

Middlesex County Council Meeting Highlights – September 24, 2024

Council Highlights is an informal summary of selected actions taken by Middlesex County Council or Committee of the Whole at business meetings. The Council Highlights are not an official record of County Council proceedings. To view official agendas and minutes, please visit [Council Meetings and Minutes](#).

► Provincial Planning Reform - Bill 185 & Provincial Planning Statement

The Committee of the Whole received an update from staff on recent and upcoming planning reform in the Province, outlining key developments at the provincial and local levels. A major focus was Bill 185, *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes*, which introduces changes to the Provincial Planning Statement, effective October 20, 2024. This update emphasizes a more permissive planning framework to support housing growth, including adjustments to agricultural policies and employment land conversion. For more information, see the [Planning and Development Update](#).

► Middlesex County Procurement Services Initiatives

Staff provided an update on the County's Procurement Services initiatives and future goals. The update outlined progress since the 2022 service delivery review, which recommended centralizing procurement services, adopting consistent policies, and developing standardized procedures. In 2023, Procurement Services facilitated 28 procurement processes, totaling \$19.3 million for various Middlesex County departments and the Middlesex-London Paramedic Service. So far in 2024, a total of 27 bids have been awarded, totaling \$19.6 million. Moving forward, plans are underway to offer support to local municipalities by 2025. For more information, see the [Procurement Services Update](#).

► Middlesex County Economic Development Corporation Strategy considered

The Committee of the Whole received a presentation from urbanMetrics, a consultant retained to conduct an independent background review of the current economic development eco-system in Middlesex County. In addition to highlighting the economic development landscape in southwestern Ontario, the report incorporated feedback from various stakeholders and concluded that a new Middlesex County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) would be best positioned to stimulate investment and business growth in the region. Following the presentation, the Committee of the Whole approved a recommendation directing staff to bring forward a Middlesex County Economic Development Corporation – Implementation Strategy during 2025 Budget Deliberations for Council consideration. For more information, see the [Middlesex County EDC Strategy](#) presentation.

► Committee supports appeal to Province for continued transit funding

The Committee of the Whole endorsed a resolution in support of continued provincial funding for Southwest Community Transit (SCT). This funding, set to expire on March 31, 2025, facilitates the operation of Middlesex County Connect, the County's inter-community

transit service. Without ongoing financial support from the province, the sustainability of this service and other small urban and rural transit systems is at risk. The resolution calls on the provincial government to extend funding for Southwest Community Transit beyond March 2025.

Recommendations made by the Committee of the Whole at the September 24, 2024 meeting will be considered by County Council at its next regular meeting on October 8, 2024. The Legislative Services Department maintains the official record for all County government proceedings.

For more information please contact: mediarelations@middlesex.ca

