



Administrative Report

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

To: Warden McNamara and Members of County Council

**From: Robert Maisonville
Chief Administrative Officer**

Date: Wednesday, September 04, 2019

Subject: Modernization and Efficiency Grant

Report #: 2019-0904-ADM-R012-RM

Purpose

To present County Council with proposed projects to utilize unanticipated funding provided from the Province of Ontario for the intended purpose of modernizing service delivery and assist in reducing future costs.

Background

On March 20, 2019, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), Steve Clark, announced municipalities would receive an unconditional grant from the Province to aid in transforming service delivery and identify more modern, efficient ways of operating municipal services in critical and complex environments.

The funding allocation is based on number of households and whether the municipality is urban or rural. The higher the household count and the more rural the municipality, the greater the fund allocation. The rationale for this allocation method was to recognize the limited capacity to plan and manage transformational initiatives in small and rural municipalities.

The County of Essex received the maximum allocation of \$725,000 in one-time funding.

Discussion

Provided below are summaries of the various projects reviewed by senior management and offered as Administration's recommendations for use of this one-time provincial allocation. Department reports are attached to this report in Appendix A, which provide further details regarding these proposed initiatives.

Network Security Initiatives

\$160,000

As part of the approved 2019 Budget, the Corporation retained KPMG to conduct a detailed network security audit. The audit identified areas for improvement and made recommendations for augmenting the Corporation's formal security plans. Many of the operational recommendations have already been completed or are in the implementation phase. However, greater efforts on systems continuity, disaster recovery, I.T. policy and protocol improvements and security onboarding are necessary to modernize the Corporation's strategic system controls. These measures are Corporate in nature, affecting all operations and will result in improvements in staff efficiencies, provide greater protection from cyber security threats/attacks and reduce overall expenditure growth in the future.

Records Mgmt. Program Review/Needs Assessment

\$30,000

Current use of mixed records management systems, as well as continued dependence of paper records has resulted in duplication of effort and storage capacity (on-line and physical), while jeopardizing security of confidential information. As additional office renovations are pursued, it's timely and prudent that third party expertise be consulted to address both physical storage and data storage systems. Inclusive of this analysis would be a review and refresh of the Corporation's records management policies/procedures.

Compassion Fatigue Training

\$6,000

Compassion Fatigue has been described as the "cost of caring" for others in emotional pain. Statistics show that workers are profoundly affected by the work they do. Whether it is by direct exposure to traumatic events (for example, working as a paramedic, or nurses/personal support worker, etc.); secondary exposure (hearing people talk about trauma they have experienced or helping people who have experienced trauma); or the full gamut in between (such as working with people who are chronically in despair, witnessing people's inability to improve their very difficult life

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circumstances or feeling helpless in the face of poverty and emotional anguish). The work of helping requires professionals to open their hearts and minds to other people – unfortunately, this very process of empathy is what makes helpers vulnerable to being profoundly affected and even possibly damaged by their work.

Providing staff with training and the necessary tools to help cope with these stresses provides an opportunity to minimize staff absenteeism and improve mental health of both staff practitioner and the residents/customers/patients they serve.

County Connect Application \$20,000

The Employee Engagement Committee has had discussions and received comments on the ability to access the Corporation's intranet (CountyConnect) from mobile devices, as many of our employees are not regularly working from workstations with stationary PC's or Laptops.

Efficiencies and improved employee productivity could be attained if all employees were able to access CountyConnect for corporate information, including policies and training materials from their mobile devices.

Accessibility Document Contract Services Portal \$20,000

AODA standards/requirements necessitate that municipalities (as well as other public and private sector organizations) to create documents which are accessible to all people, regardless of assistive device usage. Current methods used by staff are time exhaustive at the best of times and in many instances insufficient or create best efforts in terms for accessible output. Fortunately, heightened demand for improved efficiency have resulted in technology improvements and new software options. This allocation of funds will allow staff to seek options that best meet corporate requirements, relieving staff from manual conversion and improving staff productivity.

SPH, Food Services–Decentralization of Dish Cleaning \$30,000

Currently, the centralized dish room is utilized to wash the dishes and small wares from 4 residential home areas where 100 residents have their meals. All dirty dishes and small wares are brought through the Home to the centralized dish room on the main floor to be cleaned and sanitized.

The environmental scan demonstrated that there was an opportunity to re-locate dish cleaning equipment within the existing food service serveries on

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each resident home area. This application, if approved will yield the following outcomes:

- reduce resource utilization, including electricity and generate staff efficiencies
- improve infection control best practices, and
- maximize facility space wisely and provide a better location for food services workers to clean dishes and address resident needs.

EMS & Infrastructure Services – Transnomis

\$50,000

This initiative includes a service license through December 2020 for use of Transnomis Municipal and Responder 511; a web portal based solution that integrates GIS road information with traffic detail and road closures that can be used corporately by multiple departments and be made available to local municipal services. From a County perspective it would integrate, ISD, EMS, Emergency Management and Communications into one portal and one interface for both inward use and outward use. The integrated interface would eliminate multiple entries into disparate systems and be available for use throughout the Community via a public web access interface.

Integration of this system, already in use by MTO, provides real-time roadway information for EMS responders, ISD rerouting and crucial Emergency Preparedness information, in the event of a disaster response.

It is important to highlight that local municipalities would also be able to incorporate their road work activity into the portal for a complete dataset of County-wide roadway accessibility.

Use of this tool would improve real-time accuracy and create efficiencies due to the reduction of information input, increased clarity of road networks and easy integration with the local municipal services (fire, public works, and police).

Pelee Island EMS Base Repairs

\$80,000

Two paramedics staff the Pelee Island Ambulance Station, seven (7) days a week, 365 days a year. The paramedics are on call (notified of a call by pager) from 3 pm to 7 am and one site from 7 am to 3 pm each day. Due to the remoteness of the island, the paramedics are transported to the island by ferry during the warm months and by aircraft during the winter months. The staffing schedule is normally four concurrent shifts and the crews are rotated on this schedule. The staffing complement is historically part time

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paramedics. During periods of poor weather, the paramedics may spend an additional day or two on the island.

The ambulance station is attached to the Pelee Island Nursing Clinic in a shared facility, owned by the Township. The nursing clinic is operated by the VON, under contract from the ESC LHIN. The station has a single vehicle garage, lower level office, washrooms and storage. The upper level houses a one-bedroom apartment, with kitchen, bathroom, shower and living area. The upper level is the living accommodations for the paramedics during their assignment to the island.

Over the past several years EWEMS has improved some of the facility components (kitchen, bathroom and flooring), however significant structural components require attention, including:

- Roof and window replacement
- HVAC systems
- Replacement of garage carbon monoxide detection system, and
- Improved park facilities for ambulance

All items listed are a necessity to ensure a healthy and safe work place and to reduce unnecessary wear and tear on the vehicle. EWEMS is exploring avenues to share costs with the VON and Pelee Township.

Understandably, these repairs may not normally be considered a responsibility of the County of Essex. The issue remains that County of Essex staff reside in, and provide core service from, this structure.

Intelligent Traffic System

\$87,000

The County of Essex currently owns, operates and maintains 43 traffic signals within the County, with the majority of the signals located on key arterial and collector roadways. Exclusive of a few key corridors/intersections (CR22-CR19 / CR19-Amy Croft & CR19-Lanoue and 2 signals on either side of CR22 at Pike Creek) communication infrastructure at intersections run semi-actuation and are not coordinated.

Installation of Video Image Vehicle Tracking and Detection System for monitoring traffic on roads and paths can detect stopped vehicles, estimate the traffic flow and automatically alerts operators to queuing and congestion on the roads. Video detection will be able to detect vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians in zones set up by the traffic operations center to support signal timing plan implementation. Also, depending on the type of technology

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procured, video detection may be able to collect real-time turning movement counts to support more real-time signal timing adjustment requirements. Additional detection can support more traffic-responsive signal timing to detect the key corridors more effectively.

Strategic locations of camera and processor equipment would be mounted on pole locations to be able to view all legs of the intersection and, as feasible as possible, to view to the next intersection location. Based on advanced video detection technology, this application will allow the County to monitor two different lanes/zones of traffic simultaneously.

This system will enable the County to proactively identify trouble areas, report on corridor performance, and facilitate efficient traffic management.

The allocation of \$87,000 will allow for the expansion of the program at three additional intersection locations.

ProsperUs

\$75,000

ProsperUs, a collective of community partners from non-profit, government, health care, education, labour, business and inspired residents holds a vision to transform the conditions and capacity in our region to dramatically improve the outcomes for children and young people of Windsor-Essex County, from the time they are born until they complete post-secondary education and enter the workforce full-time – Cradle to Career.

Together, the community, through these agencies and private corporations, plan to implement the vision of a neighbourhood-based Cradle to Career strategy that wraps supports around children, youth and their families where they are needed most. Cradle to Career partners value equity. Working with an equity lens means that some kids in certain neighbourhoods need more help than others in order to level the playing field. This means targeting investments and supports in communities that need it most based on and supported by data. These supports will help ensure that children and youth are successful at key measurable milestones. This enables the community to track progress over time to continuously improve our work and outcomes, and leverage individual successes to enhance impact at scale with the goal of measurably changing community conditions.

As this program is developed and new methods/process are established to support children, young people and their families, seed funding to facilitate community participation and acquire resources will be necessary. This

commitment of funding will help with the initial process of data gathering and solution formation.

The benefits of positive outcomes will have a significant impact on reduce costs to the community in terms of social cost, mental wellness, crime prevention and economic prosperity.

ERCA – Community Energy Plan – Climate Change \$75,000

Changes in climate and increased likelihood and frequency of extreme weather are having a significant impact on the provision of municipal services within the region and beyond throughout the Province/Country etc. From our local perspective, risks of severe flooding, shoreline erosion, roadway, sewer/water infrastructure failures, beach closures and emergency management/response are but a few of the issues facing our new realities. In response to these changing environmental norms, the Essex Regional Conservation Authority (ERCA) is seeking partnerships to lead the development of a regional climate change strategy with municipalities and other partners. Through this collaborative, ERCA has initiated a number of sector-based Implementation Teams, including Human Health, the Built Environment, Natural Hazards, Agriculture, and Nature & Ecosystems, and Energy. Each Implementation Team will consider identifying vulnerabilities and likely impacts resulting from climate projections in their sector to inform action. In addition, the Energy sector will also explore opportunities for mitigating climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

In collaboration with the local municipalities and leveraging provincial funding, ERCA would coordinate a regional application for the development of a regional Community Energy Plan (CEP). A CEP is a comprehensive long-term plan that helps define community priorities around energy with a view to explore how energy could be generated, delivered, and used in the community now and in the future.

As well as the direct environmental benefits (reduced emissions, healthier ecosystems) and health benefits (improved air quality, improved physical and mental health), energy costs are an important economic driver, particularly in terms of business retention and expansion. The price of energy is rising in Ontario, placing a hardship on individuals and businesses. A Community Energy Plan will allow a better understanding and improve the relationship between high quality economic-development, related infrastructure, and economic growth. Ensuring an adequate supply of serviced employment land is essential to the economic health of the region. Incorporating energy data and policy into land use and economic

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development decisions will attract investment, allow businesses to benefit from synergies, and assist in reducing energy costs for businesses.

This work will build on the mandatory Energy and Conservation Demand Management Plans recently updated by all municipalities, and support existing regional initiatives, including the County Wide Active Transportation System (CWATS) and regional transit.

The Essex Region Community Energy Plan will:

- Enhance regional economic development and identify cost savings.
- Reduce our carbon footprint and advance the County's priorities to "encourage reduced greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption in the County by promoting built forms and transportation systems that create more sustainable, efficient, healthy, and livable communities.
- Align with provincial and federal energy strategies.

Library Services – Open+ Service

\$85,000

The Essex County Library would recommend a proposal for capital funding be invested to support the implementation of an Open+ Library technology Service (or comparable systems) for one small community branch. The Open+ Service incorporates the use of technology to complement current staffed library hours and support greater community access to Library resources and services. Through the use of site monitoring technology and resource self-check systems, integrated with Library's current Integrated Library System (ILS) database, residents would be able to access resources independently, while still being able to access staff virtually from other offices or branches. The estimated cost of implementation is \$70,000 - \$100,000 (dependent on site needs).

Use of technology, like Open+ Library service, can provide the following benefits:

- Increased community access to sites typically utilized 17 hours a week or less
- Increased access to library resources and services
- Greater flexibility of use for community residents in small locations
- Greater flexibility for ECL to direct staffing service and resources
- Supports a County initiative to provide "cradle to grave" learning and education supports

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Financial Implications

As noted in the Background section of the report, funding is provided from the MMAH as a one-time unconditional grant. The total allocation included within the report is \$718,000, providing a small buffer as a contingency of \$7,000 from the \$725,000 received. There is no impact to the County Levy within the projects identified.

Recommendation

That the proposed initiatives outlined within the report, totaling approximately \$725,000, inclusive of \$7,000 contingency, be approved for use of One-Time Modernization & Efficiency Grant funding.

Respectfully Submitted

Robert Maisonville

Originally Signed by

Robert Maisonville, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix No.	Title of Appendix
Appendix A	Departmental reports/submissions for use of one-time Modernization & Efficiency Grant funding