



WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?



FUNDING THE PLACE FOR LIFE

Creating the Place for Life is not our work alone. It is what we do together with municipalities, our neighbours, our universities, our donors, our local and regional agencies, and the many other organizations we partner with.

ERCA's 2018 Budget totals \$9,271,600, and includes a total levy contribution of \$3,148,752 - an increase of \$101,019, or \$0.09 per household (to \$16.00). Of that, \$51k is allocated for operations, and \$50k for future asset replacement.

The Budget also includes over \$4.2 million in leveraged funding for projects described above. This represents 40% of the total ERCA budget. When combined with fee for service revenues, 72% of ERCA's budget is funded through non-levy sources of funding.

ERCA's annual revenues for programs and services ranks consistently in the top 10 of all 36 Conservation Authorities.

At the same time, ERCA's operational levy funds less than 30% of its operations, placing ERCA in the bottom five of all Conservation Authorities, and well below the provincial average (approx. 45%). For comparison in 2016, while the average CA levy supporting operations was \$15.62/capita, ERCA's levy supporting operations was only \$8.47/capita.

We are making a difference. We need to celebrate our successes, and we need to increase the scope, scale and intensity of our joint efforts. We want to create a place we can be proud of and celebrate – one we can call home. For life.

2018 Municipal Levy Allocation										
	CVA %		GENERAL LEVY		CW~GS LEVY		TOTAL LEVY		CHANGE	
	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	\$	%
Amherstburg	5.974%	6.051%	\$125,384	\$120,874	\$62,729	\$63,531	\$188,114	\$184,405	\$3,709	2.0%
Essex	4.864%	4.927%	\$102,077	\$98,429	\$51,069	\$51,734	\$153,146	\$150,164	\$2,983	2.0%
Kingsville	6.134%	6.193%	\$128,738	\$123,711	\$64,407	\$65,022	\$193,146	\$188,733	\$4,413	2.3%
Lakeshore	9.191%	9.023%	\$192,888	\$180,247	\$96,501	\$94,737	\$289,389	\$274,984	\$14,405	5.2%
LaSalle	8.283%	7.965%	\$173,843	\$159,110	\$86,973	\$83,627	\$260,817	\$242,737	\$18,080	7.4%
Leamington	5.944%	6.102%	\$124,759	\$121,909	\$62,417	\$64,075	\$187,176	\$185,983	\$1,192	0.6%
Peele Island	0.296%	0.305%	\$6,221	\$6,102	\$3,112	\$3,207	\$9,333	\$9,310	\$23	0.3%
Tecumseh	8.354%	8.237%	\$175,339	\$164,545	\$87,722	\$86,484	\$263,061	\$251,029	\$12,031	4.8%
Windsor	50.959%	51.198%	\$1,069,502	\$1,022,806	\$535,069	\$537,583	\$1,604,570	\$1,560,389	\$44,182	2.8%
Totals	100%	100%	2,098,752	\$1,997,733	\$1,050,000	\$1,050,000	\$3,148,752	\$3,047,733	\$101,019	3.3%

2018 Budget available in full at www.erca.org