

Whitby Climate Emergency Response Plan

Phase 2: Mitigation

Engagement Summary



Executive Summary

Background

Engagement is best understood as a process that involves the public in shared decision-making or influence over decision-making. Meaningful engagement is critical to building mutual understanding, providing information and data, and ensuring Plans reflect the priorities of the community.

This Engagement Plan was developed for the Town of Whitby Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP) Phase 2: Mitigation Plan to ensure that interested and affected parties (either internal or external) received opportunities to inform and provide feedback on the Mitigation Plan. The Engagement Plan provided the framework outlining the engagement objectives and techniques, and roles and responsibilities used throughout the active engagement period. The engagement process was designed to align with the CERP Phase 1: Resilience Plan's engagement process and some engagement techniques used during Phase 1 included opportunities for community members to provide feedback used to develop the Mitigation Plan. The Phase 2: Mitigation Plan's engagement process further engaged community members in developing the Mitigation Plan.

This Engagement Summary report was finalized in December 2023 to summarize the feedback we received during the active engagement period.

ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

- 152 community members participated in the Community Survey: Resilience Plan, which engaged community members on mitigation actions related to buildings.¹
- Seven Whitby Advisory Committees and Durham Advisory Committees were engaged.²
- 66 community members participated in the Community Survey: Mitigation Plan.
- Seven community members participated in the Equity and Social Services Focus Group.
- 14 meetings were hosted with members of Whitby's CERP Phase 2 Project Team.
- A one-on-one meeting was held with a representative from Elexicon Energy.

TOPLINE RESULTS

Results obtained through engagement with community members include:

1. The Town of Whitby (Town) needs to act urgently to address climate change. This includes raising awareness of climate change and climate actions by providing education on these topics, and recruiting community champions to participate in climate action events.
2. The Town should leverage and expand funding support for all community members to

¹The Community Survey: Resilience Plan was designed to engage participants on mitigation strategies related to buildings. The feedback received from these survey questions informed the Mitigation Plan.

²These committees included: Accessibility Advisory Committee, Active Transportation and Safe Roads Advisory Committee, Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee, Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee, Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change, Durham Environmental Advisory Committee, and Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

implement climate actions, with priority given to equity-deserving and at-risk community members.

- 3.** The Town should expand active transportation networks to support community members in adopting active transportation for shorter trips.
- 4.** The Town should position themselves as a leader in climate action by implementing the Zero Carbon Whitby Framework's actions, and share lessons learned and success stories from Town-led actions to encourage community members to take action.
- 5.** The Town should increase awareness campaigns and provide educational materials highlighting programs and showing the benefits and costs of different climate actions.

Engagement Plan Background

Engagement Objectives

The following are the main objectives of this Engagement Plan described according to the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Engagement of inform, consult, involve, or collaborate (see Appendix A).

Engagement objectives are strategic and describe why we are engaging. They outline the purpose (not technique) of the plan, define what is successful and meaningful engagement, and are clear about the level of influence participants have. The engagement objectives were designed based on information available in the project proposal and pre-engagement summary created for the CERP Phase 1: Resilience Plan, as well as the feedback provided by Town staff.

Engagement techniques (e.g., workshops, focus groups, surveys) are tactical and describe how we're engaging. The techniques are linked with the engagement objectives to show how they achieve those objectives. The outputs and outcomes drive the techniques selected to achieve the objectives.

- Outcomes are the results, often measured by a change in state. They are intangible and measured qualitatively.
- Outputs are the actions, activities, or items that contribute to achieving the outcome. They are tangible and can be measured quantitatively.

The engagement objectives for this project were:

- Objective 1: To inform community members about the creation of the Mitigation Plan and how they can participate in the process.
- Objective 2: To involve community members in determining their preferred engagement style for the Mitigation Plan.
- Objective 3: To involve diverse community members in documenting their lived experiences with climate change, and sharing feedback on the Mitigation Plan's goals, and their preferred approach to climate action in Whitby.
- Objective 4: To involve the Project Team members in documenting their approach to climate action in Whitby, their local climate change concerns, and challenges and opportunities for the Mitigation Plan.
- Objective 5: To inform interested and affected parties how their feedback and participation shaped the Mitigation Plan.

Interested and Affected Parties

The community refers to any individual, group of individuals, or organizations within or connected to Whitby. Similarly, interested and affected parties are any person, group of individuals, or organization interested in or affected by the Mitigation Plan. In addition to providing feedback opportunities to the community during key phases, the SSG consultants and Town staff engaged interested and affected parties through the following three groups:

1. The Project Team consisting of the Town and Region of Durham staff members,³
2. Town and Region of Durham existing Steering Committees,⁴ and key external interested and affected parties,⁵ and
3. A Focus Group with equity-deserving community members and social service organizations identified by the Town, Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee, and SSG.

First Nations (Rights Holders)

Indigenous engagement in Canada is governed by the ‘duty to consult’ as ruled by the Supreme Court of Canada. Indigenous Peoples are rights holders and not stakeholders. Governments have a duty to engage in meaningful consultation whenever there is reason to believe that its policies or actions, directly or indirectly, may infringe upon actual or claimed Indigenous interests, rights, or title. SSG recognizes that the creation of the Mitigation Plan falls under this duty.

Though SSG does not facilitate the government-to-government process, we supported the process by undertaking the following steps to engage Indigenous Peoples in the creation of the Mitigation Plan:

1. Town staff and SSG consultants were familiarized with the individual policies/guidelines of each Nation or Indigenous group.
2. Town staff and SSG consultants followed the individual guidelines for consultation (where they existed) with each Nation or group in order to set up discussion with the appropriate participants.
3. The Town reached out to Nations that did not have consultation policies or guidelines in order to find out who best to invite to a discussion with the Town.
4. Meetings were set up to answer the following questions: “How would the Nation/group/community(ies) like to be engaged in the creation of the Mitigation Plan?”
5. Based on the response, consultation was planned accordingly.

Engagement Timeline

Table 1 (next page) summarizes the engagement timeline used throughout the duration of the project, a detailed engagement timeline is provided in Appendix B: Engagement Phases and Techniques.

³ External interested and affected parties, such as Elexicon Energy, were invited to attend the Project Team meetings.

⁴ These committees included: Accessibility Advisory Committee, Active Transportation and Safe Roads Advisory Committee, Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee, Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee, Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change, Durham Environmental Advisory Committee, and Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

⁵ These key internal interested and affected parties included The Atmospheric Fund (TAF), Clean Air Partnership (CAP), and Elexicon Energy.

Table 1. Summary of engagement phases and techniques.

TIMING	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
ENGAGEMENT PHASE 1: PRE-ENGAGEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT DESIGN		
Spring 2022	The pre-engagement process	Using the pre-engagement summary report prepared by SSG for the CERP Phase 1: Resilience Plan, SSG contacted additional interviewees to participate in the pre-engagement process and prepared the Mitigation Plan's Engagement Plan.
March 2022	First Nations (Rights Holders)	SSG supported a meeting between the Town's Project Manager and the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation Consulting Team.
Spring 2022	Engagement Plan Design	SSG prepared the Mitigation Plan's Engagement Plan with feedback from the CERP: Phase 1 Resilience Plan's pre-engagement summary report.
ENGAGEMENT PHASE 2: ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT		
Spring 2022	Phase 1: Resilience Plan Survey	SSG conducted a community survey to further involve the broader Whitby community in shaping the Resilience Plan by identifying preferred actions and increasing emergency preparedness. Survey questions were also designed to engage participants on mitigation actions related to buildings. The feedback received from these survey questions related to mitigation actions for buildings was used to inform the Mitigation Plan.
May 2022 - August 2023	Monthly Project Team Meetings	SSG and the Town's Project Manager hosted monthly meetings with the Project Team to inform them of key deliverables and received feedback to inform each phase of the Mitigation Plans development. The Project Team consisted of members of the Town, Region of Durham and Elexicon Energy.
May - June 2022	Existing Committees presentations	SSG presented to the Town's Accessibility Advisory Committee, Active Transportation and Safe Roads Advisory Committee, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee, Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee, and the Region of Durham's Roundtable on Climate Change, Environmental Advisory Committee, and Agricultural Advisory Committee. The presentations were designed to inform these committees of the CERP Phase 1 and Phase 2 and receive feedback on the Mitigation Plan's objectives and goals.
April 2023	Elexicon Energy Meeting	The Town's Project Manager hosted a one-on-one meeting with Elexicon Energy to inform them of the plan and invite them to provide feedback on the draft Implementation Plan.
April 2023	Phase 2: Mitigation Plan Survey	SSG conducted a community survey to involve the broader Whitby community in shaping the Mitigation Plan by identifying preference towards mitigation actions and supports required to implement the renewable energy, transportation, and waste actions.

TIMING	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
May 2023	Focus Group: Equity-Deserving Community Members	SSG conducted a focus group with equity-deserving community members to understand lived-experience among participants and the support mechanisms required to implement the mitigation actions.
August 2023	Internal and external interested and affected parties draft Mitigation Plan and Implementation Plan review	SSG prepared the draft Mitigation Plan and the Implementation Plan. The editable document and miro board was shared with the Project Team, additional units and departments not included in the Project Team (such as Enforcement Services, Waste Services, and Communications and Creative Services), the Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee, The Atmospheric Fund, Clean Air Partnership, and Elexicon Energy.
ENGAGEMENT PHASE 3: FINAL PLAN AND PRESENTATION		
August 2023	Engagement Summary	SSG prepared an Engagement Summary report summarizing feedback received during the active engagement period.
December 2023	Council Presentation	SSG presented the final Mitigation Plan to the Town's Council.

Engagement Techniques

The following section summarizes the techniques used during the active engagement period to meet the third and fourth engagement objectives.

MONTHLY PROJECT TEAM MEETINGS

The Project Team included representatives from the Town, the Region of Durham and Elexicon Energy.⁶ To ensure Elexicon Energy had the opportunity to share the feedback, the Engagement Plan was adjusted to extend the draft Mitigation Plan and Implementation Plan review to external parties.

The monthly meetings ran from May 2022 until August 2023, and were designed to share project updates and receive feedback on key deliverables such as modelling assumptions and low-carbon actions, financial analysis, and implementation actions. Feedback from the Project Team was directly integrated into the project deliverables.

EXISTING COMMITTEES PRESENTATIONS

The existing committee presentations were designed to meet the third engagement objective as outlined above and in Appendix B.

Between May and June 2022, SSG and the Town project staff presented to the Town's Accessibility Advisory Committee, Active Transportation and Safe Roads Advisory Committee, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee, Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee, and the Region of Durham's Roundtable on Climate Change, Environmental Advisory Committee, and Agricultural Advisory Committee.

⁶ The Elexicon Energy representative was only able to consistently attend the Project Team meetings early in the project as the representative left Elexicon Energy mid-way through Mitigation Plan's development, as a result the Engagement Plan was adjusted to host a one-on-one meeting with an Elexicon Energy representative.

During each presentation, committees were provided with an overview of the modelling process, net-zero emissions target, and potential Big Moves. The committees were asked to share feedback on the following questions:

1. How do you define the success of the Mitigation Plan?
2. What are some opportunities to reduce GHG emissions in Whitby?
3. What are some challenges to reduce GHG emissions in Whitby?

Feedback received during these sessions was incorporated directly into the Mitigation Plan.

PHASE 1: RESILIENCE PLAN AND PHASE 2: MITIGATION PLAN SURVEYS

The Phase 1: Resilience Plan and Phase 2: Mitigation Plan surveys were designed to meet the third engagement objective as outlined above and in Appendix B.

These surveys were not designed or intended to serve as a public opinion poll, which typically measures uninformed opinion. Therefore the results of the survey cannot be extrapolated to represent the views of the entire community. The findings only reflect the perspectives of those who chose to participate and complete the survey.

The online surveys asked participants to respond to a series of multiple-choice, ranking, and open-ended questions related to building retrofits, renewable energy, transportation, and waste. Both surveys were hosted on the Town's Connect Whitby web page. The Phase 1: Resilience survey ran from April 14, 2022 to May 5, 2022, and the Phase 2: Mitigation survey ran from April 12, 2023 to May 7, 2023.

ELEXICON ENERGY MEETING

The Elexicon Energy meeting was designed to meet the fourth engagement objective as outlined above and in Appendix B. This meeting was added as Elexicon Energy representatives were unable to attend the monthly Project Team meetings.

In April 2023, the Town's Project Manager hosted a one-on-one meeting with a representative from Elexicon Energy. This meeting was organized to inform Elexicon Energy of the Mitigation Plan's modelling process, the low-carbon scenario's modelled targets, and the development of the Implementation Plan. As a follow up to this meeting, Elexicon Energy were invited to share feedback on the draft Implementation Plan during the external review period in August 2023.

FOCUS GROUP: EQUITY-DESERVING COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The focus group with equity-deserving community members was designed to meet the third engagement objective as outlined above and in Appendix B.

The equity focus group plays a crucial role in understanding lived-experiences among participants by providing a nuanced perspective and detailed feedback. The focus group was not designed or intended to serve as a representation of all equity-deserving community members in Whitby. Therefore, the results cannot be extrapolated to represent the views of the entire community.

In a focus group, facilitators have the ability to ask tailored questions and follow up questions to explore the topics in greater detail, and allow participants to elaborate on their experiences, resulting in more comprehensive feedback. This allows us to uncover the connection between

climate change and other social, economic, and environmental factors affecting focus group participants.

The session was designed to encourage active participation and collaboration in a safe space. Anonymizing the feedback and participation, provided participants with the opportunity to share open and honest feedback.

To gather participants, SSG staff reached out to 24 organizations and individuals involved in equity-related issues or belonging to equity-deserving groups. This list was compiled based on pre-engagement input, online resources, and input from Town's staff and the Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee.

The focus group was designed as a 90-minute session conducted via Zoom. The session began with a brief presentation of the Mitigation Plan, followed by a question-and-answer period. The format involved a roundtable discussion, where all participants were asked four questions from a speakers list:

1. What has your experience been with climate change while living in Whitby? (Additional prompt: how has the Town (and/or Region of Durham) supported you through these impacts?)
2. What actions, policies, or initiatives should the Town consider to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in new and existing buildings? (Additional prompt: how will the changes impact your household, and how do you want to be supported?)
3. What actions, policies, or initiatives should the Town consider to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation?
4. What are the major barriers for you to reduce your greenhouse gas emissions, from your home, commuting, waste etc.? (Additional prompt: how can the Town best support you in reducing your greenhouse gas emissions?)

Each participant shared their responses based on the questions provided by the facilitator. They were encouraged to build on previous contributions, introduce new perspectives, or abstain from responding if desired.

An SSG facilitator led the discussion while another SGG staff member took detailed notes. These notes were anonymized and categorized into different themes, and a qualitative analysis of the responses was completed.

DRAFT MITIGATION PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN REVIEW

The Draft Mitigation Plan and Implementation Plan review was designed to meet the third and fourth engagement objectives as outlined above and in Appendix B.

Internal and external interested and affected parties were invited to review the draft Mitigation Plan and Implementation Plan. The internal reviewers included the Project Team and additional internal departments such as Enforcement Services, Waste Services and Communications and Creative Services. The external reviewers were staff from the Region of Durham, Elexicon Energy, The Atmospheric Fund, Clean Air Partnership, and Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee.

The two documents were available for review from August 2 to August 25, 2023. The review process was designed to identify challenges and opportunities, refine the implementation actions, and build support among the leads, sponsors, and supporters identified in the

Implementation Plan. Feedback was incorporated directly into the final Mitigation Plan and Implementation Plan.

Communications Approaches

Online communication methods were the primary tools used to grow awareness of the project. Channels included the Town's official social media, the Town's [Connect Whitby web page](#), and email updates to the interested and affected parties list.

Communication of the project on the Town's official social media channels and Connect Whitby were coordinated by the Town's internal Communications and Creative Services department. The Connect Whitby page housed information about the project, the community survey, upcoming public engagement events, key project dates and Town staff contact information.

What We Heard

Who We Heard From

The SSG consultants and the Town's Project Manager gathered feedback from over 250 members of the public, including representatives from the Town and Region of Durham staff, community members, youth, non-profit organizations, and equity-deserving community members.

- 152 community members participated in the Community Survey: Resilience Plan.
- Seven Whitby Advisory Committees and Durham Advisory Committees were engaged.
- 66 community members participated in the Community Survey: Mitigation Plan.
- Seven equity-deserving community members participated in the Equity and Social Services Focus Group.
- 14 meetings were hosted with members of the CERP Phase 2 Project Team.
- A one-on-one meeting was held with representatives from Elexicon Energy.

Key Themes

Across the community engagement techniques, we commonly heard the following recommendations and considerations which were used to inform the Mitigation Plan:

1. The Town needs to act urgently to address climate change. This includes raising awareness of climate change and climate actions by providing education on these topics, and recruiting community champions to participate in climate action events.
2. The Town should leverage and expand funding support for all community members to implement climate actions, with priority given to equity-deserving and at-risk community members.
3. The Town should expand active transportation networks to support community members in adopting active transportation for shorter trips.

4. The Town should position themselves as a leader in climate action by implementing the Zero Carbon Whitby Framework's actions, and share lessons learned and success stories from Town-led actions to encourage community members to take action.
5. The Town should increase awareness campaigns and provide educational materials highlighting programs and showing the benefits and costs of different climate actions.

What We Heard

COMMUNITY SURVEY: RESILIENCE PLAN

The Community Survey: Resilience Plan was designed to receive feedback from community members on actions to retrofit their home and/or buildings to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. 152 community members participated in the survey. The following section details the results related to the CERP Phase 2: Mitigation Plan, the full summary analysis is available in the [CERP Phase 1: Resilience, Engagement Summary](#).

Retrofitting Buildings

The survey provided information about retrofitting buildings in order to help participants respond to the questions. The top residential and business energy-efficiency improvements of interest were installing more efficient windows and/or doors to prevent the loss of heated and cooled air (53%) and increasing building insulation to prevent the loss of heated and cooled air (51%).

In order to make these energy-efficiency improvements to their home or business, participants identified partial support (a proportion of the cost of the upgrades is covered by another party such as a utility, government, or non-profit) (47%) and a list of recommended professionals and contractors (40%) as the top supports needed.

Participants are willing to allocate or accept a rent increase up to 25% (23%) or less than 10% (22%) to receive energy-efficiency upgrades to their home. Thirty-five percent of participants are prepared to pay more to rent, purchase, or lease a building that discloses its energy-efficient upgrades. Another 19% are more likely to rent, purchase, or lease a building that discloses its energy-efficient upgrades but are not prepared to pay more for that building.

COMMUNITY SURVEY: MITIGATION PLAN

The community Climate Mitigation Plan Survey was designed to receive feedback from community members on actions related to renewable energy, transportation, waste, and priority actions of the next five years. Each survey section provided information in order to help participants respond to the questions.

The results were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods to develop a thematic analysis. Note that for questions where respondents could select multiple answers, total percentages may add up to more than 100%. The following section details these results.

Who Participated

Participants were asked six key identifier questions to determine that participants represented diverse groups of residents, and to encourage participation from under-represented communities. The identifiers included: if they lived or worked in Whitby, their gender identity, their household income, and self-identification in groups. The key findings are summarized below.

Majority of the participants selected that they live in Whitby (71%), the second-largest participant group was individuals who travel to Whitby for work and/school (15%), the third-largest group was individuals who travel to Whitby for work and/or school as well as for shopping, dining and/or entertainment (6%). The remaining participants selected that they travel to Whitby for shopping, dining and/or entertainment (3%), that they did not live in Whitby (3%), and that they would like to live in Whitby (1.5%).

A household income of \$200,000 or greater had the highest participation (19%), and the second- and-third highest participation were from household incomes of \$150,000-190,000 (16%) and \$100,000-124,999 (16%). The lowest participation was from household incomes of \$25,000 or less; this group only made up 2% of community members. Twenty-five percent of survey respondents selected “prefer not to disclose.”

Forty-three percent of question respondents identified as a man and 42% identified as a woman. Five percent of respondents selected “prefer not to disclose.”

Sixty-three percent of question respondents identified as Caucasian, 6% identified as South Asian, and 6% identified as Southeast Asian. Of the survey respondents that chose to self-identify with a group; 7 participants (11% of question respondents) self-identified as a person with a disability, 3 participants (5%) self-identified as a member of the 2SLGBTQ+ community, and 2 participants (3%) self-identified as a person experiencing poverty.

Renewable Energy

Fifty-three percent of survey respondents were in full support of increasing renewable energy supply, and 9% did not support increasing renewable energy supply. The remaining survey respondents that selected that they may support increasing renewable energy if they had additional information on:

- Benefits and trade-offs (17% of survey respondents),
- Financial impacts on their household costs (17% of survey respondents), and
- General information on renewable technologies (5% of survey respondents).

Survey participants were asked what supports they would need to install rooftop solar on their home or business. The top five supports selected among survey respondents were (since question respondents could select multiple options, the percentages do not add up to 100%):

1. Partial financial support, in which a proportion of the system’s cost is covered by a utility, government, or non-profit organization (62% of survey respondents),
2. A list of recommended professionals and contractors (45% of survey respondents),
3. Full financial support, in which the total system’s cost is covered by a utility, government, or non-profit organization (38% of survey respondents),
4. Education about the technology and how well it may work (32% of survey respondents), and
5. Financing support, such as a loan (15% of survey respondents).

Thematic Analysis of Open-Ended Questions

Majority of the responses to the open-ended questions were supportive of renewable energy, with many respondents recommending exploring additional renewable energy options

including: geothermal, heat pumps, district energy, and wind.

Developing strategies to alleviate costs were commonly referenced. Some of these included education programs for the public on the benefits of renewable energy systems, the types of loans and financing options available, and the return on investment for homeowners to install systems. Additional recommendations related to cost included developing incentives for all community members. Specifically one respondent recommended incentives be developed for new developments to install heat pumps and electric appliances as they felt this would increase demand and spur action to create renewable energy sources. Many individuals raised concerns about the capital cost, implications of incentive programs on tax-payers, and ongoing maintenance of the systems.

The final theme that emerged was related to the Town acting as a leader. Many individuals felt that the Town should adopt renewable energy first as an opportunity to show the feasibility of these systems. Multiple respondents indicated a desire for the Town to develop partnerships with local businesses, all levels of government to increase the learning opportunities for homeowners.

Transportation

Sixty-eight percent of survey respondents selected their primary mode of transportation is a diesel or gasoline vehicle and 8% selected electric vehicle (EV). Walking, passenger in a vehicle or ride-sharing, and public transit, walking, and passengers in a vehicle or ride-sharing made up 11%, 8%, and 3% respectively.

Electric Vehicles

Eight percent of survey respondents selected that they had no barriers to purchasing or leasing an EV in the next five years, and 11% are not interested. The biggest barriers for purchasing an EV were identified as (since question respondents could select multiple options, the percentages do not add up to 100%):

- Purchase cost (58% of question respondents);
- Availability of charging stations across the province (41% of question respondents); and
- Adding a vehicle charger at home (38% of question respondents).

Public Transportation

Seventy-three percent of respondents do not take public transit at all. Eleven percent take public transit sometimes (one to two times per week), 9% take it occasionally (one to two times per month), 5% take it multiple times per week, and 3% take it seasonally (only in the warmer months).

The respondents who do not currently take public transportation regularly indicated that the following tactics would encourage them to use transit in the future (since question respondents could select multiple options, the percentages may not add up to 100%):

- More frequent service (40% of question respondents);
- More direct routes (32% of question respondents); and
- Transit stops closer to their origin and/or destination (27% of question respondents).

Thirty-seven percent of respondents are not interested in taking public transportation.

Active Transportation

Thirty-six percent of survey respondents do not ride a bike to commute, and 31% do not ride a bike to commute but do for recreation or leisure; 24% sometimes ride a bike (one to two times per week); and 11% ride a bike to commute seasonally. The remaining respondents either ride multiple times per week (5%) or occasionally (3%).

Those who do not ride their bikes indicated that the following would encourage them to start biking (since question respondents could select multiple options, the percentages do not add up to 100%):

- An increase in separated and protected bike lanes (100% of question respondents);
- An increase in separated bike lanes (100% of question respondents);
- An electric bike incentive program (67% of question respondents);
- Safe cycling community outreach and/or awareness campaigns (67% of question respondents); and
- A bike-share program (67% of question respondents).

Thematic Analysis of Open-Ended Questions

Many of the open-ended responses discussed the options presented in the multiple choice questions. Nine of 22 responses discussed connectivity, networks, and land use planning techniques to:

- Encourage the creation of dense development and complete neighbourhoods to reduce the need for travel with vehicles;
- Enhance safe and direct connections between bike paths and routes, including separated barriers between bike lanes and vehicle lanes; and
- Improve network connections between neighbourhoods and destinations.

The remaining comments discussed transit related measures, including more frequent transit service, cheaper transit fares, direct transit routes to Go Transit hubs, and improved efficiency.

Waste Reduction

Eighty-nine percent of survey respondents participate in the Town's Green Bin and/or Yard Waste collection programs. Of the remaining 11% who do not participate in the collection programs, their reasons for not participating included:

- Lack of access to green bins in multi-unit buildings (4 comments);
- They compost at home and do not require the Town's programs (2 comments); and
- They did not live in Whitby but would like to see an increase in education related to the reuse of materials (1 comment).

Participants were asked to rank initiatives that would help reduce their household waste, the initiatives were ranked in the following order from most helpful to least helpful:

- Provide community reuse or take-it-or-leave-it centres;
- Provide curbside swap days;
- Increase support for reuse programs;

- Provide incentives for small businesses to make less waste; and
- Increase financial incentives for recycling and composting.

Understanding the Community's Priorities

The final section of the survey asked participants to rank their preference for climate-related priorities, their support toward job placement training that support the low-carbon scenario, and an open-ended question to share additional feedback on how the Town can support an equitable transition.

Survey respondents ranked the following climate-change priorities that the Town should focus on in the next year. The priorities were ranked from highest to lowest:

1. Establish additional programs to assist Whitby residents, especially those who cannot afford to make energy upgrades to their buildings;
2. Continue to seek federal, provincial, or private partnerships and/or grants to fund the implementation of climate actions;
3. Further support and promote the regional Durham Greener Homes program, which provides technical and financial support for building retrofits;
4. Make it easier for people to bike or walk by building more paths, sidewalks, and other structures for them to use;
5. Establish programs to assist Whitby businesses to make energy upgrades to their buildings; and
6. Advocate for carbon-free regional and municipal services across Whitby.

In terms of supporting programs to create training opportunities related to the skills required in the low-carbon transition, 74% of survey respondents support the Town leading this action, 14% were unsure, and 8% did not support.

Thematic Analysis of Open-Ended Question: Supporting an Equitable Transition

Many respondents indicated the need for continued consultation with at-risk community members to ensure all residents are aware of the programs, supports, and services available to them as part of the CERP Phase 1 and Phase 2 implementation. Respondents requested merging consultation with ongoing monitoring and tracking of the Town and community's GHG emissions.

"By always ensuring that the Town, Region and Council do everything they need to do to keep the community updated and involved in community programs to address these concerns on a quarterly basis." - Survey Respondent

Respondents discussed the need to provide equitable assistance based on household income and include incentives for renters and residents living in multi-unit residential buildings. Concerns were raised regarding the current housing affordability crisis and the need to equitably distribute the climate actions among different groups.

"It has to be a balanced approach that will not fall primarily on the shoulders of new construction. Housing affordability is a bigger crisis than climate and some measures being proposed further exacerbate the problem." - Survey Respondent

“Construct sustainable affordable housing.” - Survey Respondent

The final theme was that the Town should be a leader in climate action and use their Zero Carbon Whitby Framework as the pilot and example to show how these actions can be successfully implemented.

“Whitby should take the lead - rather than pushing citizens and business to do the heaving lifting and absorbing the costs The Town should be the leader in its own fleet of vehicles, buildings at hopefully a close to zero cost to taxpayers, therefore being able to demonstrate to the general population the low to “NO” cost of the initiatives.” - Survey Respondent

FOCUS GROUP: EQUITY-DESERVING COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The focus group was designed to receive feedback from equity-deserving community members. Seven community members participated in the focus group. The following section provides a thematic analysis of the focus group feedback.

Who Participated

Seven individuals took part in the focus group. Although a formal demographic analysis was not conducted, participants voluntarily self-identified as representatives of various groups, including mobility-limited and people with disabilities, new immigrants to Whitby, members of Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) communities, and senior citizens.

Thematic Analysis of Focus Group Discussion

There was a sense of urgency and climate guilt among focus group participants.

Numerous participants emphasized the importance of taking immediate action and highlighted the need for a swift development and implementation of the Mitigation Plan. However, even with many participants discussing the actions they have taken to reduce their GHG emissions, many participants mentioned that they feel guilty for not being able to do more.

Protecting green spaces was a priority among focus group participants.

One participant reflected on the difference between living in Whitby and their previous home in the Greater Toronto Area. They shared an anecdote that they feel that Whitby has more tree plantings and access to green spaces; they appreciated that the Town and Region of Durham are investing in tree planting programs.

However, concerns were raised regarding the intensity of urbanization Whitby (and Region) has undergone recently. While not directly to the Mitigation Plan, one participant recommended that the Town collaborate more with the local conservation authority to implement increased erosion control and work to minimize debris in local watersheds.

Financial support is necessary for low-income groups to participate in climate actions.

Participants explained that the cost of climate actions are expensive and lower-income or at-risk residents will need financial support and incentives to participate. Participants said existing rebate programs are not suited to the needs of lower-income households because they cannot afford to pay for upfront capital costs or long-term maintenance.

Community awareness and accessible and transparent communications will foster community involvement in the implementation of the Mitigation Plan.

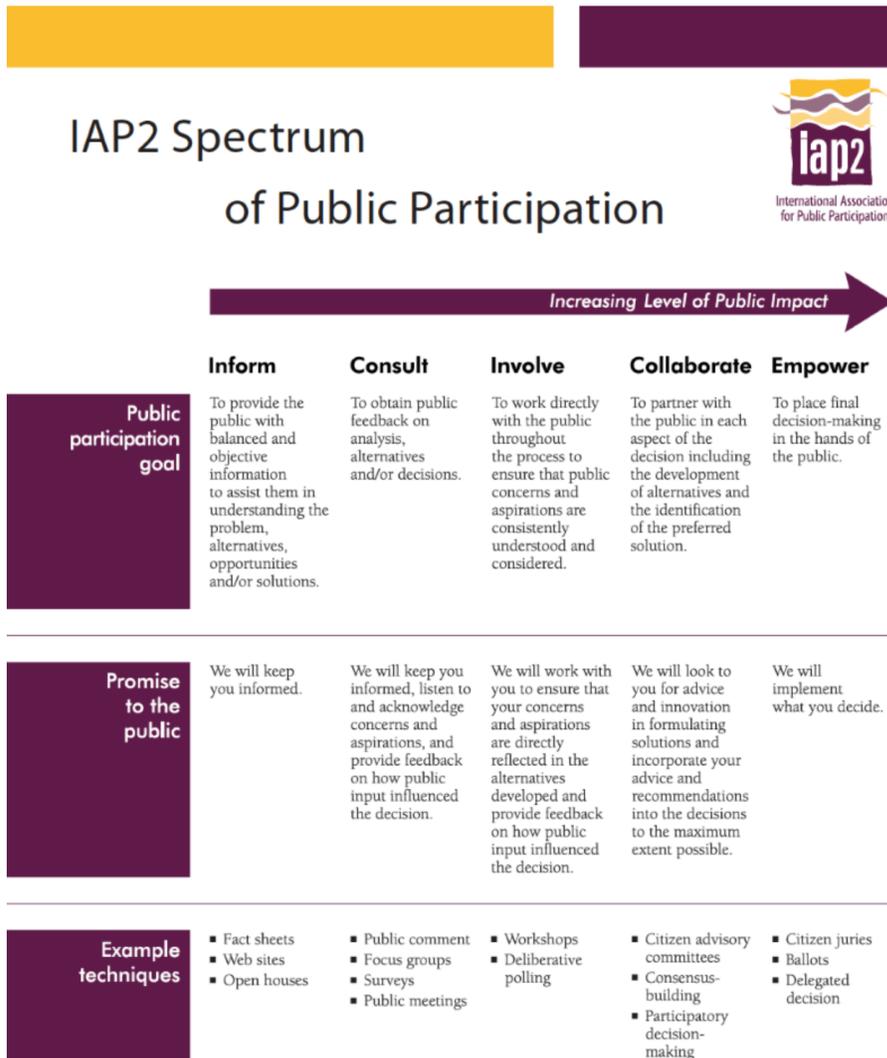
All focus group participants highlighted the need to increase education within the community regarding climate change and mitigation. While guides and pamphlets are helpful techniques, many participants indicated the need for additional education programs such as pilot programs and test initiatives. Participants said that these programs could be beneficial as they provide more than a static education material and are able to show how these initiatives can be successful within the community. For example, providing education sessions on a green roof site is a tool to highlight reduced urban heat island, urban agriculture, stormwater management, and biodiversity.

Further to this, one participant recommended reaching out to the Ajax Center to develop a partnership to engage new immigrants to Canada by sharing newsletters, periodic email updates, and training sessions. Regardless of the education or communication technique used, participants noted that communication efforts should be inclusive and considerate of different segments of the population. They highlighted the need for language that is easily understood and accessible to ensure that information related to climate preparedness reaches and resonates with these communities.

Next Steps

The feedback from the engagement techniques helped the Town understand the community's priorities and needs, and enabled the Town staff and SSG to develop a Mitigation Plan that can be successfully implemented across the community. As noted in the survey and focus group analyses, ongoing and continued engagement will be important during the implementation of the Mitigation Plan. To ensure this is achieved, the Implementation Plan has been designed with multiple advocacy and education actions to ensure community members stay informed and to build awareness.

Appendix A: IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum



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Figure 1A. Summary of the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum (source: International Association for Public Participation).

Appendix B: Engagement Phases and Techniques

The engagement’s timeline was integrated with the project’s modelling activities. Between the stages of modelling, engagement input was gathered; and when the modelled results are completed, results will be presented. In addition, the engagement techniques were designed to provide a transparent engagement process, as defined during the pre-engagement interviews. The following section details the engagement objectives, techniques, outcomes, and outputs for the three engagement phases.

Phase 1: Pre-Engagement Interviews and Engagement Design

HOW OBJECTIVES WERE ACHIEVED

OBJECTIVE	INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTY(IES)	OUTCOME(S)	OUTPUT(S)	ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVE
Objective 1: To inform community members about the creation of the Mitigation Plan and how they can participate in the process.	All	A diverse representation of Whitby’s community members understand how to engage with the project, and are motivated to participate	<p>A list of community members and organizations who wish to participate in the engagement process and their contact information (ongoing intake for the project’s duration)</p> <p>A list of under-represented and equity-deserving community members to invite to the process Information shared through the Town’s communications channels, newsletters, and advertising</p>	Regular project updates and ongoing communications
Objective 2: To involve community members in determining their preferred engagement style for the Mitigation Plan.	All	Effective methods are identified to ensure meaningful engagement during the Active Engagement Phases	<p>Series of pre-engagement interviews with representatives of different sectors of Whitby were completed during CERP Phase 1: Resilience</p> <p>Additional pre-engagement interviewees with representatives of equity-deserving communities were contacted</p> <p>An Engagement Plan reflecting the community’s needs for engagement</p>	<p>The pre-engagement interview process</p> <p>Engagement Plan</p>

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PRE-ENGAGEMENT

TECHNIQUE	SSG	TOWN OF WHITBY	OBJECTIVES
Pre-engagement Interviews and Summary Report	Conducted interviews of individuals identified by Town staff (30-minute to 1-hour phone or video call) Analyzed interviews	Identified and invited participants	2
Engagement Plan	Prepared draft Engagement Plan	Refined and approved the Engagement Plan	All
Ongoing Communications + List of Interested or Affected Parties	Advised Town of Whitby staff on groups to include based on the pre-engagement interview process Advised Town staff on project updates to communicate on the project website and through communications channels Prepared engagement materials (e.g., presentations, virtual engagement platforms) Identified interested and affected parties for stakeholder lists	Compiled communications list of interested groups and individuals, and provided opportunities for members of the public to join the list Provided regular project updates distributed through the Town’s communications channels, newsletters, and advertising Prepared communications materials (e.g., social media and website content)	1

Phase 2: Active Engagement Period

HOW OBJECTIVES WERE ACHIEVED

OBJECTIVE	INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTY(IES)	OUTCOME(S)	OUTPUT(S)	ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVE
Objective 3: To involve diverse community members in documenting their lived experiences with climate change, and sharing feedback on the Plan’s vision and objectives, and their preferred approach to climate action in Whitby.	Community members, including key external interested and affected parties (such as Elexicon Energy, The Atmospheric Fund [TAF], and Clean Air Partnership [CAP])	<p>Community members have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A common understanding of the project approach to the Mitigation Plan; • Clarity on how public input shapes the final plan and future opportunities for engagement; • A shared understanding and sense of excitement of community opportunities and challenges on the Mitigation Plan process; and • A shared understanding of community criteria for the Mitigation Plan . <p>External interested and affected parties support the Mitigation Plan’s implementation</p> <p>External interested and affected parties are interested in the Mitigation Plan process and excited for its implementation</p>	<p>Identification of opportunities for collaboration and partnerships, monitoring, and reporting for implementation</p> <p>Identification of community concerns and opportunities for implementing the Mitigation Plan</p> <p>Seven presentations to existing Region of Durham and Town of Whitby steering committees</p> <p>Deployment of 2 community survey through the Town’s communications channels</p> <p>One focus group with equity-deserving community members</p> <p>One one-on-one meeting with Elexicon Energy representatives</p> <p>Draft Plans reviewed by external parties</p>	<p>Phase 1: Resilience Plan Survey</p> <p>Phase 2: Mitigation Plan Survey</p> <p>Focus Group: Equity-Deserving Community Members</p> <p>Existing Committees presentations</p> <p>External interested and affected parties Implementation Plan review</p>
Objective 4: To involve the Project Team members in documenting their approach to climate action in Whitby, their local climate change concerns, and challenges and opportunities for the Mitigation Plan.	Town of Whitby Project Team	<p>Town and Region of Durham staff have a shared understanding of how their feedback shaped the final Mitigation Plan</p> <p>Town staff support the Mitigation Plan’s implementation</p> <p>Town staff are interested in the Mitigation Plan process and excited for its implementation</p>	<p>Delivery of 14 staff steering committee workshops at key phases of the project</p>	<p>Monthly Project Team Meetings from May 2022 to August 2023</p> <p>Elexicon Energy Meeting</p> <p>Internal interested and affected parties draft Mitigation Plan and Implementation Plan review</p>
Objective 5: To inform interested and affected parties how their feedback and participation shaped the plan.	All	<p>Community members understand how their feedback shaped the plan and find the process acceptable</p>	<p>“What We Heard” updates provided at key points of the project</p> <p>Engagement Plan and Summary report prepared for the final Mitigation Plan</p>	<p>Engagement Plan and Summary</p>

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

TECHNIQUE	SSG	TOWN OF WHITBY	OBJECTIVES
Existing Committees presentations	Prepared presentations for each meeting, highlighting Mitigation Plan goals and objectives	Co-ordinated meeting timing and hosting	3
	Presented at seven existing steering committee meetings and facilitated engagement sessions to understand opportunities and challenges of climate actions in the local context and future emissions profile	Reviewed presentation materials prior to the workshops	
	Responded to questions about the modelling process, assumptions development, and implementation framework	Responded to questions about the Town's role and jurisdiction	
	Provided digital framework/exercise tools (i.e. menti polls)		
	Analyzed feedback		
Phase 1: Resilience Plan Survey	Prepared survey design	Reviewed draft survey based on SSG's advice, and provided feedback on survey design	3
Phase 2: Mitigation Plan survey	Prepared advice on survey deployment	Provided logistical support	
	Analyzed responses	Sent survey to external interested and affected parties	
		Provided ongoing marketing and communications via the Town's social media channels	
Monthly Project Team Meetings from May 2022 to August 2023	Prepared presentations for each meeting, highlighting key updates, deliverables, and results	Recruited Project Team members	4
	Facilitated meetings to understand opportunities and challenges of climate actions in the local context and future emissions profile	Coordinated meeting timing and hosting	
	Responded to questions about the modelling process, assumptions development, and implementation framework	Reviewed materials prior to meetings	
	Provided digital framework/exercise tools (i.e. Miro boards, menti questions, FAQ documents)	Responded to questions about the Town's role and jurisdiction	
	Analyzed feedback		

TECHNIQUE	SSG	TOWN OF WHITBY	OBJECTIVES
Focus Group: Equity-Deserving Community Members	Contacted equity-deserving community members to attend focus group	Identified list of equity-deserving community members and social equity organizations	3
	Co-ordinated meeting timing and hosting		
	Prepared presentation materials and feedback questions		
	Hosted one focus group with equity-deserving community members		
	Analyzed feedback		
Elexicon Energy Meeting	Prepared presentation materials and guiding questions on key results, opportunities for feedback	Co-ordinated meeting timing and hosting	3
		Reviewed presentation materials prior to the workshops Presented presentation materials and guiding questions	
		Responded to questions about the Town’s role and jurisdiction	
External and internal interested and affected parties Mitigation Plan and Implementation Plan review	Prepared draft Mitigation Plan and Implementation Plan for review by internal and external interested and affected parties	Reviewed draft Mitigation Plan and Implementation Plan prior to sharing for external review	3 and 4
	Provided digital framework/exercise tools (i.e. Miro boards)	Invited internal (Project Team, Town of Whitby departments) and external (Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee, Clean Air Partnership, The Atmospheric Fund, and Elexicon Energy) parties to review the Plans and provide feedback	
	Analyzed feedback	Responded to questions about the Town’s role and jurisdiction	
Engagement Plan and Summary	Analyzed feedback from all engagement activities	Reviewed Ancillary Report: Engagement Plan and Summary	5
	Wrote Ancillary Report: Engagement Plan and Summary		

Phase 3: Final Mitigation Plan and Presentation

HOW OBJECTIVES WERE ACHIEVED

OBJECTIVE	INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTY(IES)	OUTCOME(S)	OUTPUT(S)	ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVE
Objective 5: To inform interested and affected parties how their feedback and participation.	All	Town staff and Town Council have an understanding of the Mitigation Plan, opportunities, and concerns	Approval of the final Mitigation Plan by Council	Presentation to Town Council

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FINAL PLAN AND PRESENTATION

TECHNIQUE	SSG	TOWN OF WHITBY	OBJECTIVES
Town Council Presentation	Prepared a presentation	Co-ordinated meeting timing and hosting	5
	Co-delivered presentation to Council and answered questions	Reviewed presentation materials prior to presentation	
		Presentation to Town's Senior Leadership Team	
		Prepared Council Staff report	