



Meeting Date: January 29, 2025

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Report No: CPS-03-2025

Subject: Middlesex Centre Website and Social Media Overview, 2024

Recommendation:

THAT Report CPS-03-2025, re: Middlesex Centre Website and Social Media Overview, 2024 be received for information.

Purpose:

To provide Council with an overview of the use of the municipal website and engagement through municipal social media channels in 2024.

Background:

Virtual / online communications through the municipal website, social media channels, and e-newsletter are key elements of our communications with residents, businesses, and various stakeholders.

The attached infographic presents a quick overview of the municipality's online presence in 2024.

- In 2024, the municipal website saw 133,500 visitors, who viewed 413,400 pages on the site.
- The top viewed pages on the website, aside from the homepage, were:
 - Recreational Skating
 - Komoka Wellness Centre
 - Book a Facility
 - Waste & Recycling
 - Recreation Programs

The employment/careers, building permits, contact us (staff directory), council meetings, Glendon Drive Improvements, billing/payment, public notices and news pages were also popular.

- Engagement through social media – Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter), and LinkedIn – continued to expand, with the number of followers on each platform increasing year over year except for on X, which saw a slight decline. Middlesex Centre shares information on municipal programs and services regularly, as well as relevant content from other agencies, levels of government, etc. Some of the most popular posts across all the platforms were related to fire and emergency services, municipal and community successes (fundraising efforts, local businesses / people), and service notifications such as road closures.
- The municipality's YouTube channel continued to see growth both in posted content (new videos) and in terms of subscribers. All council meetings were live streamed in 2024. Depending on the topics being discussed, it is not unusual for council meetings to have 60 to 115 views, with some meetings seeing much higher numbers.
- Subscribers to the monthly e-newsletter grew throughout 2024, with 2,392 subscribers at the end of the year. Staff encourage new subscribers by offering residents the opportunity to sign-up for the e-newsletter when changing billing, moving, attending an online meeting, etc., as well as advertising the e-newsletter on social media each month.

It should be noted that while a key component of our communications with the community, our online presence exists alongside with more traditional outreach, including media releases, a monthly "Middlesex Centre Municipal Minute" page in the Middlesex Banner newspaper, a monthly Middlesex Centre page in both the Ilderton Villager and the Komoka-Kilworth-Delaware Villager, inserts into tax and utility bills, and signage, to name a few.

Analysis:

The municipal website, social media channels, and e-newsletter continue to be effective tools for sharing information about municipal news, services, and facilities.

The website:

- provides a 24/7 "central hub" of information on municipal news, notices, services and facilities;
- allows residents and businesses to access services including billing changes, dog tags, fire inspection, and by-law enforcement; to submit applications for volunteer opportunities; and to provide general feedback by-way of online forms that link directly to staff. The flexibility of the website provides staff the opportunity to respond quickly to provide additional service. For instance, in late

2024 we created a “request your bill balance” form in response to the postal strike that was well received by residents;

- serves as a launching pad for residents, businesses and various stakeholders looking to access third party sites such as Citywide (reporting concerns with parks, roads, facilities, etc.), Cloudpermit (building and planning permits), Univerus (recreation program registration), and Escribe (council meeting management); and
- acts as a repository for forms, reports, and documents of interest to residents and businesses.

Social Media:

- provides a means for the municipality to instantly share news and updates with residents, businesses, and various stakeholders;
- supports increased access to open and transparent government decision-making, such as live streaming of council meetings and online public engagement sessions; and
- provides insights into the sentiment of the community on topical issues.

E-Newsletter:

- provides monthly digest-style updates and reaches residents that might not engage on social media.

Financial Implications:

None. Costs associated with the website and social media outreach are included in the annual budget process.

Strategic Plan:

This matter aligns with following strategic priorities:

- Responsive Municipal Government

Use of the website and social media respond directly to Objective 5.1 – Enhance Customer Service by expanding our digital services. Further, use of the website and social media respond to Objective 5.3 – Foster a culture of innovation, continuous improvement, and cost-effective services by sharing information and gathering input.

Attachments:

Middlesex Centre Online, 2024 (Summary)