



Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: June 25, 2025

Submitted by: Cindy Howard, General Manager Finance and Community Services, Deputy CAO

Subject: Budget Variance Report - January to May 2025

BACKGROUND:

Annual budgets for all departments are approved by Council. Professional estimates, the current legislative environment, macroeconomic trends (such as currency fluctuations, commodity prices, unemployment figures and business investment, etc.) and other local information available at the time are significant inputs to the budget recommended to Council by administration. All departments monitor revenues and expenditures on an ongoing basis.

ANALYSIS:

This Budget Variance Report offers a comprehensive overview of Middlesex County's financial performance from January 1 to May 31, 2025. The report contains information about the financial highlight of the departments and presents updates on revenues and expenses.

This report incorporates revenues received and expenses paid over the first five months of the year. Most line items should be approximately 42% of budget at the end of May. However, there are a few items that can often impact the numbers such as a delay in timing of invoices paid, seasonality of work, project delays or timing of government transfers.

Administration (Governance, CAO, Legislated Services, Strategic Initiatives and Innovation, Human Resources, Treasury and Legal Services):

- Middlesex County has adopted the *Rooted in Community, Growing Toward Tomorrow – Middlesex County Strategic Plan (2025-2030)*, a comprehensive roadmap that will guide the County's priorities, investments, and services over the next five years. adopted a new strategic plan.

- Council approved a new County Governance & Administration Centre after a comprehensive report was presented. The report outlined total project costs of approximately \$14.78 million, including construction, site preparation, furnishings, and related services. The new facility is designed to be a long-term, cost-effective investment that supports service delivery and strategic growth across the County. Council authorized the award of Tender #MC 2025-08 to Baribeau Construction London Limited and approved using reserves for short-term financing.
- Lease Amending Agreement approved between the Corporation of the County of Middlesex and York Developments (London) Inc. for 399 Ridout Street.
- Middlesex County conducted a public transit survey to gather valuable feedback from residents on the Middlesex County Connect and Strathroy-Caradoc Inter-Community Transit routes serving municipalities in Middlesex County and surrounding areas.
- Three Loans for a total of \$4,117,500 have been approved through the Middlesex County Loan Program (North Middlesex (\$2,500,000), Thames Centre (\$930,000) and Southwest Middlesex (\$687,500)).
- The 2025 Middlesex County Asset Management Plan was adopted.
- Report on the Housing Advocate role was presented to Committee of the Whole. Staff have been directed to proceed with consultation activities necessary to establish the position, identify KPI's, and report back to the Committee before moving ahead.
- County CAO retired and Council awarded RFP#MC-2025-10 to Waterhouse Executive Search for executive recruitment services for the Middlesex County Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

Planning and Woodlots:

- Following a Special Meeting under Section 26 of the Planning Act, Council approved updating the Middlesex County Official Plan to align with the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement.
- The proposed changes through Bill 17, the Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025 are expected to significantly impact Middlesex County and local municipalities, particularly in the areas of development approvals, housing provision, infrastructure delivery, and the collection of development charges.
- \$25,000 was approved from the Working Capital Reserve to support Natural Asset Valuation and Trail Monitoring. This initiative will help quantify the environmental and community value of Middlesex County's 1,040 hectares of forested land through a Forest Resource Inventory and trail usage data.

Economic Development:

- Middlesex County is excited to announce the launch of our Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) initiative, a proactive program designed to support and strengthen the local business community. This structured approach aims to foster job growth, address business needs, and enhance the economic vitality of our region. We invite businesses from every industry and sector to participate.
- Making it in Middlesex Video: Stories of Business Success series updated to include Van Osch Farms and Baribeau Construction.

Information Technology:

- The ITS department is implementing a capital project from the 2025 budget that will replace the remote management and support software used by the department. This new software enhances cyber security controls while also streamlining remote connectivity for the department.
- ITS has just implemented a new cyber security awareness training software that brings forward a new methodology, micro learning. This new software offers short 3-5 minute videos frequently throughout the year to all staff and council providing training on emerging cyber security trends.

Social Services:

- Middlesex County Social Services Department submitted an Investment Plan to the City of London, which serves as our Service System Manager (SSM). The SSM has received the County's plan, to review, approve and submit to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) for final approval, requesting a total of \$1,151,000. The 2025-2026 investment plan includes an increase of \$104,279.
- The Middlesex Accommodation Program was renewed. A total of \$628,896 will be allocated for this program, which covers motel room costs and CMHA TVAMHS staff wages. The Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) is a provincially-funded program created to support individuals and families with housing and support services who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness.
- Expenses reflects the funding for the Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care Program (CWELCC) and new Provincial Child Care Funding.

Transportation:

- Construction schedule proceeding as per the approved budget.
- Construction of the Glendon Drive Roundabout began in September 2024 and work will resume in spring 2025 and is scheduled for final completion by August.

- Approval of the request for Tender # MC-2025-02 to Hayman Construction Inc. in the amount of \$5,829,893.97 before taxes, for the replacement of Pike Road bridge including the site preparation, supply of materials, and bridge replacement. The Pike Road bridge is located in the Township of Adelaide Metcalfe on County Road 45 (Pike Road) in the County of Middlesex crossing the Sydenham River

Strathmere Lodge:

- The province has made a 4-year commitment to increase funding for direct care by March 2025. This includes 4 hours per resident day (Nursing) and 36 minutes per resident day (Allied Health Professionals).
- The Lodge is ensuring full provincial funding by achieving a 97+% occupancy rate (the target occupancy rate set by the province).

Middlesex-London Paramedic Service:

- Middlesex-London Paramedic Service (MLPS) introduced the Mobile Logistics initiative. The trial launch was set for February 5, 2025. This initiative will lower costs, support sustainability, and enhance regulatory compliance.
- Request for Proposal on an electronic patient care record (ePCR) software solution was approved.
- Ambulance remounting strategy was introduced. This strategy allows the ability to stretch budgets further, potentially enabling the purchase of additional vehicles or upgrades for equipment.

Library:



- Library Board approved Reciprocal Borrowing Agreement with Region of Waterloo Library. The benefits of reciprocal borrowing privileges entitle Middlesex County Library patrons to a membership free of charge in any of the Region of Waterloo Library branches (with valid proof of residency within the County of Middlesex and with a valid photo ID).
- Library branches offered a wide variety of programming for kids and families over March Break and PD Days.
- Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NCI) training is being offered to staff to prevent and de-escalate medium to high-risk behavior using both restrictive and non-restrictive methods. All adult Library staff are participating in this full-day training. Staff will be completing this training in May, June and September, with Bettina Weber facilitating.
- Middlesex County Library Strategic Plan 2025-2029 was approved by Library Board. The plan was informed by a comprehensive process of research, collaboration and engagement.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

No significant concerns have been identified at this time. All divisions are on track for this time of the year.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC FOCUS:

This report aligns with the following Strategic Focus, Goals, or Objectives:

Strategic Priority	Goal	Objectives
Collaboration & Partnerships 	Strengthen collaboration with local municipalities and regional partners to improve economic efficiency, enhance service delivery, and support regional development in alignment with community priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve communication and transparency through open engagement, accessible information, and informed decision-making.
Adaptability and Agility 	Modernize the County's administrative capabilities to strengthen decision-making, improve service delivery, and achieve better community outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transform, modernize and continuously improve administrative systems and processes to increase efficiency and enhance the experience of residents and partners.• Strengthen internal administrative capabilities to ensure key support services have the necessary resources to meet community needs and support organizational growth.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Budget Variance Report for January to May 2025 be received for information.

Attachment.