



Administrative Report

To: Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council

From: Karyn Templin, P.Eng., Manager, Design and Construction

Date: Wednesday, October 15, 2025

Subject: State of Good Repair Program Report

Report #: 2025-1015-IPS-R24-KT

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide County Council with information and recommendations pertaining to the development and implementation of the 2026 State of Good Repair Program.

Background

In preparation for the 2026 Budget, the Infrastructure and Planning Services Department has developed the annual State of Good Repair Program (SOGR). The SOGR concentrates on maintaining and improving the condition of the assets in the County of Essex Road Network. Included in the Program are road pavements, bridge and culvert structures, drainage structures, intersections and guiderails. It utilizes a three-tiered approach of reconstruction, rehabilitation and preventative maintenance to improve our infrastructure and extend the life of our assets.

Much like the Roadway Expansion Program, the influx of development in the County has a direct impact on the level of service values for our roads and structures. As traffic volumes increase, the County's assets see more wear and tear and consequently the rate of deterioration accelerates. The SOGR strives each year to meet these demands and maintain the objectives of the County's Asset Management Plan.

Discussion

The intent of the SOGR is to ensure a safe and reliable road network while providing for value-added and cost-effective maintenance. Appendix 1.0

provides a detailed discussion on the how the Program is developed and implemented as well as the methodologies utilized in its execution.

The 2026 SOGR is made up of numerous road, bridge and culvert projects that require some type of preservation effort. These preservation efforts are comprised of both major and minor rehabilitation works as well as full reconstruction projects. The draft Program List can be found in Appendix 7.0 and includes:

- 2 Bridge Rehabilitation Projects;
- 2 Bridge Engineering Projects;
- 4 Culvert Replacement Projects;
- 3 Culvert Engineering Projects; and
- 13 Road Rehabilitation Projects.

Also included in the program are allowances for preservation efforts related to concrete pavements, small and medium sized structures and roadworks.

The total value of the (Draft) Program is \$21,157,850. This value includes estimated amounts for both the Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF) and the Ontario Communities Infrastructure Fund (OCIF).

The County Wide Active Transportation System (CWATS) is integrated into the SOGR each year as IPS strives to maximize the value of our construction efforts. Opportunities to incorporate active transportation facilities such as paved shoulders into scheduled road rehabilitation is a conscious and cooperative departmental initiative.

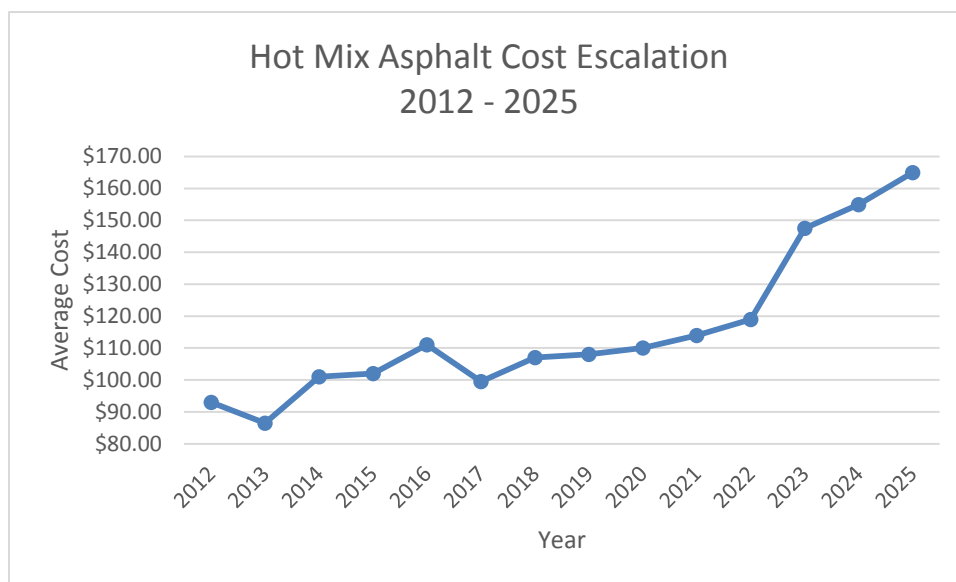
The construction of CWATS facilities in conjunction with the road rehabilitation program requires funding support from the Roadway Expansion Reserve. The estimated construction value of Paved Shoulder works for 2026 is \$3,620,000, and a listing of the segments included in the Program can be found in Appendix 11.0. This amount is not included in the \$21,157,850 as it is specifically tied to CWATS and work done outside of the SOGR funding envelope.

The overall condition of the network had been gradually improving due to increased annual funding and utilization of funding programs from senior levels of government. Utilization of the CCBF and OCIF had allowed the annual Program to incrementally increase towards the targeted funding level. But as a result of recent reductions in these contributions and in the contributions from levy funding, combined with the increases in construction costs, the Program is moving away from the target and the funding gap identified in the County's Asset Management Plan remains high. Without the

increase in annual budget, this funding gap will continue to grow and the overall condition of the County's assets will fall.

Cost escalations have been experienced across all types of construction activities. Labour, material and equipment costs have all be steadily increasing over the last decade. A good example of this escalation is the unit rate for hot mix asphalt (measured in tonnes). The data shown in Figure 1 illustrates the escalation experienced since 2012.

FIGURE 1: Asphalt Cost Escalation



Also impacting the efficiency of the Program is a now steady decrease in total length of paving each year. At the time the County's Asset Management Plan was established, the SOGR included the paving of approximately 40-45km of roadway. With the decrease in external funding and the loss of annual increases to the SOGR budget, the overall Level of Service of the County Road Network will continue to drop. The current 2026 program indicates that 31.6km of road will be paved. Figure 2 illustrates the growth of the paving program.

Similarly, the structures in the State of Good Repair Program have been impacted by the current year's funding ratio. While bridge projects remain consistent at this time, three culvert projects are being deferred in 2026 in order to meet the allocated budget. The Five-Year Program, found in Appendix 9.0 has also seen an overall reduction in order to remain in line with funding projections.

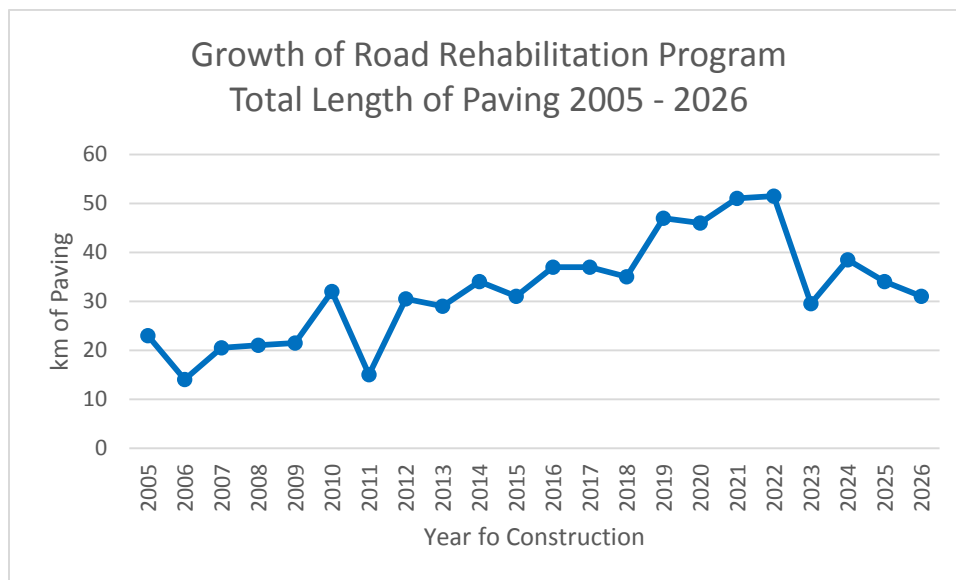
There are two projects recommended for pre-budget approval by Administration and they are highlighted in Appendix 7.0 as projects BC0036 and BC0043.

Project BC0036 Big Creek Bridge, is projected to have an extensive construction schedule. With more than 9 months required to complete the work, construction must begin in early February in order to avoid in-water works restrictions and complete all elements of the project before the close of the 2026 construction season. Considering the required timelines for tendering and ordering of materials, this project will need to be tendered in November of 2025. Without this pre-approval, there will likely be delays to the construction schedule to account for winter weather conditions. And further, it is anticipated that there will be periods in the schedule where the road will remain closed with no work taking place on site as the construction team waits for the start-up of the next construction season (i.e. asphalt plants to open).

The second project, BC0043 Lonsberry Drain Culvert, is a culvert replacement that will have a direct impact on the tourism of the surrounding area. In order to minimize the impact to the wineries in the area as well as the seasonal active transportation activities, Administration is pursuing the possibility of a shift in the construction schedule to the spring season. Although rarely feasible in this type of work, the characteristics of the drain have allowed us to move forward with a request for special exemption from the Environmental Authorities. While the request is pending and approval is not guaranteed, Administration is looking for support from County Council to move forward with tendering in November 2025. This support provides the greatest chance of success. Should these initiatives of environmental exemption and pre-approval from County Council not come together, construction will take place during the peak summer months as the standard regulations and tendering process allow.

The total value of the two projects requested for pre-budget approval is approximately \$4,760,000.

FIGURE 2: Growth of Paving



Financial Implications

The Draft 2026 Budget includes a State of Good Repair (SOGR) Program valued at \$21,157,850 (Appendix 7.0), representing an increase of approximately 2% compared to 2025. Despite this modest increase, higher construction costs and reduced external funding mean the program will deliver 4% less paving than in 2025 and require the deferral of three culvert projects.

The Program also incorporates approximately 16 km of paved shoulder construction under CWATS at an estimated cost of \$3,620,000 (Appendix 11.0). While this work continues to leverage roadway rehabilitation opportunities, the 2026 allocation reflects a reduction from 2025 levels.

Administration is recommending pre-budget approval for two priority projects—Big Creek Bridge (BC0036) and Lonsberry Drain Culvert (BC0043)—with a combined estimated value of \$4,760,000. These works account for roughly 23% of the overall SOGR Program. Early approval is required to avoid scheduling delays, minimize community impacts, and ensure compliance with environmental and seasonal restrictions.

Overall, while the 2026 Program sustains critical rehabilitation and preservation efforts, the ongoing funding gap identified in the County’s Asset

Management Plan remains a concern. Without additional annual investment, the County’s ability to maintain service levels and improve network condition will continue to erode under the combined pressures of inflation, reduced grant support, and increasing asset demands.

Consultations

This report was prepared in consultation with the following parties:

- Jerry Behl, Manager, Transportation Planning and Development
- Allan Botham, Director, Infrastructure & Planning Services
- Melissa Ryan, Director of Financial Services/Treasurer
- Heidi McLeod, Manager, Accounting – Administration/Deputy Treasurer
- Hoa Du, Financial Analyst

Strategic Plan Alignment

Working as Team Essex County	Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence	Building a Regional Powerhouse
<input type="checkbox"/> Scaling Sustainable Services through Innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Focusing “Team Essex County” for Results <input type="checkbox"/> Advocating for Essex County’s Fair Share	<input type="checkbox"/> Being an Employer with Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Government Working for the People <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promoting Transparency and Awareness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Providing Reliable Infrastructure for Partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporting Dynamic and Thriving Communities Across the County <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonizing Action for Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

Recommendation

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-1015-IPS-R24-KT, State of Good Repair Program Report, having an estimated value of \$21,157,850, for information;

And that the projects identified as BC0043 Lonsberry Drain Culvert and BC0036 Big Creek Bridge, noted in Appendix 7.0, having an estimated combined value of \$4,760,000, be pre-approved for the 2026 budget.

Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,

Karyn Templin

Karyn Templin, P. Eng., Manager, Design and Construction

Concurred With,

Allan Botham

Allan Botham, P.Eng., Director, Infrastructure and Planning Services

Concurred With,

Sandra Zwiers

Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix	Title
1.0	State of Good Repair Technical Summary
2.0	2026 Rehabilitation Program Powerpoint
3.0	County Road Map
4.0	Bridge Location Map
5.0	Culvert Location Map (Span greater than 3.0m)
6.0	Pavement Condition Rating Map
7.0	2026 Rehabilitation Program Project Listing
8.0	2026 Rehabilitation Program Project Map
9.0	2026-2030 Rehabilitation Program Listing
10.0	2026-2030 Rehabilitation Program Map
11.0	Candidate Paved Shoulder Program Listing
12.0	2026 Candidate Paved Shoulder Program Map