



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Shauna Calder, Manager of Finance
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2024
Subject: 2024 Budget – Social Services

Background:

The 2024 budget package for Social Services is respectfully submitted for the Committee’s consideration.

Attachments (by Division):

- a. Programme information page
- b. Programme performance measures
- c. Proposed 2024 Programme Operating Budget
- d. Proposed 2024-2033 Budget Forecast (Operating & Capital)
- e. Proposed 2024-2033 Capital Budget
- f. Explanation of significant budget items

Overall Budget Impact

The following table provides a comparison of the 2024 tax levy impacts for the City and County relative to the approved 2023 budget (operating and capital combined).

COUNTY OF WELLINGTON 2024 SOCIAL SERVICES NET BUDGET COMPARISON - OPERATING & CAPITAL (all figures in \$000's)					
	Approved 2023 County Budget	2023 Budget Projections for 2024	Proposed 2024 County Budget	% Change from 2023 Projections for 2024	% Change from Approved 2023 Budget
City Tax Levy Requirement					
Social Housing	\$ 18,608	\$ 21,325	\$ 25,024	17.3%	34.5%
Ontario Works	3,391	3,709	3,900	5.2%	15.0%
Children's Early Years	3,518	4,567	5,084	11.3%	44.5%
IT	458	226	248	9.7%	-45.9%
Total	\$ 25,976	\$ 29,826	\$ 34,255	14.9%	31.9%
County Tax Levy Requirement					
Social Housing	\$ 5,091	\$ 4,812	\$ 5,367	11.5%	5.4%
Ontario Works	1,479	1,582	1,543	-2.5%	4.3%
Children's Early Years	2,072	2,520	2,099	-16.7%	1.3%
Affordable Housing	1,200	1,400	1,401	0.1%	16.7%
Total	\$ 9,842	\$ 10,314	\$ 10,409	0.9%	5.8%

The tax impact of the overall 2024 Social Services Budget is a 5.8% increase for the County and an 31.9% increase for the City. There are also a number of future challenges that could have significant budget impacts in the medium and longer term including:

- Future Affordable Housing capital investment opportunities – affordable housing continues to be a significant need. Being prepared to make the best use of funds from higher orders of government if they become available is key.
- State of the local economy driving community needs in all areas of social services. A strong economy will create a need for increased affordable housing to support local business expansion, while an economic downturn could drive a need for additional spaces if unemployment rates increase.
- The expiry of long-term provincial funding allocations used to support rent supplements in our community creates uncertainty. Staff must plan to ensure households are able to maintain their housing without knowing what funding may be available.
- As non-profit and co-op providers begin to reach the end of mortgages there is potential that some may choose to end their relationship with the County. Currently the risk is mitigated by provincial regulation prohibiting provincial providers from withdrawing from the *Housing Services Act*, but the long-term plan is unknown.
- The provincial review of the funding formula for Children’s Early Years remains outstanding and funding implications are unknown.
- Reductions to the Federal Reaching Home funding allocation create uncertainty and place additional pressure on the homelessness planning system at time when additional investments are needed to meet the goal of ending homelessness.

Recommendation:

That the attached 2024 Operating and Capital Budget and 2024-2033 Ten-Year Plan for Social Services be approved and forwarded to the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee.

Respectfully submitted,



Shauna Calder, CPA, CGA
Manager of Finance