



2024 to 2027 Business Plan

Service: Ontario Works

\$0.19

Cost per day for the average rate payer (2024 to 2027)

1.71%

Of the 2024 to 2027 City of London Net Property Tax Supported Budget

Who we are:

- The Life Stabilization division delivers social assistance under the *Ontario Works Act, 1997*, through the Ontario Works program. This includes the provision of income supports, delivery of discretionary and participation benefits, and life stability referrals and supports, to low-income residents of London.

What we do:

- We provide financial support to help individuals and families in achieving their employment, education, health and social inclusion goals.
- Financial supports are provided for basic needs, shelter, emergency social assistance, and other discretionary and participation benefits.
- Once individuals needs are determined through a common assessment process, staff will provide referrals and support with system navigation. Referrals may include:
 - Stability support referrals for healthcare, literacy / numeracy programs, child care, housing, legal services, information for other benefit income streams, and resources for social inclusion goals.
 - Employment referrals are made to Employment Ontario for supports to help obtain sustainable employment.
- Coordination of service is offered between divisions (Child Care & Early Years and Housing Stability Services).
- Partnerships in the community to meet individuals where they are needed most.

Why we do it:

- **Mandatory** - The City of London is designated under the *Ontario Works Act, 1997* and *Ontario Regulation 136/98* as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager for the Ontario Works program for the City of London and the County of Middlesex.

The following table provides an overview of the budget for this service:

Budget Summary (\$000's)	2024	2025	2026	2027	2024 to 2027 TOTAL
Gross Operating Expenditures	\$143,186	\$148,942	\$151,224	\$153,556	\$596,908
Other Revenues	-\$127,663	-\$133,465	-\$135,787	-\$138,158	-\$535,073
Net Tax Levy Supported Operating Budget	\$15,522	\$15,477	\$15,436	\$15,398	\$61,833
Total Capital Expenditures	\$100	\$100	\$185	\$260	\$645
Full-Time Equivalents (FTE's)	233	233	233	233	N/A

Reflects 2024 to 2027 approved City budget as of March 1, 2024

Linkage to the 2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan

This service supports the following Strategic Areas of Focus in the 2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan:



**Reconciliation, Equity,
Accessibility, and
Inclusion**



**Economic Growth, Culture,
and Prosperity**



**Housing and
Homelessness**



**Mobility and
Transportation**



Wellbeing and Safety



**Climate Action and
Sustainable Growth**



**Safe London for Women,
Girls, and Gender-Diverse
and Trans People**



Well-Run City

Environmental, Socio-economic Equity and Governance (ESG) Considerations

Environmental, Socio-economic Equity and Governance Profile for this service:



Environmental:

- There are no anticipated changes to the environmental impact for Ontario Works throughout the next budget term (2024 – 2027).

Socio-economic Equity:

- Through administration of Ontario Works, Life Stabilization supports equity-deserving groups including newcomers, Indigenous, Black and Racialized persons, youth with higher needs, persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, women and girls, and individuals experiencing poverty.
- Ontario Works services in London are provided in a decentralized model across five (5) offices and one (1) satellite office, to allow access to services closer to where individuals reside.

Governance:

- Under the *Ontario Works Act, 1997*, The City of London has been designated the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) responsible for administering the Ontario Works program for London and Middlesex, on behalf of the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS).
- Funding for administration of the program is cost-shared between the City of London and the MCCSS. Through a Cost Apportionment and Agency Agreement, the County of Middlesex serves as the delivery agent for Ontario Works in Middlesex County, on behalf of the City of London.

- Metrics and key performance indicators are determined and monitored by the ministry. The City of London monitors and reports on performance for the City of London and the County of Middlesex.
- Sources of caseload data to inform service delivery needs includes, but is not limited to, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) operations performance reports, MCCSS caseload reports, local case management system reports, census data, regional and local data (i.e. Workforce Planning & Development Board).

The following section provides an overview of the key activities the service plans to undertake from 2024 to 2027 to implement the Corporation's 2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan, as well as an overview of the risks and challenges the service is anticipated to experience during this period:

Service Highlights 2024 to 2027

- Implementation of the *London-Middlesex Ontario Works Service Plan*, including strategies to attain the ministry's priorities of:
 - 100% of Ontario Works adults and ODSP non-disabled adults with participation requirements have an Action Plan
 - 39% of Ontario Works adults and ODSP non-disabled adults with participation requirements are referred to Employment Ontario (EO)
 - 12% of Ontario Works cases exiting to employment annually (average of 1% of caseload per month)
 - 18% of cases that exit Ontario Works do not return to the program within one (1) year
- Through an Integrated Employment Services Delivery model, increase the focus on person-centred supports to connect individuals to a range of services and supports that respond to their unique needs, addressing barriers to help them move towards employment readiness and independence from social assistance. As part of an integrated model, deliver services in tandem and collaboration with Employment Ontario providers (London Regional Employment Services division) to increase employment success.
- Develop and foster community partnerships to enhance service delivery, increase Ontario Works presence in the community, and provide opportunities with partners at Ontario Works offices for wrap-around supports.
- Continued modernization of services in alignment with MCCSS direction, including virtual and digital access.

Risks and Challenges Anticipated in 2024 to 2027

- Funding for the Ontario Works program has been frozen since 2018, and funding rates for Discretionary Benefits haven't increased since 2012. Should caseloads continue to grow, there may be financial pressures related to

adequate staffing to effectively meet caseload demands. The Discretionary Benefits cap limits the amount of discretionary support that can be provided to individuals, especially as the cost of items increases due to inflation.

- As a result of Employment Services Transformation, ministry funding to municipalities to deliver the Ontario Works program has been reduced by 22% per year (\$5.8M annually) effective 2024, to reflect the transfer of employment services responsibilities to Employment Ontario. This reduction in funding will affect the level of financial support for participation benefits that can be provided to Ontario Works recipients.
- Ability to achieve targets set by MCCSS may be dependent on factors outside of the municipality's control, such as the economic climate, timely access to stability supports (i.e. mental health supports), etc. Failure to achieve the ministry's outcome targets may result in financial clawback of funding. It is unknown at this time what the level of financial clawback may be.
- Changes being made to the *Ontario Works Act, 1997*, designate the ministry as the "delivery agent" to administer the Ontario Works program, with the municipality being designated as the "delivery partner". It is unknown at this time whether this will result in any changes to municipal administrative authorities for the program.
- A greater focus on stability supports and an intensive case management approach will require upskilling of staff to ensure appropriate competencies, and may create an increased risk of burn-out.

Other reference information and links:

- [2022 OW Participant & Service Delivery Profile – Schedule 1](#)
- [Government of Ontario announcement - Social Assistance Transformation](#)

Contact:

- Shirley Glover
- Director, Life Stabilization – Ontario Works
- 519-661-CITY (2489) Extension 4797
- sglover@london.ca