



# Prince Township Line-by-Line Budget Review

→ Draft Final Report

September 2, 2020



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## 1.0 Executive Summary

Optimus SBR was contracted by the Prince Township ('the Township') to conduct a line-by-line review of historical expenditures and budget allocations over the 2015-2019 fiscal period and review the Township's budget development process. The primary objectives of this engagement were to identify any budget line items that can be reduced without compromising the service delivery and provide recommendations to enhance the overall budgeting process.

During the review, Optimus SBR team was able to conduct consultations with the Township's Fire Chief, and CAO. Findings and themes from these consultations are included in this version of the Report.

### **Establish a budget process that takes into account multi-year forecasts and service levels that are reviewed and discussed with Council**

Stakeholders involved in the budgeting process (Council and staff) do not currently take a multi-year perspective. There is an opportunity to increase the foresight of budget planning by increasing the focus on the budget requirements for future years. This would provide all stakeholders with a clearer picture of the impact budget decisions can have on future years (e.g., delayed capital investments to maintain low tax levels).

### **Develop clear service level expectations and align these to the Township's Strategic Plan and use to inform budget discussions and decisions**

While the Township does have a Strategic Plan, this document only references 2013-2018, and while it contains initiatives and focuses for the Township, it does not contain detailed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), metrics, or targets to guide the Township's performance. Given the expectations of the plan, there is therefore an opportunity to develop a new Strategic Plan, that includes KPIs and expected service levels. Establishing an annual actual plan for key initiatives and service levels is a valuable input for the Strategic Planning process. With agreed upon service levels, Township staff can more clearly explain, and discuss, the impact that budget reductions may, or may not, have on service levels.

### **Establish a strategy for the use of reserve funds and ensure alignment to the Asset Management Plan**

The Township developed a 10-year Asset Management Plan and Roads Improvement Plan in 2014, and reviewed the Asset Management Plan in 2016. Currently, it does not appear that the recommendations from the 2016 Asset Management Plan review have been implemented (e.g., develop condition assessment programs for various capital assets, short- and long-term maintenance and capital budgets, and planning to determine long-term reserve balances, among other recommendations); nor is it clear how the Township's strategy for reserve funds aligns to the Asset Management Plan / capital budget requirements.

**Explore opportunities to reduce fire costs associated with MNR fire protection**

The Township currently pays the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry \$9,657 annually (2020) for fire protection associated with forested areas of the Township. This cost has increased annually since 2015 (\$7,323). With the recent investments made in the Fire Department, there is an opportunity to take over fire protection responsibilities of some of these areas, without additional investment required. Further investigations should be had with MNR to review this opportunity and determine the amount paid to MNR can be reduced.

## 1.1 Context

Prince Township is a single-tier municipality within the District of Algoma and situated North West of Sault Ste. Marie. The Township has a population of over 1,000 residents spread across a landscape of farmland which also offers natural beauties that include the Gross Cap Bluffs and the Lake Superior coastline. The Township is governed by a five (5) member elected Council, consisting of the Mayor and four Councillors. The Prince Township Team, currently comprised of the Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk-Treasurer, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer, and the Assistant Township Clerk, oversees the municipal services provided to the community. These services include public works, parks and recreation facilities and programming, planning and economic development, fire protection, general government and library services.

With guidance from the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), department heads are required to develop annual draft budgets for their areas of responsibility. Upon completion, the budgets are compiled and reviewed by the CAO and the Township's Council, which then receives final approval from the Council.

In early 2019, the Ontario Government granted 405 small and rural communities a one-time Municipal Modernization Payment to improve service delivery. Following the completion of its Regional Government Review, the Ontario Government expanded upon its initiatives to help municipalities become more efficient and modernize service delivery while protecting front line jobs by additionally announcing a Municipal Modernization Program for municipalities who received the previous Modernization Payment. The Modernization Program grants municipalities funding for a third-party service delivery review to provide specific and actionable recommendations for cost savings and improved efficiencies.

## 1.2 Project Mission and Success

### 1.2.1 Project Mission

The Project Mission defines why the County and its Member Municipalities have engaged Optimus SBR. For this engagement, the Mission is defined as:

- To conduct a line-by-line review of historical expenditures and budget allocations, over the 2015-2019 fiscal period, and evaluate the Township's budget development process to provide key recommendations for adopting new budgeting methodologies that focus on accuracy and ensure that obligations are adequately funded, while minimizing property taxes

### 1.2.2 Project Success

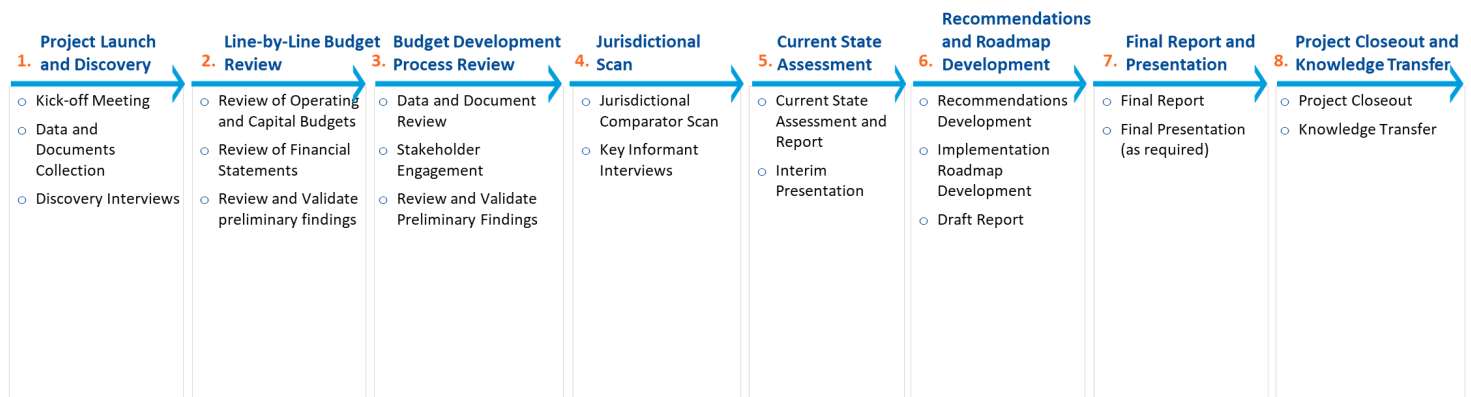
Project success outlines what Prince Township can expect at the conclusion of this engagement, ensuring that our engagement approach and activities will support the achievement of these goals. For this engagement, project success has been defined as:

- Identification of budget line items that can be reduced without compromising the service delivery.

- Clear understanding of the Township's budget development process.
- Improved knowledge of best practices that can be leveraged by the Township for its budgeting process.
- Identification of opportunities for reduction in budget line items and amending the current budgeting methodology to achieve a more accurate estimation during budgeting.
- A clear direction and understanding of the roadmap to implement the recommendations.
- Buy-in among the Township's stakeholders that recommendations will help with on-going effective management of the Township's financial resources.

### 1.3 Project Approach

The graphic below describes our project approach, which will ensure this engagement is completed both on time and on budget. Our approach includes eight major phases of work, each having its own discrete activities that build on one another. Finalization of this deliverable, along with an Interim Presentation to follow, will mark the completion of Phase 5. The Optimus SBR team is also responsible for project management activities throughout the engagement to ensure that any potential risks are identified, captured, and mitigated appropriately.



## 2.0 Budget Development Process Review

### 2.1 Overview

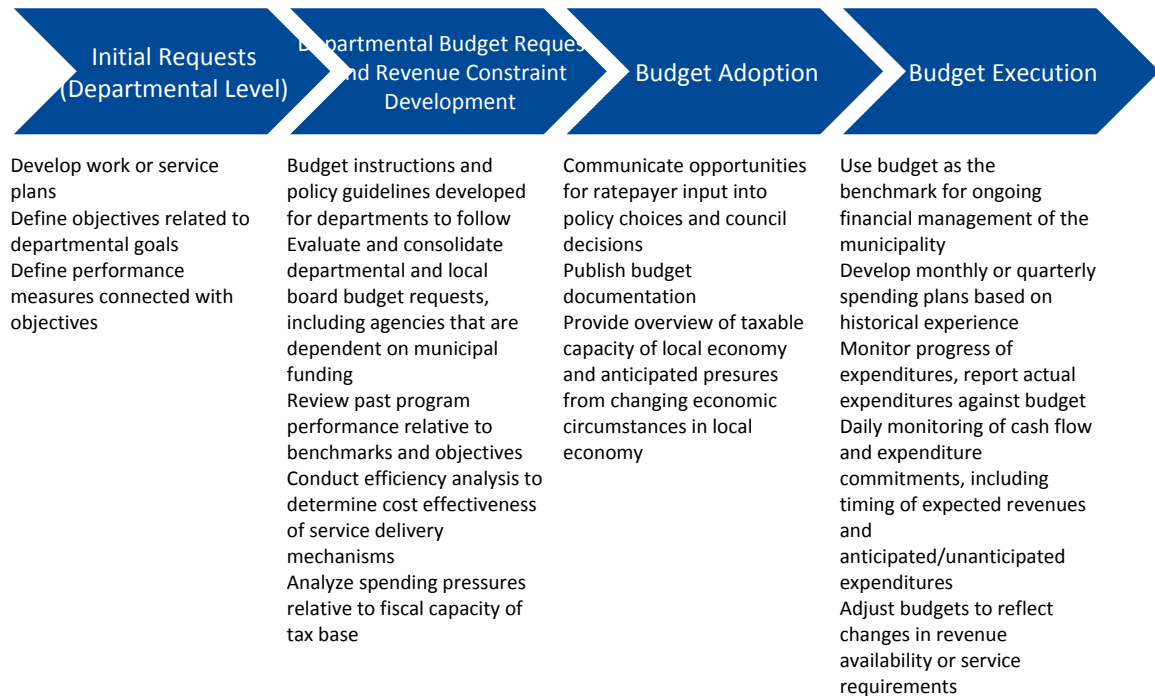
#### 2.1.1 Municipal Act Requirements

Ontario's *Municipal Act, 2001* increased the accountability of municipalities for their budget processes, which at a high level, includes the following requirements:

- Prepare a balanced budget each year, and to provide for any surplus or deficit of the previous year, costs of tax collection, abatement or discount, and reserve funds as required.
- Set out major activities, service levels, related costs, and how best to deliver services in the budget.
- Include estimates of all sums required during the year including: payment of all debts due within the year, amounts required to be raised for sinking or retirement funds, amounts required for any board commission or other body, estimated revenues, estimated expenses, and portions of revenue or expenses to be paid respectively into or out of the municipality's reserve, sinking and retirement funds
- Discuss and approve their annual budgets in public meetings. Budget documents and staff reports are routinely made public before the political decision-making process begins.
- Submit an annual financial information return (FIR) to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The return also includes all local boards within the municipality's jurisdiction.
- Publish annual audited financial statements 60 days after the audit is completed.
- Provide the minister of municipal affairs and housing with designated information related to the efficiency and effectiveness of the municipality's operations.
- Report to taxpayers annually on any service delivery improvements, and on any identified barriers to improving service delivery.

## 2.1.2 Budget Process

Below is an overview of the four stages in budget-making, as defined by Harry Kitchen.<sup>1</sup>



A budget should be established before the start of the fiscal year; however, the time of year when budgets are started and finalized varies among municipalities.

## 2.1.3 Operating, Capital and Multi-year Budgets

Operating budgets are normally used to plan for day-to-day spending, while capital budgets typically cover existing infrastructure or assets to be maintained or new infrastructure needs to be met in the future.

Operating budgets may include a statement of budgetary policy in the form of goals, objectives and strategies, summary information that can be used by the media and the public, a chart and description of the municipal organization (how it is structured and what each department, board and commission does), enough data to provide a basis for comparison. It will usually include projected operating expenses and revenue sources for a specific time period, and is formatted in a way that it parallels a municipality's accounting and financial reporting system to help with monitoring and evaluation of the budget performance.

<sup>1</sup> Harry Kitchen, *Issues in Municipal Financing: Spending, Revenues, Governance, and Administration* (Toronto: Canadian Tax Foundation, forthcoming), chapter 10, "Management Issues Affecting Expenditure Controls."



Through capital budgets, municipalities can plan future expenditures, debt repayment and potential reserve fund needs to manage the financial position of the municipality over a specific period of time. There should be a coordinated effort between departments to develop a financing plan for new construction, acquisition or replacement of municipal assets.<sup>2</sup>

A clear connection between the asset management plan and financial plan is important to ensure sustainability of assets. Annual contributions to reserve should be based on meeting the objectives of the Asset Management Plan. There should be an understanding of the impact of using reserve contributions on future councils and ratepayers. The asset management plan should be a living document and updated regularly to reflect changes.

To aid with long-term financial planning, municipalities may also prepare and adopt a multi-year budget covering a period of up to five years, which must be reviewed and re-adopted each year.

#### 2.1.4 Financial Policies

To support a strong budgeting process, key financial policies should be developed and approved before the budget development process. They provide financial control to ensure resources are spent and funded in a fiscally prudent manner, and decisions are made in a consistent manner, reducing uncertainty about future funding needs. Different policies can be developed to address various elements in the budgetary process including: surplus/deficit, assessment growth, debt management and multi-year budgets.

#### 2.1.5 Public Sector Accounting Standards

Municipalities are required to prepare annual financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for local governments as recommended by the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada. The method for municipal budgeting is not prescribed by the PSAB, rather it is important to maintain alignment with the financial principles of the PSAB.<sup>3</sup>

Under PSAB accounting standards, differences can emerge between budgets and financial statements. Specifically, transfers to and from reserves are considered neither revenues nor expenses under PSAB accounting standards. This can result in differences between budgets (used to raise sums) and results reported using PSAB principles.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ontario. "The Ontario municipal councilor's guide 2018" available via:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide-2018/9-fiscal-context>

<sup>3</sup> Ontario. "The Ontario municipal councilor's guide 2018" available via:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide-2018/9-fiscal-context>

<sup>4</sup> Ontario. "The Ontario municipal councilor's guide 2018" available via:  
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## 2.2 Budget Development Methodology

A high-level overview and brief discussion on the various methods used to develop budgets are included below. There has been a gradual evolution in the methods that municipalities use, starting with the more simplistic methods that focused on incremental changes, gross budgeting, to more sophisticated methods that are informed by data and require more advanced analysis, with enhanced transparency and connection to performance and outcomes.

The Municipal Act allows for multi-year budgeting. Such an approach can be helpful in ensuring the sustainability of assets and services, encouraging Council to take a longer term perspective on the financial vision of the municipality (beyond a single year), and tie clearly into Asset Management Plans. The Municipality of Clarington, for example, includes a five-year capital forecast in its annual budget. Reserves and reserve funds are also outlined with purpose and any planned activity articulated.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.2.1 Incremental Budgeting

An incremental budget is prepared using the previous period's budget and actual performance as a basis with incremental amounts added for the new budget period. However, this method does not consider an assessment of the benefits from existing expenditures and does not tend to allow for a more efficient allocation of resources.

### 2.2.2 Zero-Based Budgeting

In contrast to incremental budgeting, this strategy starts with a zero base and the budget is built around what is financially required for the organization, from the ground up to achieve the level of service planned. It identifies opportunities to reallocate budget to higher priority initiatives. Current and future needs are compared to the annual budget for that area to determine whether a surplus or deficit exists. This can be a difficult and time-consuming process, and some programs/services may not start at zero if they are mandated from other levels of government, but it does allow for a more comprehensive review where expenses are justified, budgets are not connected to prior year spending, and every function is analyzed for its continued need.

### 2.2.3 Gross Expenditure/Revenue Budgeting

Another traditional method of budgeting is to show gross expenditures as the total cost to deliver programs and services, each department budgets for their costs, and revenues are budgeted centrally by one area. Though this is a very easy and simple method, it is less transparent and it is difficult to determine the net cost of departments or programs.

### 2.2.4 Net Based Budgeting

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<sup>5</sup> Municipality of Clarington. (2020). "Draft Budget 2020" <https://www.clarington.net/en/town-hall/resources/Budgets-and-Financial-Reports/Draft-Budget-2020-web.pdf>

The net budget is the difference between gross expenditures and revenues and subsidies, and is typically paid by property taxes. This is more transparent and empowers more responsibility and planning, however it can be time consuming to set up and difficult to allocate shared resources, and explain to the general public.

### 2.2.5 Departmental Based Budgeting

Budgets are built by departments, and each department is responsible for developing and presenting their budget to Council. While the process can be managed independently by each department, this approach can result in too many presentations to Council, lack of specificity for services that may be increasing cost pressures within departments, and less transparency compared to other strategies.

### 2.2.6 Service/Program-based Budgeting

Service or program-based budgeting is a relatively newer methodology. Budgets are built around services or programs instead of departments. One key challenge with this method is redefining activities based on program structure rather than administrative structure. It also requires more time to conduct the various analyses and prepare both the regular annual budget as well as the program budget. Determining ownership of services that cross departments can also present a challenge. There is also a greater focus on outputs or goals rather than solely on costs of inputs. Decisions are made based on costs with respect to efficiency, and returns in terms of effectiveness. This method involves defining objectives and programs to achieve those objectives, appropriation of funds by program, and using performance indicators to measure program outputs, and conducting cost-benefit analyses. This method also allows Council to have more strategic discussions on service levels and tax rates, and advocate for changes to provincial funding for the benefit of rate payers.

## 2.3 Budgeting Considerations

The Ontario government has outlined the following additional considerations to guide municipalities in the budgeting process.<sup>6</sup>

- Public input can be helpful in the municipal budget process. It promotes trust in the municipality and ensures council is aware of residents' opinions.
- Consider provincial reporting requirements or timelines. Compliance helps ensure access to capital programs and receipt of provincial grants on time.
- Take advantage of the opportunity to use the breadth of FIR data to support evidence-based decision-making.
- Consider establishing, or reviewing existing, tax rate stabilization reserves – that is reserves to help address changes in tax revenue, for example, to make up for expected or potential tax (assessment) appeal-related decisions. Assessment appeals can take several years to resolve, particularly for more complex commercial and industrial property. An unexpected appeal loss may result in a need for a significant tax increase for many ratepayers if a municipality does not have the resources set aside to pay the amount.
- Consider using special area rates. Municipalities that provide different services or levels of service in different areas, such as urban or rural regions, have used special area rates to help fund those services from within the communities that benefit from them
- If a property does not sell at the initial tax sale, a municipality may wish to consider re-advertising the property a second time, or taking ownership of the land following the failed tax sale.
- Councils may wish to consider using development charges to help cover a portion of the municipality's growth-related capital costs.
- Consider opportunities for sharing services or resources with your neighbouring municipalities or local bodies to achieve economies of scale, tap into a new revenue stream, or reduce expenditures.
- Integrate climate change adaptation best practices, such as storm water management, into your municipality's asset management planning.
- Consider undertaking private works as local improvements. Municipalities have also put in place local improvement programs to help property owners with energy efficiency improvements and septic system rehabilitation.

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<sup>6</sup>Ontario. "The Ontario municipal councilor's guide 2018" available via:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide-2018/9-fiscal-context#section-13>

## 3.0 Line-by-Line Budget Review

### 3.1 Overview

#### ***Budget Process***

The Township's annual budgeting process is led by the CAO. No formal policies/procedures, bylaws, or roles and responsibilities outlining the process have been documented. The CAO provides staff (Roads Superintendent and Fire Chief) with unaudited actual figures and proposed budget from which staff develop a budget. This is reviewed during two to three special Council budget meetings where Council Members review the budget and determine what the tax rate will be as a result of the proposed budget. It was noted that Council then often asks for cuts to department budgets by certain amounts to keep the tax rate within a proposed increase percentage.

Currently, it is not clear that budgeting is being considered by stakeholders involved (Council and staff) from a multi-year perspective. There appears to be an opportunity to increase the foresight of budget planning by increasing the focus on the budget requirements for future years. For example, the impact of delaying spending on aging equipment, or limiting reserve contributions to achieve unsustainable tax rates. While the Township does have a Strategic Plan, this document only references 2013-2018, and while it contains initiatives and focuses for the Township, does not contain detailed Key Performance Indicators, metrics, or targets to guide the Township's performance. Given the expectations of the plan, there is therefore an opportunity to develop a new Strategic Plan, that includes KPIs and expected service levels. Establishing an annual actual plan for key initiatives and service levels is a valuable input for the Strategic Planning process. With agreed upon service levels, Township staff can more clearly explain, and discuss, the impact that budget reductions may, or may not, have on service levels. This provides Council with greater clarity and understanding of the impact of budget decisions and allows for discussion of rate in the context of service levels.

The Township's non-levy (non-municipal tax) revenue comes from sources including transfers from other levels of governments; user fees, permits, and applications; donations; interest earned; and reserves. The difference between these sources, and the budgeted expenditures is the amount required to be raised by the municipal levy.

From 2015-2018 (the years for which Audited Financial Statements were available), the Township has collected an increased proportion of its revenue through taxation. Revenue from User fees/service charges and licences, permits and rents has generally decreased. Revenue from Interest fines and penalties and investment income has increased modestly.

*Table 1 - Revenue Sources. Source: Audited Financial Statements.*

Revenue	2015		2016		2017		2018	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Taxation	\$1,079,597	\$1,103,559	\$1,106,072	\$1,105,090	\$1,160,088	\$1,174,694	\$1,221,648	\$1,245,838
Government grants - Provincial	\$898,567	\$2,206,092	\$557,488	\$565,283	\$762,509	\$938,778	\$349,189	\$832,181
Government Grants - Federal	\$168,592	\$130,395	\$94,763	\$36,631	\$62,691	\$229,665	\$65,675	\$242,945
Other municipalities	\$7,000	\$590	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$8,000
User fees and service charges	\$72,801	\$60,532	\$46,478	\$51,793	\$41,050	\$47,921	\$159,730	\$51,150
Licences, permits and rents	\$33,630	\$29,181	\$29,505	\$40,734	\$30,180	\$20,179	\$41,200	\$19,852
Interest fines and penalties	\$20,000	\$23,800	\$20,000	\$29,898	\$20,000	\$24,538	\$24,000	\$27,969
Investment income	\$10,600	\$14,607	\$15,550	\$24,185	\$22,000	\$29,404	\$30,500	\$18,571
Other	\$300	\$47,022	\$13,400	\$25,535	\$9,180	\$10,669	\$10,000	\$2,600
<b>Taxation Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,079,597</b>	<b>\$1,103,559</b>	<b>\$1,106,072</b>	<b>\$1,105,090</b>	<b>\$1,160,088</b>	<b>\$1,174,694</b>	<b>\$1,221,648</b>	<b>\$1,245,838</b>
<b>Non-Taxation Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,211,490</b>	<b>\$2,512,219</b>	<b>\$777,184</b>	<b>\$774,059</b>	<b>\$947,610</b>	<b>\$1,301,154</b>	<b>\$680,294</b>	<b>\$1,203,268</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$2,291,087</b>	<b>\$3,615,778</b>	<b>\$1,883,256</b>	<b>\$1,879,149</b>	<b>\$2,107,698</b>	<b>\$2,475,848</b>	<b>\$1,901,942</b>	<b>\$2,449,106</b>

*Table 2 - Revenue by Source (%)*

Revenue	2015		2016		2017		2018	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
<b>Taxation Revenue</b>	47%	31%	59%	59%	55%	47%	64%	51%
<b>Non-Taxation Revenue</b>	53%	69%	41%	41%	45%	53%	36%	49%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In 2020 the Township's Budget contained \$1,398,230 in revenue through the levy – a 26% increase from 2015 (\$1,079,598). Total budgeted revenue grew from \$2,291,087 in 2015 to \$2,411,450 in 2020, a 5% increase. Residential tax rate has increased from 0.875823% to 0.883926%, a 1% increase. However, in 2016 the tax rate dropped, to 0.82414%, before rising each year after. Compared to the 2016 tax rate, the 2020 rate is 7% higher.

### ***Budget Accounts / Departments***

In 2019 the Township had an operating budget of \$1,482,327. This represents a 9% or \$121,496 increase from five years prior (2015 Budget). Actual operating expenses have increased 12%, to \$1,416,212 (4% less than budget) in 2019 from \$1,265,865 (7% less than budget) in 2015.

Table 1 and Table 2 highlight 2015 to 2019 Budgeted and Actual changes by Township Account Category.

*Table 3 - 2015 to 2019 Operating Budget*

Account Category (Department)	2015 Budget	2019 Budget	\$ Change 2015- 2019	% Change 2015- 2019
General Government	\$379,025	\$377,700	-\$1,325	0%
Protection to Persons and Property	\$279,612	\$404,922	\$125,310	45%
Transportation	\$216,600	\$180,640	-\$35,960	-17%
Environment	\$60,000	\$82,528	\$22,528	38%
Health	\$37,080	\$42,472	\$5,392	15%
Social/Family	\$295,114	\$315,221	\$20,107	7%
Recreation/Culture	\$85,900	\$70,095	-\$15,805	-18%
Planning	\$7,500	\$8,750	\$1,250	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,360,831</b>	<b>\$1,482,327</b>	<b>\$121,496</b>	<b>9%</b>

*Table 4 - 2015 to 2019 Operating Actuals*

Account Category	2015 Actual	2019 Actual	\$ Change 2015- 2019	% Change 2015- 2019
General Government	\$373,615	\$316,968	-\$56,647	-15%

<b>Protection to Persons and Property</b>	\$263,795	\$407,548	\$143,753	54%
<b>Transportation</b>	\$157,281	\$185,278	\$27,996	18%
<b>Environment</b>	\$52,630	\$80,700	\$28,070	53%
<b>Health</b>	\$35,612	\$38,253	\$2,640	7%
<b>Social/Family</b>	\$295,110	\$315,221	\$20,111	7%
<b>Recreation/Culture</b>	\$78,993	\$68,570	-\$10,423	-13%
<b>Planning</b>	\$8,829	\$3,702	-\$5,127	-58%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,265,865</b>	<b>\$1,416,212</b>	<b>\$150,347</b>	<b>12%</b>

General Government, Protection to Persons and Property, and Social Family together represent approximately 70% of the Township's Budget (and Actual) non-capital spending. As the largest categories, these areas of the Township's budget are the logical starting point for more detailed review and analysis.

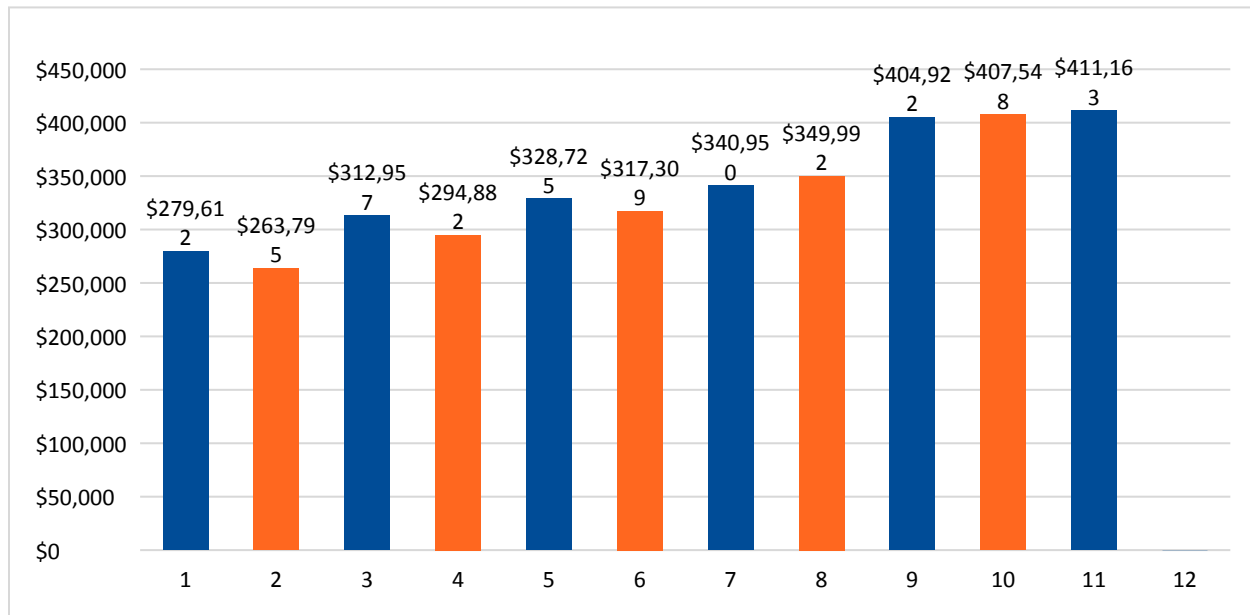
#### ***Protection to Persons and Property***

The Protection to Persons and Property (PPP) Category has grown to the largest non-capital expense category in the Township's budget (27% of the Township's operational Budget and 29% of Actual).

In 2015, PPP Budget and Actual were less than General Government and Social/Family. However, over the past five years, Budget and Actual have increased. The 2019 Budget for PPP is 45% (\$125k) higher than in 2015, while Actual was 54% (\$143k) higher. This is the largest increase for any expense category in the Township's budget (non-capital).

Annually, the Budget to Actual difference has varied from 6% under budget in 2015 and 2016 (\$15.8k and \$18k) to 3% over budget in 2018 (\$9k).





Policing is the largest expense within the PPP category, and one of the largest non-capital items in the Township's budget. Policing accounts for 50%-60% of PPP expenses, and 11%-15% of the Township's total Operating Budget. 2015 to 2019 Actuals for policing have increased from \$152k to \$216k (increase of \$65k, 43%). The 2020 Budget for Policing is \$217k, a 43% increase from the 2015 budget. It is understood that in May 2020, the Township entered into a new policing agreement with the City of Sault Ste. Marie at \$197k (once HST included), which results in considerably less than the \$217k budgeted for Sault Ste Marie police force in 2020. *At this time, it is not clear if there are additional opportunities to reduce this cost.*

After Policing, Ambulance is the largest PPP budget item. Ambulance expenses have increased by over 80% from 2015 (\$40k) to 2020 (\$74k Budget). *At this time, it is not clear if there are opportunities to reduce this cost.*

Fire Operations are represented by 18 Accounts in PPP. Collectively, these Accounts account for Budgeted expenses of \$50k to \$125k and actuals of \$41.5k to \$91.6k. The 2019 Fire Budget was a \$65k (110%) increase from 2015, while Actuals increased by \$44k (93%).

Fire Honorariums and Training were the line items within the Fire Department with significant increases. These were also the two largest Fire Department budget items in 2019.

Discussions with the Township's Fire Chief provided insights into these costs. Honorariums for firefighters were described as very low around the 2015 period – roughly \$6,000 across the department. While many part-time volunteer fire fighters are involved with the department to support their local community, it is difficult to maintain an adequate firefighter response when responding to calls results in lost income from the full-time employment of the volunteers. The Fire Chief noted incidents of low firefighter responses to incidents, and the risks this results in to the community and fire fighters themselves. Consequently, there has been a deliberate

emphasis on increasing honorariums for the fire department. The 2019 honorariums included \$16,000 for volunteer fire fighters, \$22,500 salary for the Fire Chief, and a \$4,000 bonus for the fire chief.

For 2019, \$30,000 was budgeted for Training, with only \$8,301 spent (Actual).

The Fire Chief noted that the \$30,000 Budget was an estimate made by Council prior to the Chief's hiring mid-way through the year. By the time the Fire Chief was in place, there was not enough time in the year to schedule and complete additional training. The emphasis on training is also a response to the forthcoming Ontario requirement (date still to be confirmed) that volunteer fire fighters be training to required NFPA level and that all fire fighters have DZ divers licence, ensuring that fire apparatus can respond to all calls.

The need to replace old equipment was identified as an upcoming requirement for the Fire Department. Hoses and firefighter Bunker Gear were specifically identified as being in need of replacement, with 50% of personal protective equipment out of date.

The need to replace a significant amount of equipment in a single year appears to be symptomatic of limited multi-year planning or reserve allocation. The purchase of the new Pumper Tanker in 2019 was identified as another example of this, as the purchase was not made through reserve funds.

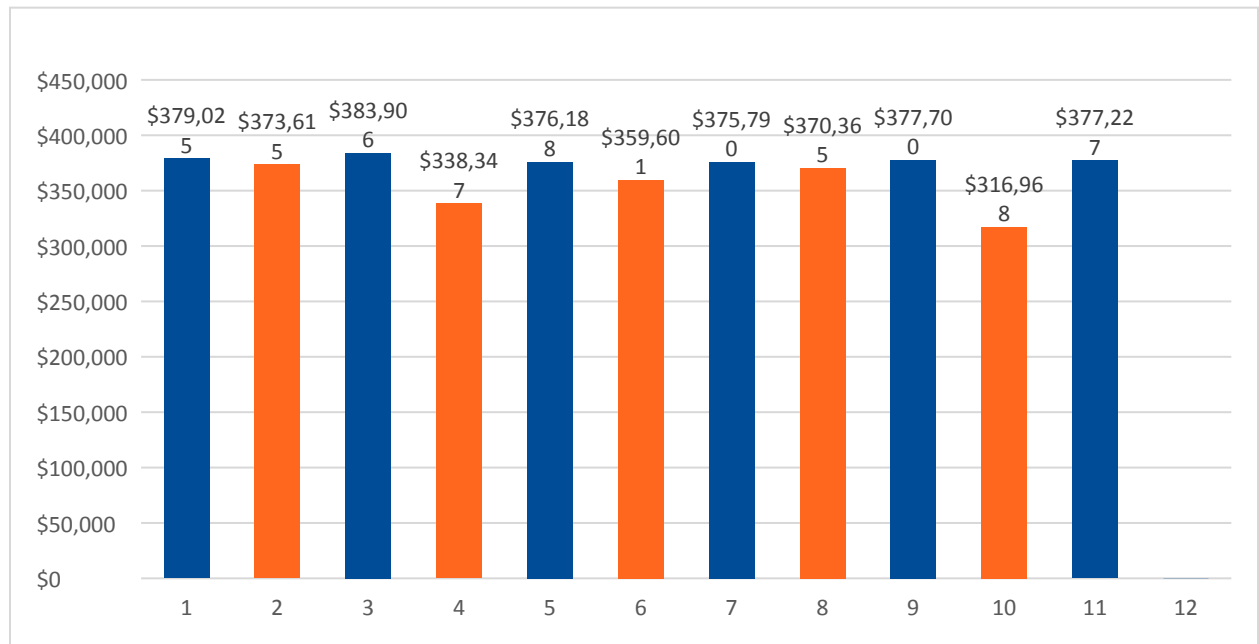
Moving forward, the Township should develop multi-year budget estimates or forecasts for the Fire Department. This should consider the Fire Department's equipment, vehicles, training, and other requirements. Replacement of equipment should be considered over multi-year periods to avoid budget spikes and mitigate risks associated with replacing aging equipment.

Cost savings in recent years appear to include \$1,400 saving by removal of the Fire Department phone line. With the purchase of the New Pumper Tanker, repair costs during the warranty period are expected to be minimal. The Fire Department has also been able to downsize from three to two trucks due to the capabilities of the new Pumper Tanker.

The Township currently pays the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry \$9,657 annually (2020) for fire protection associated with forested areas of the Township. This cost has increased annually since 2015 (\$7,323). With the recent investments made in the Fire Department, there is an opportunity to take over fire protection responsibilities of some of these areas, without additional investment required. Further investigations should be had with MNR to review this opportunity and determine the amount paid to MNR can be reduced.

### General Government

General Government Budget has varied from 25% to 28% of operating budget total. Proportion of Actuals has varied from 25-30%. Budget values have varied from \$377k to \$384k, with Actuals ranging from \$316k to \$373k.



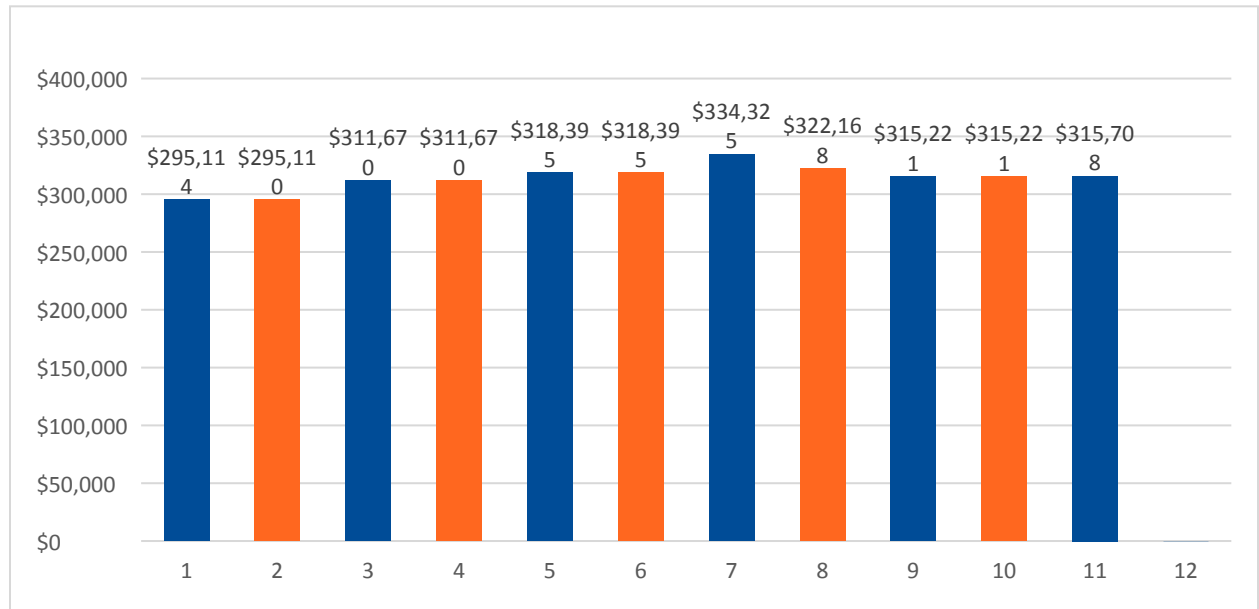
Administrator Wages represents 40%-50% of the General Government category; and 10%-12% of the Township's Operating Budget/Actuals. From 2015-2019 Administrator Wages Budget has increased from \$153k to \$162K (\$9.6k, 6%); Actuals have increased from \$151k to \$154k (\$2,000, 1%)

The next largest item is Insurance at 9%-10% of Budget/Actual for General Government (approximately 2% of the Township's total operating budget). From 2015-2019, Insurance Costs increased from \$33.8k to \$34k (2% increase). However, Budgeted costs for 2020 are \$40.6k – a \$6.6k (20%) increase.

Council Wages represent approximately 7% of General Government expenses and have remained consistent since 2015 (small decrease from \$27.7k to \$26.5k).

### ***Social and Family***

The Social and Family category is made up of three accounts: Welfare, Child Care – DSSAB, and Social Housing



Social Housing represents 60% (in 2015) to 70% (in 2019) of Social/Family spending. Social Housing 2019 Budget and Actual spending has increased 23% (\$40k) since 2015. The 2020 Social Housing budget is 20% higher than in 2015. However, this is a 2% (\$4.2k) reduction in the budget from 2019, and less than the 2019 actuals. This budget decrease is the only annual decrease in the Social Housing budget for the years under review.

Welfare has decreased from 31% of the Social/Family budget and actual in 2015 to 21% in 2019. This is a \$22.5k (25%) decrease for this account.

For the years reviewed, there is consistently a significant difference between the figures presented in the Township's budget and those in the Audited Statement for the Social and Family account category.

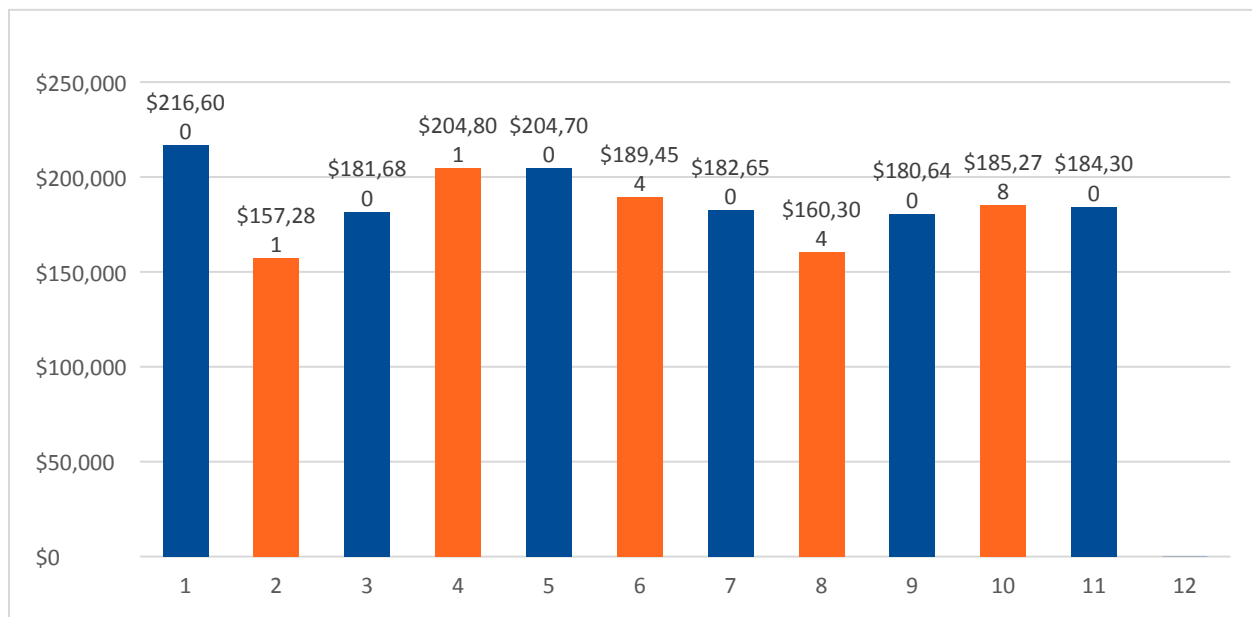
In both 2015 and 2016, the Budgeted value in the Audited Statement is approximately \$240k-250k (80%) higher than the budgeted value in the Township's budget. The Actuals in the Audited Statement are also approximately \$240k-250k (80%) higher than the actual values presented in the Township's budget.

	Budget Documents		Audited Statements	
	Budgeted Value	Actual Value	Budgeted Value	Actual Value
<b>Social/Family – 2015</b>	\$295,114	\$295,110	\$535,114	\$533,830
<b>Social/Family – 2016</b>	\$311,670	\$311,670	\$561,720	\$566,396

In 2017 and 2018, the Budgeted values in both the Budget document and the Audited Statements are identical, however the Actuals in the Audited Statement are 80% (\$257k) higher in 2017 and 120% (\$384k) higher in 2018.

### Transportation

Transportation has varied from 12% to 16% of operating budget total. Proportion of Actuals has varied from 11% to 15%. Budget values have ranged annually from \$216.6k in 2015 to a low of \$180.6 in 2019. Actuals have varied from \$157.28k to \$204.8k.



Annually, the Budget to Actual difference has varied from 27% under budget in 2015 (\$59.3k) to 13% over budget in 2016 (\$23.1k).

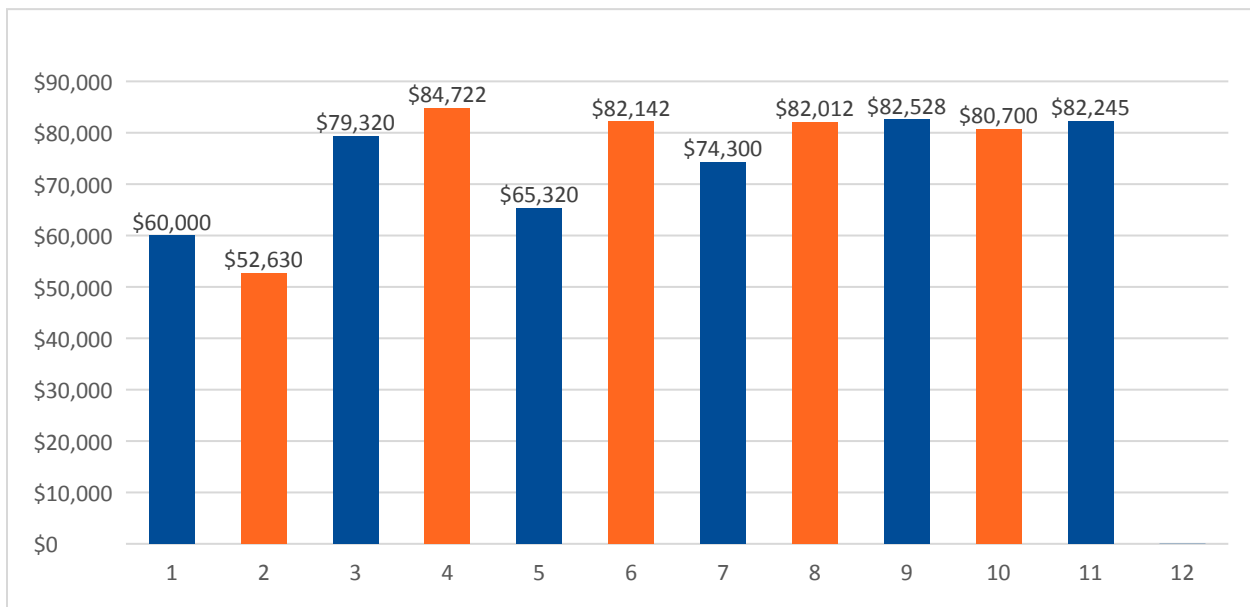
From 2015 to 2020, Transportation budget has averaged ~\$190k, with average Actuals of ~\$179k.

The 2020 Budget for Transportation is 15% (\$32.3k) lower than in 2015. The 2015 Budgeted expenses appear to be an outlier compared to 2016-2020, and may have been driven by budgeted expenses for:

- Bridges & Culverts – Machinery 2015 Budget of \$12k compared to an average budget of \$1.4k 2016-2020
- Snowplowing – Machinery and Sanding – Machinery both had 2015 Budgets of \$20k with actuals of just \$10.1k and \$12.5k.

### **Environment**

On a percentage basis, the Environment Account Category has experienced the second highest spending growth. Budget and Actuals have grown by roughly 40% since 2015. The account category has increased from 4%-6% of operating budget.



The Environment category of the Township's budget contains five active accounts. Four of these accounts have decreased in budget and actuals since 2015, with Recycling increasing considerably (although Recycling – truck expenses has decreased).

In 2015, Recycling represented 18% of the Environment budget and 17% of actual spend. By 2019, this had increased to 53% of budget and 62% of actual. This is a \$32.9k increase (300%) to the budgeted value and \$41.2k (465%) increase to actuals. The 2020 budget for Recycling (\$50k) represents another 14% increase. Stakeholder consultations noted that recycling services are provided in partnership with the City of Sault Ste. Marie that these costs were driven by decisions regarding the City's recycling vendor. It is also assumed that this increase in costs is impacted by changes in the global recycling market.

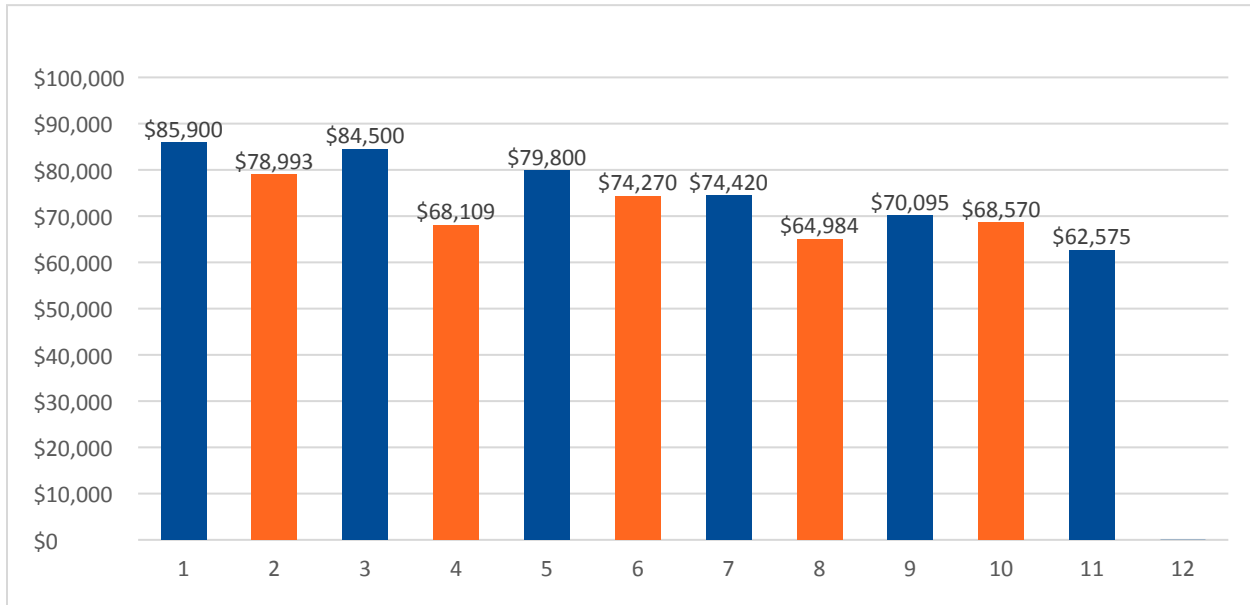
Garbage collection budget and actuals have varied between \$19k-23k, with the exception of a \$15k budget in 2018 (with actuals considerably higher at \$23k)

Some of the Recycling cost increases have been offset by a decrease in Road Super Wages of approximately \$10,000 since 2015 (73%).

	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	2015 - Budget	2015 - Actual	2016 - Budget	2016 - Actual	2017 - Budget	2017 - Actual	2018 - Budget	2018 - Actual	2019 - Budget	2019 - Actual	2020 - Budget	2020 - Actual
Environment												
<b>Road Super Wages</b>	\$13,500	\$7,622	\$3,420	\$12,079	\$3,420	\$6,482	\$5,200	\$5,126	\$3,570	\$3,273	\$3,645	\$-
<b>Garbage Collection</b>	\$21,000	\$23,130	\$23,500	\$23,057	\$23,500	\$23,081	\$15,000	\$23,057	\$23,100	\$18,983	\$20,000	\$-
<b>Recycling</b>	\$11,000	\$8,869	\$39,800	\$36,634	\$25,000	\$41,047	\$41,500	\$41,737	\$43,858	\$50,141	\$50,000	\$-
<b>Recycling - Truck Expenses</b>	\$2,500	\$1,530	\$600	\$469	\$400	\$-	\$600	\$600	\$500	\$-	\$100	\$-
<b>Garbage Disposal</b>	\$12,000	\$11,480	\$12,000	\$12,483	\$13,000	\$11,532	\$12,000	\$11,492	\$11,500	\$8,302	\$8,500	\$-
<b>Environment Total</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$52,630</b>	<b>\$79,320</b>	<b>\$84,722</b>	<b>\$65,320</b>	<b>\$82,142</b>	<b>\$74,300</b>	<b>\$82,012</b>	<b>\$82,528</b>	<b>\$80,700</b>	<b>\$82,245</b>	<b>\$-</b>

### Recreation and Culture

Social/Family represents 5%-6% of the Township's total operating budget and actuals. Budget values have ranged annually from \$62.6k to \$85.9k with actuals have varied from \$65k to \$79k.



The Recreation and Culture budget has decreased by over \$20k since 2015. This appears to be largely due to the elimination of Day Camp Expense and a considerable reduction in Hall Fuel costs. An increase in Road Super Wages offsets some of this decrease.

The Community Centre represents the largest budget item for Recreation and Culture at 20%-30% of Budget and Actuals.<sup>7</sup> Between 2015 and 2019, the Community Centre Actuals have decreased 13% (\$2.8k), however the 2020 budget represents a 12% increase (\$2k) from the 2015 budget

In 2015, Hall Fuel was 20% of the Recreation and Culture Budget (\$16.8k). This has decreased by 79% (\$13,250) to \$3.5k in the 2020 Budget. The 2019 Actual was \$7.9k lower (58%) than the 2015 Actual.

<sup>7</sup> Account number 01-36-360500. Budget and actuals are higher when Fuel, Light and Power, and Ploughing are included.



When all community centre/hall expenses are combined, the total ranges from \$40k in 2015 to \$30k in 2019. While the costs have decreased by 25% over the past five years, these considerable costs still far exceed the community hall revenues of \$1 to \$5k per year.

*Table 5 - Community Hall Expenses*

		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
		Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
<b>Revenue</b>						
01-00-190130	Gen. Gov. - Rent - Community Hall	\$1,055	\$3,195	\$2,232	\$2,832	\$4,734
<b>Revenue Total</b>		<b>\$1,055</b>	<b>\$3,195</b>	<b>\$2,232</b>	<b>\$2,832</b>	<b>\$4,734</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
01-36-360500	Community Centre	\$21,344	\$20,106	\$14,895	\$14,399	\$18,561
01-36-360520	Hall Fuel	\$11,167	\$5,990	\$9,682	\$9,088	\$3,236
01-36-360530	Hall - Light & Power	\$5,729	\$6,433	\$6,332	\$5,663	\$5,970
01-36-360540	Hall - Ploughing	\$2,125	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
<b>Expenses Total</b>		<b>\$40,364</b>	<b>\$35,529</b>	<b>\$33,908</b>	<b>\$32,150</b>	<b>\$30,767</b>
<b>Net</b>		<b>-\$39,309</b>	<b>-\$32,334</b>	<b>-\$31,676</b>	<b>-\$29,318</b>	<b>-\$26,033</b>

It is understood that the Community Hall is located within the municipal building (the former gymnasium space). Consequently, it represents the overhead/costs of the 'Community Hall' portion of the municipal building are not directly related to it's utilization – may of its costs are fixed and correspond to the generate operations of the facilities. Therefore, it is unlikely that a decision to stop renting this space would result in any substantial savings. Nor is it reasonable to assume that the revenue from rentals will offset total expenses for the municipal building.

Moving forward, the Township may wish better understand any variable costs associated with renting the community hall; and the ability to increase rental costs and/or increase rental utilization to ensure revenue is maximized and any variable expenses minimized.

Road Super Wages did not appear as a Recreation and Culture account until 2017, when Actuals were \$9.9k against a \$0 budget. Since then budget and actuals have been approximately \$8k-\$9k.

In 2015 the Recreation and Culture budget included a Day Camp Expense item (\$15k budget; \$13.5k actual). This item does not appear to have continued past 2015.

Of interest is the Parks budget, which varied considerably between 2015 and 2019. Budgets have varied from \$1k to 20k, with budget and actual figures showing considerable variation:

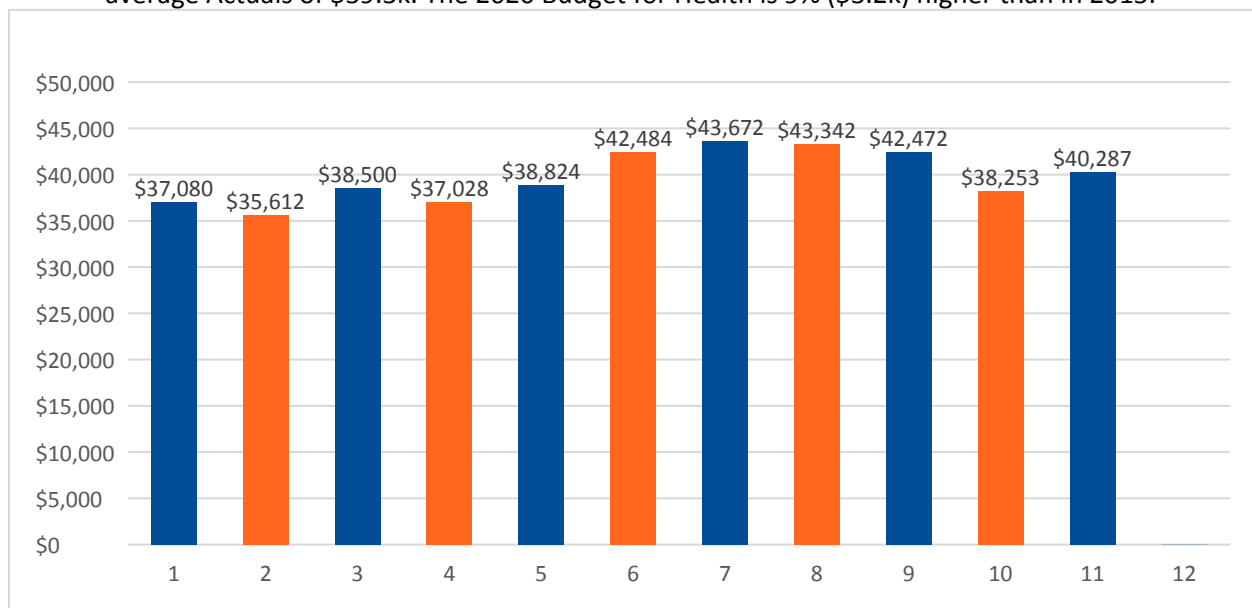
	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	2015 - Budget	2015 - Actual	2016 - Budget	2016 - Actual	2017 - Budget	2017 - Actual	2018 - Budget	2018 - Actual	2019 - Budget	2019 - Actual	2020 - Budget	2020 - Actual
Recreation/Culture												
<b>Parks</b>	\$1,000	\$3,128	\$20,000	\$10,720	\$15,000	\$12,672	\$10,000	\$1,461	\$9,000	\$679	\$1,000	\$-

Budget to actual spending has varied by as much as 200%+ over budget (\$2.1k) to 92% (8.3k) under budget.

### Health

Health represents approximately 3% of the Township's total operating budget and actuals. Budget values have ranged annually from \$37k to \$43.7k. Actuals have varied from \$35.6k to \$43.3k

Annually, the Budget to Actual difference has varied from 10% under budget in 2019 (\$4.2k) to 9% over budget in 2017 (\$3.7k). From 2015 to 2019, Health budget has averaged \$40.1k, with average Actuals of \$39.3k. The 2020 Budget for Health is 9% (\$3.2k) higher than in 2015.



The Algoma Health Unit represents 80%-90% of Health Spending. 2019 Actual spending has increased 8% (\$2.6k) since 2015. The 2020 Algoma Health Unit budget is 16% higher than in 2015, and 8% higher than in 2019.

Cemetery actuals have decreased 81% (\$1.7k) since 2015, with the 2020 budget 83% lower than the 2015 budget. However, at the same time between 2015-19, Road Super Wages increased:

- 2015 Budget - \$2,500; 2019 Budget - \$6,320 – 153% (\$3,820) increase

– 2015 Actual - \$1,905; 2019 Actual - \$3,716 – 95% (\$1,810) increase

Road Super Wages budget for 2020 is less than half the 2019 budget, and less than the 2019 actual.

	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	2015 - Budget	2015 - Actual	2016 - Budget	2016 - Actual	2017 - Budget	2017 - Actual	2018 - Budget	2018 - Actual	2019 - Budget	2019 - Actual	2020 - Budget	2020 - Actual
Health												
<b>Road Super Wages</b>	\$2,500	\$1,905	\$2,500	\$3,020	\$3,000	\$7,272	\$8,200	\$8,031	\$6,320	\$3,716	\$3,040	\$-
<b>Algoma Health Unit</b>	\$31,580	\$31,580	\$33,000	\$33,000	\$33,824	\$33,897	\$33,972	\$33,972	\$34,652	\$34,140	\$36,747	\$-
<b>Cemetery</b>	\$3,000	\$2,127	\$3,000	\$1,009	\$2,000	\$1,315	\$1,500	\$1,340	\$1,500	\$397	\$500	\$-
<b>Health Total</b>	\$37,080	\$35,612	\$38,500	\$37,028	\$38,824	\$42,484	\$43,672	\$43,342	\$42,472	\$38,253	\$40,287	\$-

Also of note, there is consistently a difference between the figures presented in the Township's budget, and those in the Audited Statement for the Health account category.

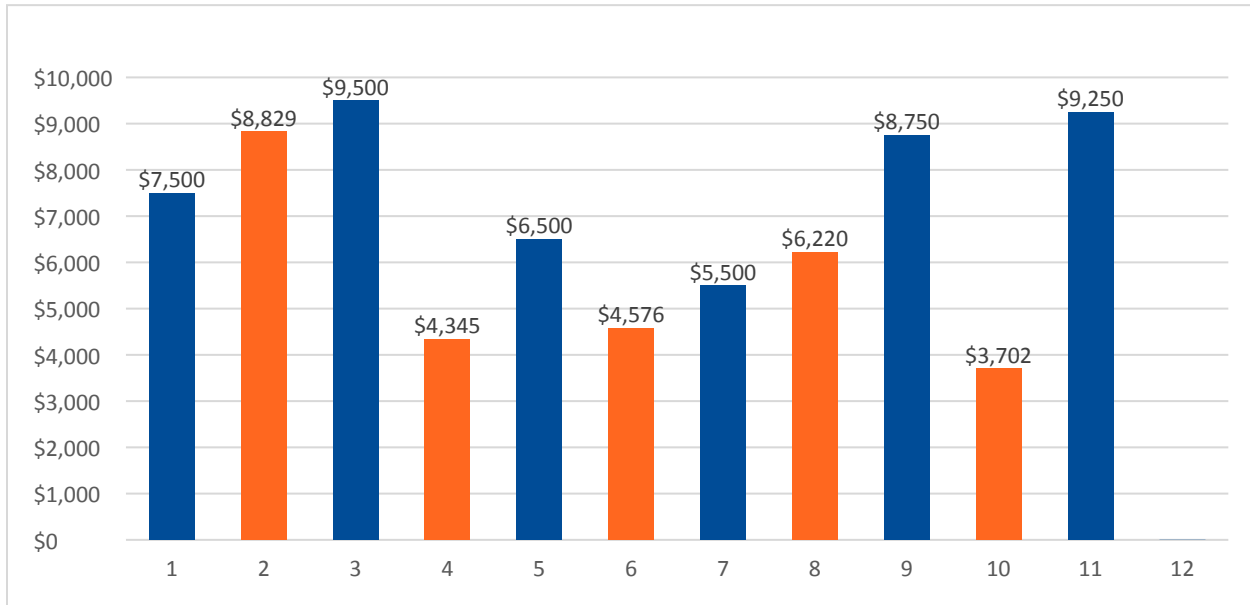
The budgeted values contained in the Audited Statement are 100%-150% (\$40k-60k) higher than the budgeted values in the budget document. Actuals in the Audited statements are consistently higher by a similar percentage. The Health Unit line item in the Township Budget document is aligned to the FIR submission for the years under review

	Budget Documents		Audited Statements	
	Budgeted Value	Actual Value	Budgeted Value	Actual Value
<b>Health – 2015</b>	\$37,080	\$35,612	\$77,264	\$76,232
<b>Health – 2016</b>	\$38,500	\$37,028	\$89,498	\$88,519
<b>Health – 2017</b>	\$38,824	\$42,484	\$96,038	\$100,787
<b>Health - 2018</b>	\$43,672	\$43,342	\$103,672	\$110,499

Through discussions with the CAO this difference was determined to be a result of "Ambulance" costs being considered part of the "Protection to Persons and Property" category in Budget Documents, but part of "Health" for Audited Statements. Moving forward, the Township should align how ambulance costs are accounted for in these two documents.

### **Planning**

Planning is the smallest Account Category in the Township’s operating budget, representing approximately 1% of spending.



Planning costs appear to be driven primarily Planning Consultant and Planning – Administrator (GIS and City-wide) costs.

### **Capital Budget, Asset Management Planning, and Reserve Funding**

The Township has a 10-year Asset Management Plan and Roads Improvement Plan (2014-2023). The Asset Management Plan referenced that the document was to be considered a “living document”, to be updated “as asset conditions change and priority’s shift”.<sup>8</sup> It is not clear that the Roads Improvement Plan document has been updated to reflect changing priorities. In most cases, capital spending identified in the Township’s budget is not aligned to the Asset Management Plan / Roads Improvement Plan – both for projects identified, and their budgeted values. The Township had a 2016 Asset Management Plan developed that provided recommendations to develop condition assessment programs for various capital assets, short- and long-term maintenance and capital budgets, and planning to determine long-term reserve balances, among other recommendations. The 2016 Asset Management Plan identified an annual investment requirement of \$231k for the infrastructure portfolio. The Asset Management Plan noted an annual \$54,000 gap in funding to sustain existing assets – equivalent to a 4.8% tax increase. While the Township has budgeted for provisions, they have not been fully aligned to the AMP.

<sup>8</sup> Township of Prince. (2014) “Asset Management Plan 2014-2023”.

The Township budgets provisions for specific purposes. Between 2015 to 2019, this included provisions for:

- Recreation (2015-2017)
- Roads
- Fire
- Capital Asset Replacement

In 2020, provisions for Working Funds, and COVID-19 were added.

Provisions for Specific Purposes	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	2015 - Budget	2015 - Actual	2016 - Budget	2016 - Actual	2017 - Budget	2017 - Actual	2018 - Budget	2018 - Actual	2019 - Budget	2019 - Actual	2020 - Budget	2020 - Actual
<b>Provision for Working Funds</b>	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$4,213	\$-
<b>Provisions for Recreation</b>	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
<b>Provisions for Roads</b>	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$-	\$-	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$-
<b>Provisions for Fire</b>	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$-
<b>Provision for Capital Asset Replacement</b>	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$215,673	\$215,673	\$119,431	\$-
<b>Contingency for Covid</b>	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$59,600	\$-

From 2015 to 2017, \$85k was allocated to Capital Asset Replacement. This decreased to \$5k for 2018, before rising to \$215k in 2019 and \$119k for 2020. This does not appear to be aligned to the 2016 Asset Management Plan recommendations.

## 4.0 Jurisdictional Scan

Jurisdictional Scan can be used to provide additional context and insights into the analysis of a specific organization. For this engagement, desk research has been conducted into the budgets (Financial Information Returns) of peer municipalities to compare significant/similar line items. The objective is to identify if any line items vary significantly from peer jurisdictions. Through discussions with the CAO, it was agreed that comparator municipalities should be Ontario-based, preferably within the Algoma District, and of a similar budget and size. This will provide a comparison that most closely represents a similar operating environment to the Township. Initial discussions and research have identified the following a potential jurisdictional targets:

- Johnson Township
- Laird Township
- Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional

Ontario's Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing maintains the municipal Financial Information Return (FIR) database. The FIR is a standard document that is completed and submitted by municipalities on an annual basis. While the FIR promotes transparency in financial information and is an accessible database with some standardization, caution should be used when drawing comparisons between municipalities and between years. Differences in accounting practices, service levels and standards, and general size of municipalities makes comparisons imperfect. It should also be noted that the most recent year for which FIR data is available is 2018. Nonetheless, if used at a high-level, FIR information can provide directional insights into expense categories across municipalities.

A number of expense categories that are standardized in the FIR were examined. These included:

- Fire
- Police
- Roads - Paved
- Roads - Unpaved
- Roads - Bridges and Culverts
- Roads - Traffic Operations & Roadside
- Winter Control - Except sidewalks, Parking Lots
- Solid waste collection
- Solid waste disposal
- Waste Diversion
- Ambulance services

To account for differences in overall budget size (specifically expenditures) the above categories were analyzed as a percentage of total expense for the municipality (in addition dollar values), and change in spend from 2015-2018.

Overall, the Township's expenses appear to be inline with its neighbouring municipalities with a few exceptions.

The Township's expenses for Roads – Unpaved and Roads – Bridges and Culverts as a percentage of total expenses is aligned to the expenses of neighbouring municipalities. Winter Control costs for the Township are the lowest among the jurisdictions review – however, the Township also has the least lane KM of roads. The Township does however, appear to spend more on Traffic Operations & Roadside than the neighbouring municipalities. This may be the result of differing methodologies in the allocation transportation related costs.

	Roads - Unpaved									
	2015		2016		2017		2018		2015 - 2018 Change	
	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	\$ Change	% Change
Johnson Township	\$228,165	11%	\$257,480	11%	\$421,432	17%	\$382,063	15%	\$153,898	67%
Laird Township			\$122,871	6%	\$67,646	4%	\$86,148	5%	-\$36,723	-30%
Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional	\$66,489	2%	\$54,108	2%	\$21,484	1%	\$42,463	1%	-\$24,026	-36%
Prince Township	\$23,923	1%	\$27,092	2%	\$27,898	2%	\$31,590	2%	\$7,667	32%

	Roads – Bridges and Culverts									
	2015		2016		2017		2018		2015 - 2018 Change	
	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	\$ Change	% Change
Johnson Township	\$33,139	2%	\$53,384	2%	\$74,049	3%	\$77,111	3%	\$43,972	133%
Laird Township			\$57,543	3%	\$46,276	2%	\$64,152	3%	\$6,609	11%
Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional	\$35,768	1%	\$31,613	1%	\$48,464	1%	\$34,829	1%	-\$939	-3%
Prince Township	\$34,567	2%	\$60,685	4%	\$55,198	3%	\$50,164	3%	\$15,597	45%

	Roads – Traffic Operations & Roadside									
	2015		2016		2017		2018		2015 - 2018 Change	
	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	\$ Change	% Change
Johnson Township	\$7,742	0%	\$68,889	3%	\$88,121	4%	\$46,830	2%	\$39,088	505%
Laird Township			\$24,485	1%	\$28,522	2%	\$23,600	1%	-\$885	-4%
Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional	\$40,502	1%	\$29,060	1%	\$30,671	1%	\$30,064	1%	-\$10,438	-26%
Prince Township	\$12,052	1%	\$101,715	6%	\$91,922	5%	\$73,912	4%	\$61,860	513%

	Winter Control – Except sidewalks, parking lots									
	2015		2016		2017		2018		2015 - 2018 Change	
	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	\$ Change	% Change
Johnson Township	\$82,470	4%	\$101,570	4%	\$163,723	7%	\$153,414	6%	\$70,944	86%
Laird Township			\$14,223	1%	\$81,147	4%	\$82,491	4%	\$68,268	480%
Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional	\$49,491	1%	\$37,306	1%	\$56,203	2%	\$60,340	2%	\$10,849	22%
Prince Township	\$32,025	2%	\$46,999	3%	\$55,369	3%	\$53,472	3%	\$21,447	67%

	Fire									
	2015		2016		2017		2018		2015 - 2018 Change	
	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	\$ Change	% Change
Johnson Township	\$95,964	5%	\$85,832	4%	\$105,079	4%	\$94,189	4%	-\$1,775	-2%
Laird Township			\$59,155	3%	\$54,200	3%	\$61,700	3%	\$2,545	4%
Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional	\$115,304	3%	\$123,168	4%	\$138,927	4%	\$139,371	4%	\$24,067	21%
Prince Township	\$72,522	5%	\$71,891	4%	\$74,877	4%	\$78,388	4%	\$5,866	8%

	Police									
	2015		2016		2017		2018		2015 - 2018 Change	
	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	\$ Change	% Change
Johnson Township	\$121,571	6%	\$153,493	7%	\$162,335	7%	\$162,116	6%	\$40,545	33%
Laird Township			\$171,638	9%	\$180,331	10%	\$163,219	9%	-\$8,419	-5%
Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional	\$215,975	6%	\$242,700	8%	\$241,262	7%	\$236,202	7%	\$20,227	9%
Prince Township	\$151,605	9%	\$166,765	10%	\$183,267	10%	\$201,661	10%	\$50,056	33%



	Ambulance									
	2015		2016		2017		2018		2015 - 2018 Change	
	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	Expense	% of Expenses	\$ Change	% Change
Johnson Township	\$5,500	0%	\$3,000	0%	\$5,502	0%	\$6,500	0%	\$1,000	18%
Laird Township			\$-	0%	\$-	0%	\$-	0%	\$-	-
Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional	\$-	0%	\$-	0%	\$-	0%	\$-	0%	\$-	-
Prince Township	\$40,296	3%	\$50,998	3%	\$57,214	3%	\$71,351	4%	\$31,055	77%

Policing costs appeared higher (as a percentage of total expenses) than Johnson Township and Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional. However, this data does not account for the new (2020) contract with Sault Ste. Marie police which appears to have lowered these costs for the Township. Ambulance costs for the Township are considerably higher than its neighbouring municipalities.