



## County Council

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**Meeting Date:** May 23, 2023

**Submitted by:** Cindy Howard, Deputy CAO

**SUBJECT:** Partnerships for Municipal Innovation – Women in Local Leadership (PMI-WILL)

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### **BACKGROUND:**

On February 4, 2022, Middlesex County received notification that its application to join the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) Partnerships for Municipal Innovation – Women in Local Leadership (PMI-WILL) project had been approved. The County has been selected to work with Cambodia.

PMI-WILL is a six-year project (2021-2027) that is part of FCM's portfolio of gender equality and women in local government initiatives. By pairing Canadian municipalities with local governments in Benin, Cambodia, Ghana, Sri Lanka and Zambia, PMI-WILL aims to improve the quality of life for women and girls by empowering women to participate in leadership and decision-making in local governance and by increasing local governments' ability to deliver inclusive municipal services that meet the needs of women and girls, especially those from marginalized groups.

Participation requires elected officials and staff to take part in virtual workshops and seminars, as well as in-person international technical missions. The County may also host an international delegation for a study visit in 2023 and onwards.

On February 8, 2022, Council approved participation in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Partnerships for Municipal Innovation – Women in Local Leadership (PMI-WILL) project. Cindy Howard was assigned as the lead on the project and the Warden as the elected official Champion.

### **ANALYSIS:**

The County of Middlesex has been selected to participate in a Gender Responsive and Inclusive Participatory Consultation Workshop in Cambodia. The Canadian team will join the first workshop, to be held in Kampot for two Local Governments (LG), from May

29<sup>th</sup> to June 1<sup>st</sup>. The Canadian team will also participate in a visit to a nearby LG. The goals of the workshop are to:

- Enable participants to understand the role gender plays in the daily lives of constituents and raise awareness on gender equality issues.
- Provide knowledge, techniques, and tools to develop gender responsive and inclusive consultation mechanisms with an aim to create inclusive societies.

The Middlesex team going to Cambodia are Cindy Howard, Jessica Ngai and Warden Cathy Burghardt-Jesson.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The project is funded by the Canadian federal government through Global Affairs Canada. Each Canadian municipality is expected to participate in 1 to 2 missions of 7-15 days yearly between 2022 and 2026. Each mission team would consist of 1-3 individuals from the County. FCM pays for all travel expenses and Canadian municipalities donate the time of their employees/elected officials as an in-kind contribution to the project.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC FOCUS:**

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

Strategic Focus	Goals	Objectives
Cultivating Community Vitality	Advance a diverse, healthy, and engaged community across Middlesex County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and support community wellness</li> <li>• Innovate social and community services</li> <li>• Attract, retain, and engage youth in our community</li> <li>• Champion and encourage active transportation and public transit opportunities</li> </ul>
Strengthening Our Economy	Encourage a diverse and robust economic base throughout the county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract visitors to Middlesex County</li> </ul>
Promoting Service Excellence	Innovate and transform municipal service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anticipate and align municipal service delivery to emerging needs and expectations</li> <li>• Engage, educate and inform residents, businesses, and visitors of county services and community activities</li> <li>• Strengthen our advocacy and lobbying efforts with other government bodies</li> <li>• Collaborate with strategic partners to leverage available resources and opportunities</li> <li>• Build organizational capacity and capabilities</li> </ul>

**RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT the Partnerships for Municipal Innovation – Women in Local Leadership (PMI-WILL) report be received for information.