

2025 Budget Review  
Discretionary Services by Dept

Purpose: To provide a summary of discretionary services by department to Council in order to facilitate decision-making for the 2025 budget process.

DEPARTMENT	DISCRETIONARY SERVICE AREA	PROS	CONS	NOTES
<b>Communications</b>				
	Strategy & Planning, Campaign Mgmt (Marketing & Advertising), Event Mgmt, Media & Monitoring, Speech Writing, Grant Writing, Branding & Creative Services, Internal Communications		Impacts to transparency and accountability in operations, and timeliness and accessibility of informaton, if no dedicated communications supports.	10% is indicated as non-discretionary for Emergency Information Officer (EIO) responsibilities, although these responsibilities vary from annual training exercises to ongoing information requirements in the event of a municipal emergency such as COVID-19. This mandated role does not need to be fulfilled by a Communications staff member but would need to be to be reassigned to another staff member if not fulfilled by Communications.
<b>Community &amp; Social Services</b>				
Community Services (incl. Homelessness)	COP Programming		Currently this department's staff is required to support mandatory homelessness and development of CSWB plans. There is some discretionary budget to support non social assistance, however these programs support low income, seniors and are considered as municipal contribution when looking for matching dollars.	Designed to support the working poor and client expenses such as dental that are not covered by ODSP and Ontario Works (OW). 2 staff members included in COP who do work on other programs such as CPP program which is a mandatory service. Supports the working poor with rental, utility arrears, last month rent, moving costs, household items so would need to find other ways to provide this program within Social Services if cut.
Homelessness Prevention	Treatment Bed Pilot			This item was included as a pilot in the 2024 budget. The total amount allocated was \$241,029. It is anticipated that \$24,000 will be used by the end of 2024 and \$217,000 is included in the Carryover by-law being presented to council at the November 20, 2024 council meeting.
Childcare/Early ON	Discretionary Programming		Programming that is counted on by the community, cuts would impact our most vulnerable community members	Triple P (Rebound Child & Youth), Community Outreach, Parenting Program, Back Pack Program
Food4All			Would not result in immediate reduction but would be realized over several years moving to a block funding, significantly reduced.	
<b>Corporate Governance/Other</b>				
CAO	Policy Setting/Strategic Planning & Implementation, Overall Mgmt & Direction of County Resources across all Depts			
Corporate Governance/Other	Court Security			County distributes any ministry funding to Town of Cobourg as well as (up to) \$275,000 in levy funding
Corporate Governance/Other	Hospital Funding			\$250,000 annually for 5 years (2021 to 2025)
<b>Corporate Services</b>				

NCAM	Collections Mgmt & Care	Achieve minimum service standard under Section 254(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25 that provides "a municipality shall retain and preserve the records of the municipality and its local boards in a secure and accessible manner"	Mandatory requirement for preserving records of municipalities. Underresourcing collections management activities leads to poor ability to leverage information in collection for public benefit. Suspending active collecting activities result in "losing" rich and representative history .	
	Customer Research Services	Achieve minimum service standard under Section 254(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25 that provides "a municipality shall retain and preserve the records of the municipality and its local boards in a secure and accessible manner"	Reduces awareness and use of asset of the Archival collection inform historical research, public policy. Suspends volunteer projects which help improve accessibility of collection.	
	Exhibition development, programming & outreach		Cannot meet Ministry of Heritage Sport Tourism and Culture Industries' minimum standards for community museum thereby jeopardizing CCSF funding (as set out in funding agreement) and making NCAM ineligible for future capital and operations funding. Miss opportunity to build positive relationships with Alderville and other local Indigenous communities and support timely anti-racist initiatives and education through Ojibwe Language exhibit. Minimal public engagement, awareness, and use of valuable County asset.	
HSEP	Wellness Programming		Elimination of wellness programs has potential for negative impacts to staff and increase in injuries, i.e., sit stand units are a preventative measure to prevent repetitive strain injuries	Wellness Supplies (Sit-Stand, Wellness Healthy Eating); Wellness Program Training (Yoga, Lunch/Learn); Wellness Work Perk Program
	Fire Services Coordination	We do not have responsibility for fire - placing the responsibility back on the lower tier removes the administration from the County		Fire Dispatch; Coordinator Remuneration; Who's Responding App; County not responsible for fire service delivery. Fire Dispatch and Who's Responding App provides for consolidated service and common platform. Fire dispatch Services currently under contract with Peterborough Fire. Costs would be downloaded to member municipalities.
Natural Heritage	Various activities and services offered within the forest	Reduction in budget; staff time reallocation to core services	Loss of outreach/awareness of Forest and garbage and washroom services at trailheads.	Print advertising, Oaktoper, Garbage collection, and washroom rental
<b>Economic Development</b>				

BECN			Loss of key component of micro and small business development for Northumberland.  Without this support, local businesses might struggle more, potentially leading to closures or relocations	County contribution leverages approximately \$350,000 of Provincial and Federal grant monies. It also launches 100 new business per year and creates 120 jobs annually
Economic Development	Investment Attraction & Retention		reduced investment opportunity; loss of advocacy; decreased competitiveness;  the absence of this role could hinder Northumberland County's ability to attract and sustain economic growth, impacting the community's prosperity and development	Investment and attraction are linked to the planning function and in the highly competitive world of investment attraction the need for a consistent "sales" orientated approach and the need to maintain relationships and trust is essential
	Strategic Initiatives & Planning		lack of long-term planning; missed opportunities for innovation; reduced coordination; impact on community engagement; hindered economic development  Without strategic initiatives there is no potential longterm framework for growth and development	Investments in strategic initiatives facilitated multiple projects including Hastings Marina, the the Womens Entrepreneurship Strategy, the Broadband initiative and Workforce Housing
OAFVC	Agri-Food Venture Centre		Reduced Support for Agri-Food Entrepreneurs; Hindered Innovation	OAFVC represents innovation, job and product development and investment attraction that ultimately affects the growth and sustainability of the agri-food sector in the County and beyond.
Tourism	Supports & Marketing		Tourism is a significant contributor to the local economy. Without dedicated tourism services, the county might see a decrease in visitor numbers, leading to reduced revenue for local businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and shops	Coordinated tourism marketing/development resulting in annual increases in tourism growth. Latest provincial numbers for Northumberland indicate revenues of \$122M.
<b>Finance</b>				
Finance	Risk Mgmt		Higher Risk if no internal oversight, would likely need to utilize legal Council more frequently at a higher cost.	20% of Procurement & Risk Mgr Position - removal doesn't eliminate cost, would just be reallocation of resources.
<b>Golden Plough Lodge (GPL)</b>				
	N/A			
<b>Information Technology (IT)</b>				
				General note: IT services are discretionary but support many mandatory services

	IT Strategic Management		<p>No IT strategic management for the organization</p> <p>No further work on interCounty security, smartnorthumberland, OHTn, or guidance for organization from technology perspective</p> <p>Function will need to be moved to another department</p>	
	IT Infrastructure Mgmt - Computer Software		Core software for organization - many are necessary for operations.	
	IT Infrastructure Mgmt - Computer Hardware		Core hardware for organization - serious negative affect to operations.	
	IT Infrastructure Mgmt - Dept IT Software		Significant negative effect for operations in support of mandatory services - some may have contractual obligations	
	IT Infrastructure Mgmt - Technical Analyst Function		<p>No internal IT specialist function</p> <p>Would have a significant impact on managed services contracts</p> <p>Outsourcing will cost as much for similar type service and will take potentially long time to transition</p>	
	Helpdesk & Technical Support - Computer Support		Essential connectivity and infrastructure solutions. Loss of which would render infrastrcuture unuseable	
	Helpdesk & Technical Support - Computer Support Staff		<p>No internal IT Helpdesk - delays in obtaining IT service</p> <p>Also impacts managed services</p> <p>Outsourcing will cost as much for similar service and will take potentially long time to transition</p>	
	IT Security		Significant increase in risk to organization.	
	Managed Services Provider (5)		<p>Reputational loss</p> <p>Serious impact for member municipalities / police forces</p> <p>Will need 1 -2 years to properly divest of function allowing partners to establish new IT support structures</p>	
	Technology Innovation		<p>Reputational damage</p> <p>No further community-focused tech innovation acitivites</p>	

	Records Management		Limited capabilities around records management Legislative requirement not met	
<b>Legal Services</b>				
	Legal Services		Would create a greater reliance on external legal advice at a greater cost. Would reduce the County's flexibility in dealing with issues that have a legal component.	
	Provincial Offenses Act Office			Provisions of the Municipal/Provincial Transfer agreement require significant notice prior to termination. Costs of wind-up of the program would be borne by the County. It is unlikely that any cost-savings would be realized in the 2025 fiscal year due to these factors. Would likely be mandated if County refused to administer program, is meant to be self-funded but expenditures are projected to exceed revenues
<b>Paramedics</b>				
	County PAD Program			15-20K for replacement of perishables plus staffing hours (Time in monitoring/follow-up and delivery of replacement pads and batteries)
	Survivor Night			
	Upstaffing for Large Events			Although this is operationally important it is not mandatory
<b>Public Works</b>				
Facilities	Prepare 10 yr Capital Plans for all County Buildings		If planning does not take place the emergency repairs in the future will far exceed the schedule maintenance and repairs. This would also cause issues with business continuity, and risk leaving tenants without housing in the event of an emergency.	This has become indirectly mandatory with the mandate changes to asset management activities.
	Implement Capital Work for all County Buildings		Without appropriate capital repairs the County and NCHC buildings will fall into disrepair.	
	Implementation of green energy projects			LED lighting projects that typically have a payback of 3-5 years in energy savings, and support the GHG emission reduction targets
	Accessibility improvements to all County buildings			Automatic door operators, detectable warning surfaces, concrete sidewalk replacement, rubber matting, visual impairment improvements.

Major Capital Projects				
	Initiate, plan, budget and execute design and construction of complex infrastructure projects requiring specialized disciplines (ie GPL/NCAM, Emergency bases, Elgin Pk Redev)			GPL rebuild is a mandatory expense as new home needs to be completed to be compliant with the ministry of health.
Transportation				
Road Operations	Fleet Mgmt		Would need to contract out	Includes capital purchase, fuel, maintenance, repairs, licenses, AVL Fleet management is mandatory to ensure the County has reliable trucks and equipment to carry out all activities to meet MMS O. Reg 239/02, if not completed in-house, would need to be contracted out
	Surface Treatment	Reduce fleet (spreader and distributor), more staff time to complete other maintenance activities	Would not be able to provide this service to municipalities if no longer providing for the County. Would need to contract out surface treatment to complete County Roads, which can cost approximately \$7,000 more per km	This is only the County portion. ST could be considered mandatory as part of maintaining the road.
	Gravel Pits	Aggregate from County pits can be used for shouldering, entrances, etc. which is readily available and at a reduced rate to purchasing from a third party	Maintenance and inspection of both open and closed pits	Includes licensing and inspections
Infrastructure	Pavement Rehabilitation & Maintenance		Reduction in Capital investments will increase maintenance and repair costs and lead to decrease in LOS. Deterioration of roads will impact movement of goods and services and increase public complaints	Includes all pavement rehab program. The capital budget is funded by levy and provincial and federal funding.
	Bridge Rehabilitation & Maintenance		Reduction in Capital investments will increase maintenance and repair costs and lead to decrease in LOS and potential load restrictions and/or closures of bridges	Includes bridge maintenance/rehab program, contribution to reserves and excludes OSIM Inspections as per O.Reg 104/97. Capital work still required to maintain to a safe standard as per HTA.
	Traffic Safety Measures		No funding will be available to address safety such as radar speed signs, safety/speed studies, intersection improvements, grade crossing improvements, may increase liability if identified safety concerns not addressed	Includes road/intersection improvements and specific safety location upgrades, but excludes traffic signal and guiderail repair/maintenance/improvements required to meet MMS
	Service Expansion		No funding means planning and design for expansion projects won't move forward, lead to further congestion/capacity issues (i.e., Campbellford Bridge, County Road 2 EA, turning lanes, etc.)	Includes all program but excludes part of GIS budget for AM as per O.Reg 588/17 and On1Call budget per Ontario Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012
Waste				

	3 Community Recycling Centres		<p>The current array of diversion programs at the County's CRCs are vital to enabling the County to meet the goal of its LTWMMP of achieving 75% waste diversion from landfill. If the HHW diversion program isn't provide it is very likely that this material will make its way into our Landfill, or be illegally dumped, causing Environmental impacts. Not offering other diversion programs such as Styrofoam, Bulky Plastics, Drywall, etc, will result in these materials going to landfill and speeding up the rate at which the County's last remaining active landfill reaches capacity. The sooner it is filled the sooner the County will incur higher cost to export its waste elsewhere or captial cost to expand a landfill or construct another waste disposal facility.</p>	<p>Assumes Cty would cease offering any waste diversion programs that have a net cost associated with them (i.e. HHW, Freon Items, Styrofoam, Bulky Plastics, Drywall). But continue to offer diversion programs that are mandatory such as Blue Box and L&amp;Y Waste, or are cost neutral / generate revenue (i.e. Scrap Metal, E-Waste, Clothing, Blue Box recyclables)</p>
	Roadside Collection of Food Waste		<p>The implemetation of the Green Bin program was adopted in the LTWMMP and approved by Council in the revision to its Waste Management By-Law and in through the execution of a long-term collection contract which includes food waste collection. The County has also invested almost \$1 million in the construction of an Organic Waste Transfer Station at the Brighton CRC. Collection of Food Waste is embedded into the current long-term waste collection contract, as such there would likely be financial penalties and a change in other unit rate costs for other waste material collection, if this item were removed from the contract. County has already implemented this program and has invested over \$700,000 in the distribution of Green Bins. This program is on pace to divert more than 2,000 tonnes of food waste from landfill each year. This program will conserve landfill capacity and also reduce the County's GHG emissions, by having food waste composted versus rotting in a landfill where it will generate methane gas (a GHG that is over 18 time more potent that CO2). The County has committed to lowering its GHG emissions by 30% by 2030 (compared to 2005 levels). Diverting food waste from landfill is a significant means of achieving this GHG emission reduction goal.</p>	

	Roadside Collection of L&Y Waste		In 2015 the County started offering a County-wide collection service for L&Y waste. Prior to 2015, several member municipalities offered this service to their urban centres. If this program is cancelled, member municipalities will likely have to start offering this service directly to their residents again, and bear the cost. The provision of L&Y waste collection was approved by Council through the execution of a long-term collection contract which includes L&Y Waste collection, as such there would likely be financial penalties and a change in other unit rate costs for other waste material collection, if this item were removed from the contract. This program currently diverts approximately 2,100 tonnes of L&Y waste from landfill each year.	
	By-Law Enforcement/Illegal dumping		If County stops enforcing its Waste Management By-law there is a high probability that illegal dumping will escalate.	
	Promotion & Education of Waste Mgmt/Diversion Prgms		If the County ceased or reduces the amount of P&E it provides for the various waste diversion programs it offers there is a high likelihood that use of the program will diminish and / or there will be increased non-compliance with the protocols for the diversion programs	
	Long-Term Waste Mgmt Planning		County has \$1.5 million earmarked to undertake an Environmental Assessment to determine the preferred solution to managing our residual waste when the Brighton Landfill reaches its capacity. Without EA approval, the County will not be able to advance any disposal options which involve developing / expanding a new landfill or alternate disposal technology. In this scenario, when the Brighton Landfill is full, the only option the County will have will be to export our waste to a facility approved to receive it. This will likely significantly increase our overall disposal costs when haulage and tipping fees are taken into consideration.	
	Annual Litter Clean-up Challenge		Each year, the County collaborates with its member municipalities to deliver the Mayor's Keep the County Clean Challenge. County provides advertising of the event and supplies for the event, free disposal of litter collected. Member municipalities register volunteers, distribute the supplies and coordinate the collection of the collected litter. If County is no longer involved, member municipalities would have to promote the event and purchase the supplies directly. If the annual event does not proceed at all, then several tonnes of litter will go uncollected each year for ditches and public spaces.	

	Medical Waste Exemption Program		County currently provides a set number of bag tags to qualifying residents who, as a result of a medical condition, generate excess waste beyond their control. Annually we provide approximately 5,000 tags to these individuals.	
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