



2026 Budget Overview

COUNTYOFESSEX.CA

Welcome

- Our 2026 budget builds on collaboration and trust — aligning our financial decisions with Council’s priorities and community needs.
- The goal remains simple: maintain stability, deliver value, and plan responsibly for the future.



Budget Process Overview

- This year's process started in May 2025 with a series of planning sessions and departmental reviews.
- We've worked to align this budget more closely than ever with Council's strategic direction.
- By November, we've pulled it all together, balancing operating needs, capital priorities, and community commitments.



Key Drivers & Pressures

- Inflation stabilizing, contracts still a factor
- Steady growth pressures on infrastructure and services
- Human Resource Priorities: retention, succession and bargaining



Fiscally Responsible Government

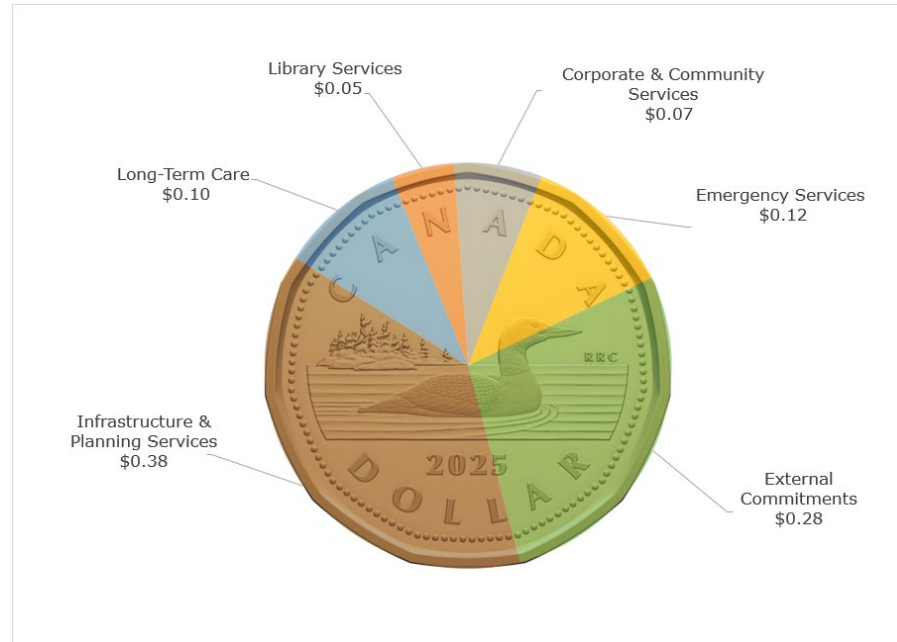
- Our approach remains consistent: maintain service levels, honor commitments to the community, and make sure today's decisions don't compromise tomorrow's financial stability.
- The County continues to be recognized for strong fiscal management, a solid credit rating, and a pay-as-you-go philosophy that limits debt.

High Level Budget Snapshot



Budget Summary	2025 Budget	2025 Projection	2026 Budget
Operating Expenditures	\$166,622,420	\$167,058,460	\$177,149,300
Operating Recoveries	81,614,390	93,428,800	85,632,300
Contribution to (from) Reserves	7,737,210	19,115,580	5,294,780
Net Operating Budget:	<u>\$92,745,240</u>	<u>\$92,745,240</u>	<u>\$96,811,780</u>
Capital Expenditures	\$116,819,100	\$81,993,240	\$132,564,780
Capital Recoveries	9,745,870	17,536,380	22,365,320
Contribution to (from) Reserves	(59,774,780)	(17,158,410)	(61,294,690)
Net Capital Budget:	<u>\$47,298,450</u>	<u>\$47,298,450</u>	<u>\$48,904,770</u>
County Responsibility	<u>\$140,043,690</u>	<u>\$140,043,690</u>	<u>\$145,716,550</u>

Your 2026 Tax Dollar



Historical Tax Rates & Inflation



	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 Proposed
County Tax Rate	0.0048942990	0.0049676134	0.0051570760	0.0054049275	0.0055932794	0.0057414081
Increase Over Prior Year	0.0000237912	0.0000733144	0.0001894627	0.0002478515	0.0001883519	0.0001481287
% Increase Over Prior Year	0.49%	1.50%	3.81%	4.81%	3.48%	2.65%
Average CAD Inflation (CPI)	3.40%	6.80%	3.90%	2.40%	2.40%	
Avg CAD Inflation (NRCPI/BCPI)	10.10%	12.50%	7.10%	3.80%	3.50%	

Notes:

- CPI & NRCPI for 2025 is estimated at this time. September 2025 data included.
- CPI = Consumer Price Index, a key economic indicator that measures the average change over time in the prices paid by consumers for a basket of goods and services.
- NRCPI / BCPI = Non-Residential Construction Price Index: tracks changes in the costs of materials, labour, and equipment for infrastructure projects, including roads and bridges.

2026 Budget Impact Variables



Budget Summary

Levy Impact

County Levy 2025	140,043,690
Community Services	438,550
Sun Parlor Home	0
Emergency Services	754,480
Infrastructure & Planning Services	1,789,620
Library Services	158,820
General Government Services	1,000,960
External Commitments	1,530,430
County Levy 2026	<u>\$145,716,550</u>

Key Budget Highlights



- While each department head will present their individual budgets, these are some of the key factors that have shaped the County's overall 2026 Budget: contractual wage increases, reallocation of internal recoveries and budget requests.
- Pre-Budget Approvals
 - EMS: 2026 Vehicle Procurement (7 Regular Replacement + 2 Net New)
 - IPS: State of Good Repair (2 Projects)
 - Corporate Management: Articling Student

Non-Included Items

- To reach the 2.65% target, we did have to defer some valuable initiatives.
- Appendix C attached to the Treasurer's Report lists these items. Many align with long-term priorities and can still be considered in this Budget should Council choose to prioritize them.

Positions by Department



Staff Positions Full-Time & Part-Time	2023		Actual		2024		Actual		2025		Actual		2026		Proposed	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
Community Services	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0
Sun Parlor Home	175	202	176	213	176	214	176	214	176	214	176	214	176	220	176	220
Emergency Services	225	110	245	110	247	110	247	110	247	110	256	110	256	114	256	114
Infrastructure and Planning Services	63	0	64	0	64	0	64	0	64	0	64	0	64	0	64	0
Library Services	32	22	35	19	35	19	35	19	35	19	35	19	35	19	35	19
General Government																
Corporate Management	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0
Legislative Services	9	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0
Financial Services	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0
Information Technology	10	0	11	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0
Human Resources	9	0	9	0	9	0	9	0	9	0	11	0	11	0	11	0
Totals	545	334	573	342	576	343	576	343	576	343	587	343	587	353	587	353
# Increase Year Over Year			28	8	3	1	3	1	3	1	11	1	11	10	11	10

Notes:

- EWEMS Full-Time staff positions increased from 2023 to 2024 due to enhanced service requirements
- SPH Increase in Part-Time staff is a result of increase in hours of Life Enrichment
- Numbers above do not reflect students or casual employees
- Chart updated from all years to reflect positions in their proper org chart structure

Reserve Management



Category	Account Number	Reserve	2023 Actual (restated)	2024 Actual	2025 Projection (unaudited)	2026 Budget
General Reserves	8501	Rate Stabilization	22,457,668	17,505,461	16,512,193	15,182,881
General Reserves	8510	Capital	84,617,536	115,289,028	117,759,374	107,418,378
General Reserves	8520	WSIB	4,425,310	552,000	624,467	656,624
General Reserves	8521	Health Benefit Rate Stabilization	2,842,682	926,250	956,566	960,636
General Reserves	8522	Insurance	1,067,729	700,000	722,911	725,987
General Reserves	8523	Official Plan	567,933	485,965	507,370	489,529
General Reserves	8530	Donations (Sun Parlor Home)	79,803	76,757	74,769	66,087
General Reserves	8540	New Windsor Essex Hospital System	42,310,000	51,073,701	59,785,337	67,799,718
General Reserves	Category	Total	158,368,660	186,609,162	196,942,987	193,299,839
Infrastructure Reserves	8512	Roadway Expansion	118,283,900	110,619,286	102,014,512	48,885,013
Infrastructure Reserves	Category	Total	118,283,900	110,619,286	102,014,512	48,885,013
Emergency Medical Services	8515	Vehicles & Equipment	13,775,608	17,499,286	17,618,926	18,417,562
Emergency Medical Services	Category	Total	13,775,608	17,499,286	17,618,926	18,417,562
Library Reserves	8501	Rate Stabilization	247,078	252,422	315,502	315,502
Library Reserves	8503	Enhanced Service	36,581	36,581	36,581	15,281
Library Reserves	8510	Capital	1,286,139	1,173,336	1,203,336	1,183,336
Library Reserves	8515	Vehicles	158,659	95,860	111,260	126,660
Library Reserves	8520	WSIB	134,734	134,790	134,790	134,790
Library Reserves	Category	Total	1,863,191	1,692,989	1,801,469	1,775,569
Total		Reserves	292,291,359	316,420,723	318,377,893	262,377,983

Risk & Mitigation

- We're closely watching provincial funding constraints, EMS offload delays, higher infrastructure costs, and the increasing care needs at Sun Parlor Home.
- Our mitigation strategy focuses on proactive financial planning, reserve use, and advocacy with our partners.

Tax Impact



Year	Per \$350,000 of CVA	Residential Tax Rate	Taxes	Tax Change
2025	\$350,000	.0055932794	\$1,957.65	
2026	\$350,000	.0057414081	\$2,009.49	\$51.84



Questions?

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