

Information Technology Services



The Information Technology (IT) Services department is instrumental in delivering technical support and strategic guidance for the County's technological and risk management needs.

In 2024, the Information Technology team became an independent department within the County of Essex. This significant step marks the beginning of the County's digital transformation journey, aligning the organization with a modern structure. As a standalone department, IT is now better positioned to support the County of Essex team in achieving strategic goals and objectives.

As organizations continue the digital transformation process, the importance of data is becoming increasingly significant. Data as a whole has the ability for organizations to make sound, fast, informed decisions about services that matter to the constituents. Cyber threats are built to access, control and weaponize data against the organizations that are the rightful owners due to its value.

In 2025, we look to establishing a path for continuing the modernization process. The County IT department will be focused on continuing to move to the cloud and moving email to Microsoft 365. Additionally, the department will be working on refining internal processes that help the organization realize some efficiency improvements.

The collaborative expertise of the Department serves to enable the business of the County ensuring alignment with its strategic objectives. In 2025, the department will be looking to partner with other business units to ensure that systems and solutions are considered more holistically.

Level of Service Statement

IT Services provides support to all departments of the County, including Community Services, Sun Parlor Home, Emergency Services, Infrastructure and Planning Services, the Essex County Library and other General Government Services departments. By providing information technology advice and supports, the Department forms an important part of the administrative backbone for the County. In the two-tier municipal system, County staff in the Department also strive to be a regional resource to peers at the local level, strengthening intergovernmental relations and sharing ideas and best practices. Additionally, the department is engaged in working with other counties and public sector entities across the region.

Opportunities and Challenges for 2025

In the upcoming year, the department is committed to advancing its initiatives by prioritizing the implementation of additional recommendations highlighted in the Service Delivery Review (SDR) that was completed at the end of 2023. This strategic approach involves elevating our IT services to meet industry standards observed in other municipalities. Moreover, the department aims to proactively address emerging challenges and seize opportunities for continuous improvement.

In 2024, the department was successfully divided from Financial Services, hired a Project Manager in March and onboarded the Director of IT in July. For 2025, the department will be further implementing recommendations from the SDR. The department will continue building capabilities by hiring a Business Analyst mid-year, if approved through the 2025 Budget process.

Proposed 2025 Budget Plan

Aligning the department to the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan continues to set the framework of the proposed 2025 Budget. The SDR provided some high-level recommendations that will help guide the alignment of the department to the County's long-term goals.

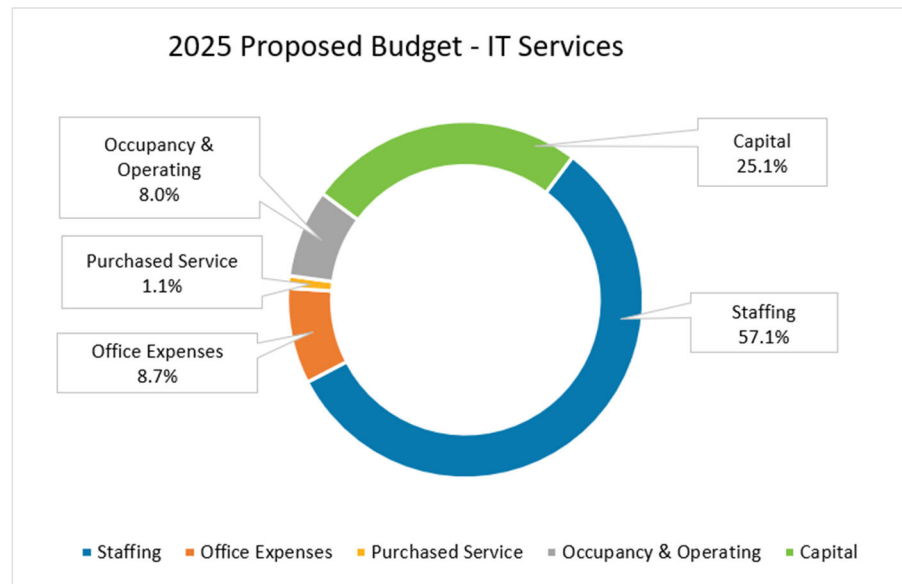
With the Project Manager and Director in place, the proposed 2025 Budget includes hiring a Business Analyst to help the organization analyze business processes and technology solutions to ensure they are aligned and provide the best business value to the organization. In alignment with the Strategic Priorities to improve customer service, it is important to ensure technology solutions are providing the best value to help reduce costs as the County continues to grow.

In 2025, we anticipate realizing the benefits of a centralized Information Technology Department. With multiple departments initiating digital transformation projects in 2025 and beyond, the County's IT department can begin having a line of sight to ensure those systems and projects are integrated to work together.

The Information Technology department will be continuing its move to the cloud as we continue efforts on adopting Microsoft 365 and supporting other departments as they implement their technology projects.

Overall, 2025 will be an exciting year for the IT department as we continue to work with the recommendations from the SDR, and implement technology the County has long been waiting for.

The graph on the following page illustrates the key areas of proposed 2025 Budget spending in Information Technology Services:



Overall, the proposed 2025 Budget for Information Technology Services, net of recoveries, totals \$2,894,070 (an increase of \$683,970, (31%) over the 2024 Budget of \$2,210,100).

Alignment with Strategic Plan Initiatives

The IT Department’s proposed 2025 Budget is designed to be aligned with the Strategic Goals and Directions of the County of Essex.

Harmonizing Action for Growth

The IT Department will be continuing to transform its operations and expand its capabilities. Our growth will help our efforts for Harmonizing Action for Growth as we review existing digital solutions and evaluate new opportunities.

Scaling Sustainable Solutions

The IT team will be guided by the principle of continuous improvement in support of our Scaling Sustainable Solutions goal, reviewing internal processes to enhance the customer experience, while also collaborating with other departments to implement solutions based on industry best practices.