

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Director of Corporate Services

2023 Business Plans and Budget

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the 2023 Oxford County Business Plans be adopted as amended;
2. And further, that Oxford County Council approves the 2023 Budget with a general purpose levy of \$_____;
3. And further, that Oxford County Council approves a 2023 special levy for Library purposes in the amount of \$_____, levied against all area municipalities with the exception of the City of Woodstock;
4. And further, that Oxford County Council approves a 2023 special levy to fund a Woodstock Police Services Grant for court security and prisoner transportation services in the amount of \$10,276, levied against all area municipalities with the exception of the City of Woodstock;
5. And further, that the following grant requests, totalling \$_____, be included in the 2023 general purpose levy:

Agricultural Award of Excellence	\$ _____
Oxford Connection - Economic Development	_____
Oxford County Physician Recruitment	_____
Tillsonburg Airport	_____
Oxford Creative Connections	_____
Social Planning Council Oxford	_____
The Small Business Centre	_____
North Oxford Intercommunity Bus Transit	_____
Woodstock Curling Centre	_____
Oxford County Youth Initiatives	_____;
6. And further, that the following grant requests be funded under the Oxford County Youth Initiatives grant:

Oxford Invitational Youth Robotics Challenge	\$ _____
International Student Exchange Ontario	_____
Oxford Plowman's Match	_____;
7. And further, that a by-law to adopt the estimated expenditures for the year 2023 as set out in Report No. CS 2023-03, subject to amendments, be presented to Council for enactment at their regular meeting scheduled for January 25, 2023;
8. And further, that staff be authorized to proceed with implementing the incremental full-time equivalent positions as presented in the Full-time Equivalent Plan attached to Report No. CS 2023-03 upon the passing of the aforementioned by-law.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- 2023 County levy \$70.6 million – 6.0% increase over 2022
- 2023 Library levy \$4.3 million – 5.6% increase over 2022
- 2023 Court Security Grant levy \$10,276 – 80.1% decrease from 2022
- \$84.1 million financed capital plan – 31.6% increase over 2022
- 13 new initiatives to advance the Strategic Plan
- Average residential property would pay \$29 more in property tax for County purposes an increase of 2.8% (based on the 2022 Draft General Levy of \$70.3 million)

Implementation Points

Upon approval of the recommendations contained in this report and enactment of a By-law adopting the budget, staff will proceed with implementing the following:

- goals, objectives and new initiatives as set out in the approved business plans and the respective budgets;
- incremental full-time equivalent positions as presented in the Full-time Equivalent Plan;
- actions identified in the Action Items List; and
- inform the public of the highlights contained within the 2023 Business Plans and Budget.







Financial Impact

This report has been prepared on the basis of a draft 2023 Business Plan and Budget that has been presented to Council for deliberation over two meetings in November and December. During the course of those deliberations, Councillors have presented notices of motion that will be decided on during final consideration of the budget. The notices of motion and new budget information, addressed more specifically in this report, have been reflected in the revised draft budget figures referenced throughout this report.

Communications

The approved 2023 Business Plan and Budget will be posted on the County’s website, linked to the *SpeakUp Oxford!* site and announced to the public through social media and local media outreach.

Strategic Plan (2020-2022)

					
WORKS WELL TOGETHER	WELL CONNECTED	SHAPES THE FUTURE	INFORMS & ENGAGES	PERFORMS & DELIVERS	POSITIVE IMPACT
		3.iii.			

DISCUSSION

Background

The 2023 Preliminary Business Plans and Budget Plan was first presented to Council at their regular meeting held November 23 and was further deliberated during special meetings held on November 30 and December 5. During this process the public has been invited to learn more about the 2023 business plans and budget by visiting the County's website at www.oxfordcounty.ca. The site includes the full information package as well as the presentations that were presented at each of the meetings.

The preliminary plan proposed a levy requirement of \$70.3 million for general purposes and a levy requirement of \$4.3 million for libraries and \$10,276 for Court Security - benefitting seven of the Area Municipalities (excluding Woodstock). The 2023 tax levies represented increases of 5.7% for general purposes and 5.6% for libraries and a decrease of 80.1% for Court Security.

The 2023 proposed capital plan amounted to \$84.0 million, compared to \$63.9 million in 2022. Of the \$84.0 million in capital projects \$11.1 million are carryover projects from 2022, with \$73.0 million representing new 2023 budget requests.

Some project highlights include:

- Electric vehicle chargers - *Expansion* - **\$1,405,000**
- 410 Buller Masonry - *Renewal* - **\$1,150,000**
- Woodingford Lodge – Buildings – *Renewal* - **\$1,068,506**
- Bridge and Culvert Rehabilitation / Replacement - *Renewal* - **\$6,080,000**
- Waste Management compost pad and weigh scale – *Expansion* - **\$1,501,500**
- SCADA Master Plan - *Replacement and expansion* - **\$2,208,000**
- Tillsonburg Wastewater, WWTP Upgrade – *Expansion* - **\$6,415,000**
- Drumbo Wastewater, WWTP Expansion – *Expansion* - **\$725,000**
- Woodstock Wastewater, Pattullo Industrial Park servicing – *Expansion* - **\$2,456,500**
- Ingersoll Water, Cast iron pipe replacement – *Replacement* - **\$1,000,000**

Since the release of the draft budget package on November 23, additional information has been received and incorporated in the draft budget. These changes are described in Table 1 of this report and result in a levy of \$70,561,471 for general purposes, representing a 6.0% increase over the 2022 levy.

Over the course of the special budget meetings held on November 30 and December 5, 2022, notices of motion to amend the draft business plans and budget were presented by Councillors and reserved for debate at the time of final consideration of the budget to ensure all matters are fairly assessed and the overall impact of amendments are understood. The notices of motion received to date are summarized in Table 2.

Comments

Proposed Business Plan and Budget - General

Table 1 references notices of motion for adjustments proposed by Councillors during the budget deliberation process and illustrates the respective levy impact and percentage change as well as total levy impact. Detailed accounting of the draft budget adjustment impacts on the County's levies and capital budget can be found in Attachment 1. As a matter of perspective, a \$670,000 adjustment to the levy translates to a 1% change from the prior year's levy.

Table 1 – Draft Budget Adjustments

		\$ Budget	\$ Levy	Inc (Dec)
2022 General Levy Requirements			66,552,568	
2023 Draft General Budget Levy Increase			3,765,236	5.7%
1	Long Point Conservation Authority: Draft budget adjustment	20,856	20,856	(0.0%)
2	International Student Exchange Ontario: Grant request increase from \$8,000 to \$9,600 (within the \$15,000 Youth Initiative Grant)	-	-	(0.0%)
3	Social Planning Council Oxford: Grant request increase from \$65,000 to \$80,000-90,000	15,000	15,000	(0.0%)
4	Woodstock Curling Centre: 2023 Grant request to support hosting of Ontario Provincial Mixed and Senior Mixed Championship event April 13-16, 2023	10,000	10,000	(0.0%)
5	Tillsonburg Airport: 2023 Grant request to support airport operations budget in the amount of \$42,169 towards achieving "operational neutrality" for the Tillsonburg Regional Airport	42,169	42,169	0.1%
6	Punkeydoodles – amend Capital budget to advance the Oxford County traffic study from 2026 budget to 2023 budget	75,000	-	0.0%
7	Bill 23 – More Homes Built Faster Act; (CS 2022-49): Planning and finance staff resource requirements	222,900	197,800	0.3%
8	Catfish Creek Conservation Authority: Draft budget adjustment	257	257	0.0%
9	Oxford Plowman's Match: Grant request of \$250 (within the \$15,000 Youth Initiative Grant)	-	-	0.0%
10	Woodingford Lodge: Update regarding fiscal year two funding for staffing increases in LTC and on the Supporting Professional Growth Fund Investments	-	(76,066)	(0.1%)
11	2023 OCIF Grant Allocation: 2023 Grant allocation reduction over 2022 funding (reserve impact only)	587,676	-	0.0%
12	Thames River Conservation Authority: Draft budget adjustment	28,651	28,651	0.0%
13	Retainer Fees (CS 2023-01): Provision of \$5,000 related to Integrity Commissioner and Closed Meeting Investigator appointments	5,000	5,000	(0.0)

Report No: CS 2023-03
CORPORATE SERVICES
Council Date: January 11, 2023

	\$ Budget	\$ Levy	Inc (Dec)
New Information Levy Impact decrease	1,007,509	243,667	0.3%
2023 Proposed General Levy Requirements		70,561,471	6.0%

Notices of motion received as of publication of this report are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Notice of Motions Received

Notice of Motion No.	Description	\$ Budget	\$ Levy	Inc (Dec)
NM01-221205	Broadband: Amount equal to 2% of the 2023 County Levy to be committed to enabling service providers to expand broadband service in Oxford County rural areas identified as underserved, funded by the Safe Restart Reserve	1,406,400	-	0.0%
NM02-221205	Housing: Commit \$1 million to support development in Oxford County that will be subject to municipal capital facilities agreement(s) under section 110 of the Municipal Act for the purposes of increasing supply of Affordable Housing funded by Safe Restart Funding; And further, that subject to the same conditions as the foregoing, an additional \$250,000 be added to the 2023 County levy for further investment in affordable housing development. And further that County Council establish a "base" amount in future Human Services budgets for new housing development for future "Business Plan and Budgets" at \$3 million annually until directed by council to change to another amount, and further that Council and staff proactively and strongly advocate to upper levels of government for matching contributions on an annual basis.	1,250,000	250,000	0.4%
NM03-230111	Bill 23 – More Homes Built Faster Act; (CS 2022-49): Proposed FTEs identified in Report CS 2022-48 - Municipal Resource Impacts Resulting from Bill 23 be removed from the 2023 budget. And further that; a report come forward to Council in Q4 providing an assessment of the true impacts of Bill 23 on staffing workload and actual costs when the County and the lower tier Municipalities have had the opportunity to implement the requirements and provisions of this Bill.	(222,900)	(197,800)	(0.3%)
NM04-230111	The Ox On the Run Library program remain as a summer program for the year 2023.	(189,800)	-	0.0%
NM05-230101	As a condition of providing grants for SCOR, Oxford Connections, Small Business Development Center and Community Futures Oxford as outlined in the 2023 Business Plan and Budget, that the following groups be asked to create a committee to collaborate	-	-	0.0%

	on an overall economic development strategy to help guide our economic initiatives, and further that the committee be comprised of one representative from each of, the City of Woodstock Economic Development department, the Town of Tillsonburg Economic Development department, the Town of Ingersoll Economic Development Department, the Rural Oxford Economic Development group, SCOR, The Small Business Center, Community Futures Oxford, and to include the Oxford County Warden and Councillors Schaefer and Wheaton and further this committee is asked to bring forward a report to County Council to provide both a vision or strategy for a sustainable and robust local economy and how all partners can work collaboratively for all areas of Oxford County. This report will be due no later than June 28, 2023.			
NM06-230111	Move the budgeted hybrid pickup trucks from the proposed 2023 budget (under water and wastewater) project numbers 250000 and 26000 to future budgets due to lack of supply options and high costs currently seen in the market	(272,000)	-	0.0%

Proposed Business Plan and Budget – Library

At their regular meeting held on November 23, 2022, County Council received Report No. CS 2022-37 with the following recommendation from the Oxford County Library Board for 2023 Budget consideration:

“That the Board recommends that County Council approve the 2023 Oxford County Library Business Plan and budget to provide a levy of \$4,288,199, subject to possible minor adjustments to interdepartmental charges.”

Local Court Security Advisory Committee

A grant formula, first established by the Local Court Security Advisory Committee in 2017, has been adopted by County Council for the purpose of sharing the City of Woodstock’s net court security and prisoner transportation costs as they relate to the Oxford County Court House located in the City of Woodstock. It is calculated based on prior year’s actual costs reported to the Ministry of the Solicitor General (SOLGEN) net of the Court Security and Prisoner Transportation funding received from the SOLGEN for that year. The resulting deficit is then shared on the basis of 60/40 with the City being responsible for 60% of the deficit and the County being responsible for the remaining 40% which is levied against seven of the area municipalities, excluding the City of Woodstock.

The resulting grant amount for 2023 has been calculated to be \$10,276, which will be funded by all area municipalities with the exception of the City of Woodstock through a special levy.

Conservation Authorities

At the time of publishing this report, Conservation Authorities' (CA) 2023 draft budgets have been received from Long Point Region Conservation Authority, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, and Catfish Creek Conservation Authority. In response to minor variances between the CA's draft budgets, and the County's estimated provision, an adjustment has been presented in Table 1 indicating its impact on the County's proposed levy. The other Conservation Authorities' levies presented in the preliminary budget are based on a historical average increase for each of the respective Conservation Authorities.

The Conservation Authorities' Board meetings to consider their budgets are typically held in January and February of the budget year. The Conservation Authorities' 2023 draft and final budgets will be circulated to Council as they are received.

Public Health

Due to the 2022 municipal election, the new Public Health Board (SWPH) has not met to give consideration for their 2023 budget. In the absence of an approved SWPH 2023 budget, the 2023 draft County budget has been adjusted to reflect a provisional increase of 6% over Oxford County's proportionate share of the 2023 Budget; resulting in a provision of \$2,786,700.

Southwestern Public Health's 2023 draft and final budgets will be circulated to Council as they are received.

Grants

Grant requests received in 2023, as of the date of this report, total \$361,669 which represents a 22.8% increase from 2022. Table 3 provides a list of the grant requests to be considered by Council for their inclusion in the 2023 approved budget and also illustrates the respective change over the prior year's budget.

Table 3 – Grant Requests

Organization	2022 Budget \$	2023 Request \$	Inc (Dec) \$
Oxford Creative Connections	60,000	60,000	-
Social Planning Council Oxford	65,000	80,000	15,000
Agricultural Award of Excellence	2,000	2,000	-
Oxford Connection - Economic Development	50,000	50,000	-
Oxford County Physician recruitment	30,000	30,000	-
Tillsonburg Airport	-	42,169	42,169
Small Business Centre	50,000	50,000	-

Organization	2022 Budget \$	2023 Request \$	Inc (Dec) \$
Woodstock Curling Centre	-	10,000	10,000
North Oxford Intercommunity Bus Transit	22,500	22,500	-
County of Oxford Youth Initiatives: <i>Oxford Invitational Youth Robotics Challenge \$5,000</i> <i>International Student Exchange Ontario \$9,600</i> <i>Oxford Plowman's Match \$250</i> <i>Unassigned \$150</i>	15,000	15,000	-
Total Community Grants	294,500	361,669	67,169

Full-Time Equivalent Plan

Subsequent to release of the 2023 Draft Business Plan and Budget, the Province enacted new legislations -*Build More Homes Faster Act*, that will impact the County's financial and human resources. Based on a preliminary review set out in Report No. CS 2022-49, with respect to changes to the Development Charges and Planning Act alone, staff anticipate that the increased demand on County staff to be the equivalent of three FTEs. In response, County Council referred the recommendation of adding three FTEs to the 2023 draft budget for further consideration in budget deliberations.

The County's full-time equivalent (FTE) staffing complement proposed for 2023 to reflect the additional 3.0 FTE is illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4 – 2023 Adjusted draft Full-time Equivalent Plan Changes

	FTE	Service Level	Grant/ Reserve Funded	Temp	COVID- 19 Temp*
2022 Approved FTE Plan	627.7				
2022 Temporary FTE	(10.5)				
2022 In-Year FTE Changes	2.8				
2022 Base FTE Plan	620.0				
2023 Draft Budget increase	25.4	14.0	5.6	2.8	3.0
Finance & Planning FTE – Bill 23 – <i>More Homes Built Faster Act</i> ; CS 2022-49	3.0	3.0	-	-	-
2023 Adjusted Draft Budget increase	28.4	17.0	5.6	2.8	3.0
Adjusted Draft 2022 FTE Plan	648.4				

* Provincially funded temporary positions due to COVID-19

Action Items List

There are no outstanding action items regarding 2023 Business Plan and Budget matters as of the date of this Report. Any new action items identified during final consideration of the 2023 Business Plans and Budget will be subject to Council's approval.

Preliminary Assessment and Tax Analysis

The preliminary year-end revised assessment figures as of November 3, 2022, indicate that the assessment growth (excluding PILs) for 2023 is 2.08% (1.71% - 2021). The 2022 growth rates have continued to remain strong in comparison to the past eight years, being 1.7% in 2021, 1.5% in 2020, 1.8% in 2019, 1.8% in 2018, 1.4% in 2017, 1.2% in 2016, 1.5% in 2015, and 1.1% in 2014.

As previously reported in Report CS 2022-46, the average residential property that was valued at \$275,022 in 2022 remains the same at \$275,022 for 2023 as there is no phase-in assessment due to the Province's decision to defer implementation of revised current value assessments. Based on the proposed 2023 levy of \$70.3 million (unadjusted), the average residential property would pay \$29 more in property tax for County purposes or \$1,063 (\$1,034 - 2022) an increase of 2.8%. It is important to note that this estimate assumes 2023 tax policy remains unchanged from 2022, and is subject to change with final budget approval and year end property assessment figures.

Conclusions

Upon adoption of the proposed or amended recommendations contained in this report, the preliminary 2023 business plans previously presented to Council will be amended to reflect the aforementioned adjustments and action items. The final versions of the 2023 Business Plan and Budget Highlights will be posted on the County's intranet and websites upon enactment of the budget approval by-law at the January 25, 2023 meeting of Council.

Overall, the 2023 business plans and budget are a reflection of Council and staffs' continued commitment to support the community's needs during these challenging times, having regard for COVID and inflation related financial impacts on individuals, residents and businesses. This budget positions the County well to continue to support our local community with the help of senior levels of government where possible, with the objective to secure a strong recovery and sustainable future for all of Oxford County.

SIGNATURES

Report Author:

Carolyn King, CPA, CA
Manager of Finance

Departmental Approval:

Lynn S. Buchner, CPA, CGA
Director of Corporate Services

Approved for submission:

Benjamin R. Addley
Interim Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Detailed Schedule of 2023 Draft Budget Adjustments
Attachment 2 – Full-Time Equivalent Plan