

General Government Services

Statement of Purpose

General Government Services provides corporate leadership, planning and policy setting for the Corporation of the County of Essex.

Service Description

General Government Services include Council Services, Administrative and Financial Services (includes the Offices of the Chief Administrative Officer, Director of Financial Services / Treasurer and Director of Council and Community Services / Clerk), Human Resources and Planning Services. Financial Services includes the provision of accounting, budgeting, capital asset management, IT, GIS, treasury, risk management and payroll services for the Corporation.

Prior Year Performance

A significant favourable variance is expected for General Government Services. Unanticipated net supplemental taxation revenue was offset by weaker than anticipated investment returns and (to a lesser degree) other operational variances.

Investments in facility renewal, employee engagement and technology were the focus for 2018, which was also the final year in the term of County Council.

Proposed Budget – Current Year

The proposed budget for 2019 amounts to \$5,368,150, an increase of just over \$1 million from the prior year. Increased conservatism, based on prevailing investment market forecasts, has been used in the calculation of anticipated investment income, along with estimates of interest attributed to reserves. This change accounts for \$605,000 of the budgeted increase.

Additional resources have also been included for Human Resources to mitigate risk by providing additional Occupational Health and Safety supports and initiatives.

A Corporate focus on communication and employee engagement have resulted in:

- Enhanced training and professional development for staff, including the introduction of a tuition reimbursement initiative
- Improvements to employee communication / advertising / intranet technology
- Introduction of a program to recognize employee success and continued efforts to increase engagement

Other key initiatives in the 2019 Budget include:

- Continued focus on long term measured plans for the funded renewal and replacement of Corporate facility assets, including the interior renovation of the Civic Centre and redeployment of departments within the building

General Government Services

- Continued support of an expanding network of servers (including significant hardware lifecycle replacements) and technology devices, as well as IT support for all departments implementing new systems
- System analysis and planned implementation for integrated corporate Payroll / Human Resources / scheduling software
- Web page redesign to improve functionality when accessed from mobile devices
- Negotiation / interest arbitration for three collective agreements
- Completion of the Agricultural Lot Size Study