

Staff Report



To	Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee
Service Area	Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Date	Wednesday, November 13, 2024
Subject	2025 Land Ambulance Budget Update Report

Recommendation

1. That the 2025 Land Ambulance Budget Update Report be received by the Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee for information.
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

This report provides a summary of the 2025-2028 budget impacts for Land Ambulance Services provided by the City. Complete budget details are posted on the [2025 Budget update webpage](#).

Key Findings

The Land Ambulance Services 2025 budget update results in an operating budget expenditure increase of \$1.4 million over the 2024 adopted budget, and an increase of \$139 thousand over the previously adopted 2025 budget. This increase is primarily driven by inflation, as well as the annualization of service enhancements from 2024.

The County's share of this change is a year over year increase of \$10 thousand, and a decrease from 2025 adopted of \$154 thousand due to timing of provincial funding.

There is a \$500 thousand reduction in the cost of the Elmira Road station in the 2025-2028 capital budget and forecast, as well as a funding correction to the growth ambulances capital project. Overall, the County's share for capital projects over the four years decreased by \$76 thousand.

The City has included a [reserve allocation](#) of \$500 thousand for any additional Land Ambulance costs associated with the closure of Guelph's Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) site. This is a preliminary earmark of contingency reserve capacity as the financial impacts of this change are currently unknown.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The 2025 Land Ambulance Services Budget Update supports the People and Economy theme of the Future Guelph Strategic Plan.

Future Guelph Theme

People and Economy

Future Guelph Objectives

People and Economy: Support community well-being

Financial Implications

The 2025 budget update provides an opportunity to review and refine the previously adopted 2025 budget, setting the direction for service delivery expectations for 2025.

In order to address uncertainty in service demand changes that may occur with the closure of Guelph's CTS site, the City has included a \$500 thousand allocation from the Tax Rate Contingency Reserve.

Report

On November 29, 2023, Council adopted Guelph's first four-year multi-year budget (MYB), covering the years 2024 to 2027. The 2025 budget update is Guelph's first confirmation year in this four-year MYB cycle. The budget confirmation process, which includes reviewing, updating, and confirming the budget, is the mechanism for re-adoption in the City's [Budget Policy](#).

On February 28, a [Mayoral Direction](#) was released directing staff to prepare an update to the adopted 2025 budget with a property tax impact of no more than four per cent, split proportionately between the City and local boards and shared services (LBSS) agencies.

The 2025 budget confirmation process focused on prioritization of the City's needs to balance moving strategic priorities forward with affordability pressures; this process included both new investments proposed in the 2025 adopted budget, as well as existing services in the base budget.

2025 Draft Operating and Capital Budget Update

The Paramedics Services 2025 budget update results in an operating budget expenditure increase of \$1.4 million over the 2024 adopted budget, and an increase of \$139 thousand over the previously adopted 2025 budget.

The County's share of this change is a year over year increase of \$10 thousand, and a decrease from 2025 adopted of \$154 thousand.

The operating budget updates applied to 2026-2028 relate to inflationary adjustments and service expansions. Large capital commitments include the Elmira Road station replacement (PM0015) and replacement and growth vehicles (PM0010 and PM0002).

Table 1 - Operating Summary (in thousands of dollars)

Paramedic Services Operating Budget	2024 Adopted Budget	2025 Adopted Budget	2025 Updated Budget	2026 Requested Budget	2027 Requested Budget	2028 Requested Budget
Salaries, Wages and Benefits	23,901	24,817	24,696	27,106	28,953	29,800
Purchased Goods	1,579	1,589	1,696	1,713	1,727	1,739

Paramedic Services Operating Budget	2024 Adopted Budget	2025 Adopted Budget	2025 Updated Budget	2026 Requested Budget	2027 Requested Budget	2028 Requested Budget
Purchased Services	1,320	1,331	1,331	1,342	1,359	1,359
Internal Charges and Recoveries	3,221	3,442	3,442	3,546	3,687	3,784
Debt and Transfers	826	982	1,134	1,224	1,289	1,289
Revenue from User Fee & Service Charges	(35)	(35)	(35)	(35)	(35)	(35)
Total net expenses	30,811	32,126	32,265	34,896	36,981	37,936
Ministry of Health Grant Revenue	(13,807)	(14,680)	(15,737)	(16,313)	(17,674)	(18,748)
Net Expenses to be shared between the City and County	17,004	17,446	16,528	18,583	19,307	19,188
City's share at 63% for 2025-2028	10,957	11,235	10,471	11,797	12,244	12,144
County's share at 37% for 2025-2028	6,047	6,211	6,057	6,786	7,063	7,043

Operating Budget Details

Salaries and Benefits

- The change from 2025 adopted to 2025 update is the deferral of one administration support position to 2026. Salaries and benefits increase substantially in 2026 and 2027 due to the addition of eight paramedics and one superintendent in 2026 (county share \$615 thousand) and four paramedics and one superintendent in 2027 (county share \$40 thousand) as identified in the paramedics’ budget request on the [budget dashboard](#) (budget request 1262). Other increases are related to negotiated economic and benefit increases. Compensation expenses in 2024 to date are exceeding budget due to multiple leaves of absence which require backfill. This has been a growing trend over the past few years, and there are several human resources strategies in place to mitigate this in addition to a review of staffing backfill requirements that will be undertaken next year ahead of the 2026 budget update.

Purchased Goods

- Increase to medical and personnel supplies accounts to align with expenditure trends due to increased call volumes and inflation impacts. The 2025 budget update includes an additional \$100 thousand for medical supplies over the 2025 adopted budget.

Internal Charges and Recoveries

- Internal Charges are based on the Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative costs and drivers and include fuel, insurance, corporate building maintenance, and other back-office support. The 2025 budget update has no change from 2025 adopted.

Debt and Transfers

- The province contributes to capital costs through funding the prior year's actual amortization expense. This funding is transferred to a dedicated reserve fund. This reserve money is used to fund a portion of paramedic capital projects, with the remaining cost split between the City and County. There is no change from 2025 adopted budget to 2025 update in expected amortization. IT projects for which the paramedic service has been a partial beneficiary are 100 per cent funded from city reserve funds and the chargeback for the County portion is calculated based on the 10-year average capital program in alignment with the Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative Methodology. There is no change from 2025 adopted budget to 2025 update for IT capital projects. An increase in expenditures for WSIB has been budgeted for in the 2025 budget update through a transfer to the WSIB reserve, with offsetting revenue included in the provincial operating grant.

Ministry of Health Grant Revenue

- Ministry of Health grants increased each year due to the following:
 - 2025: Additional grant funding from 2024 service expansions and other inflationary budget increases from 2023 to 2024.
 - 2026: Regular growth in grant no service expansion in 2025 budget update.
 - 2027: Additional grant funding from 2026 service expansion.
 - 2028: Additional grant funding from 2027 service expansion.

County Share

- The County's share of the net operating expenditures is calculated at 37 per cent of expenses, excluding amortization and employee future benefit amounts and the respective revenue. The county share is calculated after applicable provincial funding amounts have been applied. This is based on estimated call volumes and actual experience is subject to change.
- Changes made in the 2025 budget update resulted in a decrease of \$154 thousand in the 2025 County funding requirements.

Capital Budget Details

There is a \$500 thousand reduction in the cost of the Elmira Road station in the 2025-2028 capital budget and forecast, as well as a funding correction to the growth ambulances capital project. Overall, the County's share for capital projects over the four years decreased by \$76 thousand.

Table 2: Capital Summary (in thousands of dollars)

Paramedic Services Capital Budget	2025 Requested Budget	2026 Requested Budget	2027 Requested Budget	2028 Requested Budget
County Share of Paramedics' Capital Projects – 2025 Budget Update	461	3,362	315	667
County Share of Paramedics' Capital Projects – 2025 Adopted Budget	262	3,649	315	555
Increase (decrease)	199	(387)	-	112

The changes in each year are as follows:

- 2025: The Elmira Road Station (PM0015) has an added \$500 thousand impact for design costs, with the County's share being \$199 thousand.
- 2026: The budget for the Elmira Road Station has been decreased from \$8 million to \$7 million, as design was shifted to 2025 and the project estimate was updated.
- 2027: No change.
- 2028: Budget correction to the Growth Ambulances project (PM0002) funding to reflect county share of growth ambulances.

A detailed capital listing is included in Attachment-1.

Financial Implications

The 2025 budget update provides an opportunity to review and refine the previously adopted 2025 budget, setting the direction for service delivery expectations for 2025.

In order to address uncertainty in service demand changes that may occur with the closure of Guelph's CTS site, the City has included a \$500 thousand allocation from the Tax Rate Contingency Reserve.

Consultations and Engagement

Budget consultations are ongoing, and the key dates in the City's budget process are as follows:

- October 17 – Draft budget website go-live
- October 30 – Special City Council meeting, 2025 budget update presentation
- November 13-15 – Mayoral Budget update released
- November 19 – Special City Council meeting, budget delegations
- November 27 - Special City Council meeting, budget amendments
- November 27 to December 7 – Mayoral veto period (end date may be shortened)
- December 7 to December 22 – Council veto period (start and end date may be accelerated)
- City Budget adopted no later than December 22
- January 22, 2025 – Special Council meeting – Local Boards and Shared Services presentations, delegations and approvals.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Capital Project Listing

Departmental Approval

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