

Glossary

Below are a number of terms that may appear in the documents and reports that are helping guide the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Air Quality: The degree to which the air in a particular area or geography is suitable for inhabitants including humans, animals, or plants to remain healthy.

Anthropogenic: Describes something originating from humans, or human activity. The term is now being used to describe this current geological time period given the degree of change to the world's climate. The "Anthropocene" now follows the other geologic time periods such as the Paleozoic, the Mesozoic and the Cenozoic.

Asset Management: According to the City of London's Asset Management Policy, Asset Management City of London's (City) approach to planning, designing, constructing, acquiring, operating, maintaining, renewing, replacing and disposing of its municipal infrastructure assets in a way that ensures sound stewardship of public resources while delivering effective and efficient customer service.

Carbon Footprint: The amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere as a result of burning fossil fuels and other activities of a particular individual, organization, or community.

Circular Economy: An alternative to the traditional linear "make-use- dispose" process. The circular economy model aims to minimize the use of raw materials, maximize the useful life of a product, and create value for the product to be used again once it reaches end of life.

Climate: The prevailing weather conditions including temperature, precipitation, and wind patterns in an area over a long period of time.

Climate Action: Efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and our impact on the climate.

Climate Adaptation: Adjusting infrastructure, homes, buildings, landscapes, etc. to better withstand current and future impacts of more frequent severe weather events that are created from a climate that is wetter, warmer, and wilder.

Climate Change: A long-term shift in global or regional climate patterns. The climate of an area includes seasonal temperature, rainfall averages, and wind patterns.

Climate Emergency Declaration: On April 24, 2019, the Declaration of a Climate Emergency was approved by London's City Council "for the purposes of naming, framing, and deepening our commitment to protecting our economy, our eco systems, and our community from climate change." As of December 2019, London is one of 1,180 local governments to recognize and declare a climate emergency. A declaration acknowledges the seriousness of climate change, and London is developing a Climate Emergency Action Plan to respond to this emergency.

Climate Emergency Evaluation Tool (CEET): An interim screening tool being developed by the City of London to evaluate projects' potential climate change impacts to the community and City of London.

Climate Mitigation: The action of lessening future impacts of climate change through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Gigajoule (or, one billion joules): A metric unit for measuring energy, and is approximately equivalent to energy provided by burning 26 litres of gasoline (roughly half a tank of gas in a car).

Greenhouse Gas (GHG): A gas that contributes to the greenhouse effect in our atmosphere by absorbing infrared radiation, similar to the glass in a greenhouse that traps heat. Carbon dioxide is the most common greenhouse gas produced by human activity, but methane from decomposing garbage and nitrous oxides from incinerating sewage sludge are also potent greenhouse gases. Emissions of greenhouse gases are reported in terms of "equivalent carbon dioxide."

Green Infrastructure: An infrastructure asset consisting of natural or human-made elements that provide ecological and hydrological functions and processes and includes natural heritage features and systems, parklands, stormwater management systems, street trees, urban forests, natural channels, permeable surfaces and green roofs (Per Ontario Regulation 588/17).

Lifecycle: Describes the sequential stages connecting a product system, from material extraction or generation to final disposal.

Megawatt: (or, one million watts): A metric unit for measuring power output, usually for electricity, and is approximately the amount of power needed to light 200,000 LED light bulbs (at 5 watts each).

Net Zero: Net zero refers to the balance of either energy consumption or emissions production in a community or building. For energy consumption it is achieved when the consumption of energy is balanced by renewable energy production. For the production of emissions, it is achieved when total production equals zero or greenhouse gas emissions are removed or offset.

Resilience: The capacity of cities to function, so that the people living and working in cities survive and thrive no matter what stresses or shocks they encounter.

Severe Weather: Severe weather events refer to meteorological conditions that are rare for a particular place and/or time, such as an intense storm or heat wave and are beyond the normal range of activity. They can be the result of sudden and drastic changes in temperature, precipitation and sea-level or they may be the result of a more gradual, but prolonged, shift in temperature or precipitation that is beyond the normal range.

Terajoule (or, one trillion joules): Equal to 1,000 gigajoules, or approximately 26,000 litres of gasoline (roughly the amount of gasoline in 500 cars).

Tonne: The metric unit of mass used to represent 1,000 kilograms. Emissions of greenhouse gas emissions are reported in terms of “tonnes of equivalent carbon dioxide”. Given that carbon dioxide is an invisible gas, the best way to picture what a tonne of carbon dioxide like is to imagine this as a balloon about ten metres wide.