

# A Look Forward



September 2018

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- Traditionally, we take a look backward at the year that was
- Considering the time of the election cycle we are in, I thought it would be advantageous to take a look forward
- County Council has "moved the yardsticks" considerably for efficient and effective service delivery this past term
- However, there is much more that needs to be done
- The next County Council will have many new faces and they will be faced with some very challenging questions for a county that is changing quickly

# Orientation Sessions



- On track for considerable council turnover at the County level due to retirements
- Middlesex County has 36 different business areas with associated legislation
- We are placing significant emphasis on orientation
- Both upper and lower-tier councillors will be invited to the sessions in November / December
- Service areas / legislation
- The changing County
  - Inner / outer donut
  - Tax pie
  - Demographics
  - Service expectations
- Key Questions
- Partnerships / Government Relations

# Provincial Discussions



- Early discussions with the provincial government are extremely positive
- Synergies that can be created between the province and the County to
  - Reduce costs
  - Improve service levels
- We don't believe in changing governance models to achieve these goals
  - History has proven that this strategy does not work
- Instead, eliminating administrative duplication and consolidating service centres is the solution that is proven to reach these goals

# Key Questions for County Council in 2019



- Broadband
- Changing Demographics
- Taxation Levels
- Moving Beyond Traditional Boundaries
- Taxation Distribution
- Building System Efficiency in Low Density
- Supporting Small Urban and Rural Community Development
- Risk Mitigation

# Broadband



- Should broadband be a municipal service responsibility ?
- Ministry of Infrastructure
- SWIFT
- Community driven service model

# Changing Demographics



- How do our service needs and delivery respond to changing demographics?
- The transit challenge
  - We want to implement a micro transit solution that has worked in many rural and small urban communities across North America
  - We need greater flexibility around the requirements of the program to permit micro transit in rural and small urban areas
- Early ON
  - Program expansion and funding
  - Comprehensive Libraries

# Taxation Levels



- Council has strongly supported a common tax payer approach
  - Planning
  - Legal
  - AODA
  - IT
  - etc
- Traditionally very low County tax rates compared to our neighbours and our closest comparators
- There is much more that we can do for the common tax payer if we think outside of traditional boundaries



# Moving Beyond Traditional Boundaries



Focus for cost savings must be on administrative consolidation and service delivery partnerships that extend beyond traditional municipal boundaries

Current examples are:

- Social Housing
- Ontario Works
- Land Ambulance

Future examples are:

- Health units
- Employment Services
- Conservation Authorities
- Ambulance dispatch
- Employment Services

# Taxation Distribution



- How can we carefully protect the tax pie distribution and preserve fairness?
- We have a changing tax pie
- Impact upon an important county industry
- There are win / win / win solutions if we work together to achieve them
- We also have to address the shift away from commercial and industrial properties along with the impact of appeals
  - These shifts are profound in Middlesex and increasingly impactful across Ontario



# Building Efficiency in Low Density

- Service delivery in low density is a significant challenge
- We have all of the services available for our residents, but they are spread out and often transit challenges limit access
- We are carefully reviewing our Comprehensive Library Model to take it to the next level
- We need to understand how we can expand the "one stop shopping model" of comprehensive libraries
  - Technology
  - Inter-government service delivery
  - Customer experience
  - Increased partnerships
- Strathroy is our focus point for Comprehensive libraries 2.0

# Supporting Small Urban and Rural Community Development



- School closures
- Population decline
- Hospitals
- Community paramedicine
- Aging infrastructure

# Risk Mitigation



- Many aspects of our service delivery system have seen increased risk and how we mitigate that risk is an important question
- The risk is even higher when we are reliant upon third parties for critical decisions and actions
- Land ambulance dispatch is a perfect example of this risk
- To mitigate, we are asking the province to allow us to operate the land ambulance service for the region