

## Information Technology Services



### Service Delivery Promise

The Information Technology (IT) Services department is instrumental in delivering technical support and strategic guidance for the County's technological and risk management needs. The collaborative expertise of the Department serves to enhance the business of the County, ensuring alignment with its strategic objectives and is always looking to lead initiatives to improve project prioritization and service delivery.

### 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 expert advice and supports, the Department forms an important part of the administrative backbone for the County. In the two-tier municipal system, County staff 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 province.

## Opportunities, Challenges and Risks for 2026

In 2024, IT Services became an independent department within the County of Essex. Throughout the following year, IT continued enhancing its processes and strengthening its governance framework. The focus is on improving service delivery, enhancing its cybersecurity posture, and aligning initiatives to the County's corporate priorities.

In 2025, a path was established to continue the modernization process and IT Services continued moving services to the cloud. More importantly, the County migrated its email environment to the cloud environment M365 (Microsoft 365). This was an important step in improving productivity and better securing its digital resources.

For 2026, we are excited to continue integrating modern solutions for collaboration and analysis.

In the upcoming year, the Department is committed to continuing the momentum towards moving to the cloud. IT Services will be integrating additional tools from the M365 suite to help improve collaboration and reduce the number of files across the organization, representing a strategic investment in modernizing its digital workplace. By adopting cloud-based tools such as Outlook, Teams, SharePoint, and OneDrive, staff can collaborate more effectively across departments and locations while built-in protections and centralized management provide a safeguard for digital resources. This shift enhances productivity, supports hybrid work, and ensures that employees have secure access to the tools they need, underscoring the County's commitment to secure, modern, and responsive service delivery.

## Proposed 2026 Budget Plan

Aligning the department to the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan continues to set the framework of the proposed 2026 Budget.

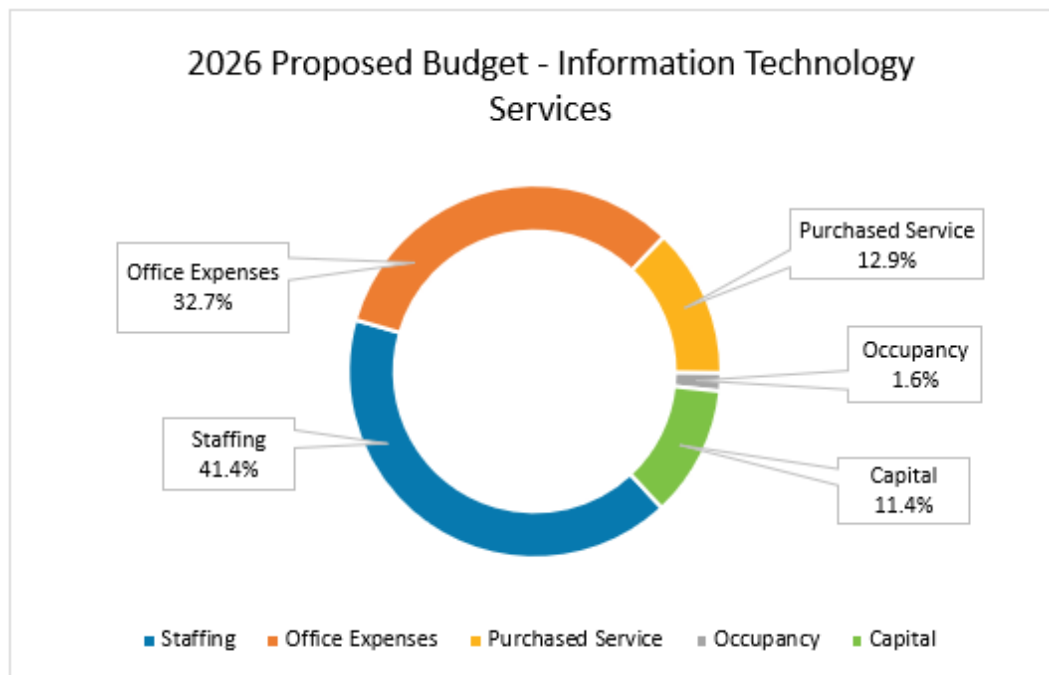
Adding the role of the Business Analyst in July 2025 has realized immediate benefits to the organization. The Project Manager and Business Analyst are establishing a Project Management Office (PMO) to aid in the organization of corporate wide IT-adjacent projects. The PMO will be standardizing project delivery, methodology, and prioritizing projects based on multiple factors to match corporate resources.

IT Services will continue its cloud migration and efforts to adopt M365 while supporting other departments as they implement their technology projects. One of the key projects to execute in 2026 will be moving the phone system to a cloud-based service and integrating in to other solutions as much as possible to reduce ongoing costs.

Additionally, the County will refresh its networking equipment, a crucial element to providing improved security and access to the network and digital resources.

Overall, 2026 will be another exciting year for IT Services as we continue to work with the recommendations from the Service Delivery Review, and implement M365, a solution the County has long been waiting for.

The following graph illustrates the key areas of proposed 2026 Budget spending in Information Technology Services:



Overall, the proposed 2026 Budget for Information Technology Services, net of recoveries, totals \$2,654,790 (a decrease of \$237,280, (8.2%) over the restated 2025 Budget of \$2,892,070).

## Alignment with Strategic Plan Initiatives

### Harmonizing Action for Growth

IT Services will be continuing to transform its operations and expand its capabilities. Our growth will help our efforts to reach this goal as we review existing digital solutions and evaluate new opportunities.

### Scaling Sustainable Services through Innovation

IT Services will be guided by the principle of continuous improvement, reviewing internal processes to enhance the customer experience, while also collaborating with other departments to implement solutions based on industry best practices.