

CK Local

Ward Representation Community Access and Local Improvement Strategy

Draft 2 | October 2026

Revised from the October 2026 first draft for public and Council consideration

Shared capacity. Local authority.

Amalgamation brought our municipal governments together. CK Local would bring municipal government closer to our communities.

CK Local proposes a practical network of scheduled councillor office hours, coordinated constituent service and public follow-up across Chatham-Kent. Its first decision is whether existing facilities, personnel and service-request systems can support a limited pilot at a verified, affordable incremental cost. The preferred approach reforms existing restricted ward funding and considers a supplementary Ward Community Improvement Fund only after operational review, sustainable financing and separate Council approval.

This is a policy proposal, not an adopted municipal program. It does not establish a new level of government, authorize spending or assign councillors management powers. Dollar amounts are Canadian dollars. Draft 1 research has been retained where accurate and supplemented by October 13–14, 2026 verification. Evidence limitations are recorded in Section 20.

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1 Executive recommendation

The decision recommended

Chatham-Kent should assess CK Local as a phased governance initiative with three pillars: scheduled access to elected ward representatives; coordinated service intake and accountability; and, only later if justified, local improvement funding. The immediate recommendation is an internal feasibility assessment followed by a separate decision on a limited pilot. Municipal administration should remain integrated.

“Shared capacity. Local authority.” means residents can shape ward priorities and hold their representatives accountable while Council exercises municipal authority through lawful decisions. It does not mean a ward or an individual councillor acquires independent taxing, staffing, contracting or operational powers. Local representation should improve the route into municipal government, while professional administration continues to manage services across the municipality.

The municipality confirms eight wards, fourteen councillors and one mayor for the 2026 election. This gives CK Local a verified geographic framework, but it does not establish demand for eight permanent offices. [1] A scheduled presence in each ward is the proposed eventual service standard. The room, frequency and support arrangement should reflect evidence about local access needs and available capacity.

Reconnect communities within the unified municipality

CK Local is not a proposal to reverse amalgamation. It is a proposal to reconnect the municipality with its constituent communities. Its public-facing argument is: “Amalgamation brought our municipal governments together. CK Local would bring municipal government closer to our communities.” The institutional design is centralized administration with decentralized representation.

The three pillars remain accessible ward representation, coordinated constituent services and responsible, phased community improvement funding. The third pillar should begin with reform of the existing Councillor Ward Funding Program within its lawful uses. Funding Option C in Section 8 is recommended: improve that program's transparency and fairness while testing access and service coordination, then consider supplementary investment only if a demonstrated gap and a sustainable source justify it. Existing grant administration and reporting must continue during the access pilot.

Draft 2 retains the twenty-section framework and the operational and financial comparisons of Draft 1. It adds amalgamation history, the bounded alderman-style comparison, community identity and reconciliation with later funding-policy records. The supplementary fund remains optional; CK Local's access function can proceed without it.

Recommended starting model

Use existing municipal service locations and suitable community rooms to offer predictable councillor appointments and walk-in periods. Share booking, basic intake and follow-up through existing customer-service arrangements where their managers confirm capacity. Route municipal service cases through CK 311 or the responsible departmental system. Publish the access calendar and aggregate results using existing municipal communications channels.

A reasonable design assumption is one two-hour session per ward each month, supplemented by quarterly outreach within each ward. This is a planning schedule, not a commitment or proven demand forecast. The

initial pilot should test a smaller selection of settings, including rural and urban access conditions and at least one multi-councillor ward. All wards should retain ordinary councillor and municipal contact channels throughout the pilot.

The preferred financial comparator is Access Scenario A in Section 14: an illustrative \$31,050 first-year cash requirement and \$13,800 recurring annual cash requirement before subsequent inflation. Those figures assume staff capacity can be reassigned without backfill. They exclude the value of 600 annual staff hours, shown separately as \$39,000 using an assumed hourly rate. Neither facility suitability nor spare staff capacity is confirmed. Council should receive actual costs before a pilot decision.

Decisions reserved for later

Do not establish permanent positions, acquire buildings or lease dedicated offices through the initial resolution. Do not purchase a new constituent-management platform before testing existing systems. Do not activate a \$400,000 improvement fund through approval of ward access. No savings are assumed available to fund either initiative.

If reforms to existing restricted funding leave a justified gap, a separately financed supplementary fund may start below \$50,000 per ward and grow only through annual budget decisions. Before approving it, Council should receive a fiscal assessment, allocation comparison, eligibility policy, lifecycle-cost analysis and explanation of overlap with existing restricted ward funding. If access improvements work but the fund is unaffordable, CK Local should continue as an access and accountability initiative.

2 Amalgamation local representation and the evidence needed

What changed in 1998

Chatham-Kent was formed in 1998 through amalgamation. The municipal Water and Wastewater Master Plan describes the consolidation of 23 municipalities, including the former County of Kent, and the creation of the Chatham-Kent Public Utilities Commission. [39] The Ontario Legislature's record for the Municipality of Chatham-Kent Act, 2002 identifies January 1, 1998 as the restructuring order's effective date. [40] These sources establish the institutional transition; they do not measure its net savings or residents' satisfaction.

Amalgamation consolidated the former municipal governments into a single-tier municipality rather than retaining a separate council for every town and township. Municipal authority now runs through one Council and a common municipal administration, subject to statutory bodies and their own mandates. Residents still live in recognizable communities, but those communities are represented within a municipality-wide governing structure. The historical count should not be converted into a claim that CK Local must recreate 23 councils, offices or administrative teams.

The intended logic of consolidation is to share specialised staff, financial controls and service planning across a larger base, coordinate decisions affecting several communities and avoid repeated administrative structures. These are plausible benefits of integrated administration, not verified amounts available for CK Local. A common procurement process can assemble municipal demand; a common asset plan can compare competing needs; shared engineering and legal services can support communities unable to maintain every specialty independently. Whether a particular centralised arrangement saves money depends on its actual costs and service results.

Local access presents a different question. Consolidation necessarily changed the institutional route through which former local councils made decisions. It did not necessarily eliminate personal contact with elected representatives. A councillor may remain highly accessible by telephone, at events or through appointments. Losing a former municipal council and feeling unheard are related possibilities, but one does not prove the other. No quantified before-and-after study of CK councillor accessibility was established for this revision.

Documented change and perceived distance

The municipality's 2024 ward-review announcement expressly framed effective representation around population, communities of interest and physical geography. [53] This demonstrates that representation has been an official governance concern; it is not an admission that amalgamation failed. The 2026 boundaries update electoral representation, while CK Local proposes practical contact and follow-up arrangements within those boundaries.

Some residents may perceive decisions as geographically distant when they cannot attend central meetings, do not know the responsible department or cannot see how their community's priorities enter a municipal plan. This paper treats those experiences as issues to investigate, not a finding about every smaller settlement. Public perceptions can affect trust even when service decisions are defensible. They should be measured through accessible consultation and compared with records of existing service, rather than repeated as proof of neglect.

Attribution also matters. Population change, downloaded responsibilities, asset age, service standards and technology can change costs and access over decades. A current tax bill or unresolved repair does not establish what amalgamation caused. Nor does the survival of a shared service establish that all promised economies were realised. CK Local does not rely on an unverified historical saving or on a counterfactual claim that separate governments would now be cheaper.

Its proposed response preserves a unified budget, administration and service standards while placing elected contact closer to residents. A rotating appointment can restore a visible relationship without recreating a municipal treasury or department. Where existing contact already works, the model should add only what the evidence supports.

Community identity within one municipality

Community identity matters because residents organise daily life around familiar places, institutions and relationships. CK Local should recognise Wallaceburg, Blenheim, Ridgetown, Dresden, Tilbury, Wheatley, Thamesville and Chatham in calendars and consultation materials, while retaining the eight lawful wards for electoral accountability. An electoral ward containing several communities is not a single homogeneous neighbourhood.

The following examples are consultation questions, not verified service deficiencies or promised projects. In Wallaceburg, ask which local sites and appointment times serve people in the town and surrounding area. In Blenheim and Ridgetown, test whether alternating sessions makes Ward 2 accessible from both centres. In Dresden, assess the usefulness of a predictable appointment location while also testing outreach beyond the town. In Tilbury and Wheatley, compare residents' ability to reach sessions across Ward 1, including alternatives for people without a car. In Thamesville, examine coordination with the existing service desk without assuming its staff can perform new duties. In Chatham, compare neighbourhood access across the three new city wards, including transit, mobility and work schedules. Smaller settlements and rural residents between these centres must also be heard. [1,3]

Identity should inform practical access, naming and consultation; it should not establish a community veto over municipal policy or a guaranteed equal share of expenditure. An urban neighbourhood can face poor access despite being physically close to municipal buildings. A smaller community can receive a responsive service without a permanently staffed office. Staff should examine conditions rather than use a rural-versus-urban assumption as an allocation rule.

Consult through paper, telephone and in-person routes as well as the internet. Include residents beyond established organizations and frequent meeting attendees, and ask younger adults, shift workers and people facing transport or accessibility barriers what would help them participate. Publish participation limits and the resulting changes to the calendar. A ward-priority report should identify community-specific themes without implying each theme has secured municipal funding.

Accessible local relationships can strengthen community identity within one municipality. CK Local therefore proposes neither de-amalgamation nor new local governments, tax authorities, ward cabinets or competing administrative chains. Its test is whether residents gain an understandable route to their elected representatives and the municipality's existing decision process.

Geography creates a reason to investigate

Chatham-Kent's size and dispersed settlements make travel, scheduling and communications relevant to representation. A municipal affidavit describes the municipality as approximately 2,500 square kilometres. [2] This paper uses that rounded description because municipal publications report slightly different area figures. It does not infer a particular travel time or service deficit from area alone.

A resident who works during business hours, lacks a car or needs an accessible meeting space may experience barriers different from those of a resident living near a service centre. Some residents may prefer email or telephone and need no additional in-person service. Others may already receive effective help from their councillors. CK Local should assess these differences before setting an expensive universal staffing model.

Limited hours are observable at some existing locations. The municipality advertises weekly service desks at libraries in Thamesville, Wheatley and Bothwell, alongside weekday CK 311 assistance. [3] Limited opening hours may affect access, but they do not prove that a ward office would solve the problem. Pilot design should consider whether existing service times can be coordinated with councillor visits and whether residents actually use the added availability.

Avoid diagnosing failure without evidence

This research did not establish a current, representative survey measuring councillor accessibility in each of the eight new wards. It also did not establish current ward-level service-request response times, repeat-contact rates or staffing capacity. These are unresolved baseline questions, not evidence of uniform administrative failure. An older municipal annual report records 236,432 customer-service services in 2022, but that measure cannot be treated as unique complaints, present demand or a forecast of CK Local cases. [4]

The feasibility report should distinguish political access, service navigation and underlying service delivery. A resident may receive a prompt explanation while a repair remains subject to an engineering inspection and a capital schedule. Conversely, a completed work order may leave a resident dissatisfied if no explanation was provided. A ward office can improve the contact process without automatically accelerating construction or changing a lawful decision.

Establish a useful baseline

Collect twelve months of available service data where lawful and reliable. Record intake channel, request category, community, responsible department, acknowledgement time, referral outcome and closure reason. Use the new ward boundaries for analysis only where the location can be mapped accurately. Keep an explicit category for unknown location and cases affecting several wards.

Survey residents through online, telephone and paper channels. Ask whether they know their councillors, how they contact municipal services, whether they received follow-up and which meeting times would be useful. Recruit beyond people already attending municipal meetings, including shift workers, renters, seniors, people with disabilities and residents of smaller settlements. Report recruitment method, sample size and limitations; a voluntary survey is not automatically representative.

Compare wards and communities within wards. Identify unmet access needs without ranking councillors by complaint volume. Before launch, record the existing hours, appointment options and service locations so added access can be measured against what residents already receive.

3 The new ward structure

Verified representation for the next term

The municipal election page lists the following eight-ward distribution. The regular term begins November 15, 2026 under section 6 of the Municipal Elections Act. [1,5] Names below follow the current election page. The indexed published text of By-law 29-2025 uses “Wallaceburg and area” for Ward 5, while the election page shortens it to “Wallaceburg”; operational materials should use the Clerk's confirmed naming convention. [6]

Ward	Published election name	Councillors	Municipal description of coverage
1	South West Kent	2	Tilbury, Wheatley and surrounding areas
2	South East Kent	2	Blenheim, Ridgetown and surrounding areas
3	North East Kent	1	Bothwell, Thamesville and surrounding areas
4	North West Kent	1	Dresden, Mitchell's Bay and surrounding areas
5	Wallaceburg	2	Wallaceburg and surrounding areas
6	North West Chatham	2	West of St. Clair Street and north of the Thames River
7	North East Chatham	2	East of St. Clair Street and north of Park Avenue
8	South Chatham	2	South of Park Avenue and along the Thames River corridor

These are official public descriptions, not legal boundary descriptions. The detailed adopted boundary schedule and municipal new-ward mapping govern address assignment. The Clerk should validate every proposed site and community rotation against that mapping before publication. The old municipal Ward Map PDF still encountered in search shows six wards and eighteen seats including the mayor; it must not be used to assign CK Local locations. [7]

How CK Local complements electoral restructuring

Council enacted By-law 29-2025 on March 3, 2025 to redivide wards and change Council composition. The official election page confirms the move from six to eight wards and from eighteen total Council seats to fourteen councillors plus the mayor. [1,42] Electoral restructuring changes who represents a resident; it does not by itself establish where a constituent can meet that representative or how a referral is followed up.

CK Local can supply that operational arrangement without reopening the boundary decision. Map sites and cases to the new wards, notify residents whose ward has changed, and distinguish the new ward name from the familiar community name. Preserve telephone access for people who are unsure of their councillor or cannot travel. The adopted boundary schedule remains authoritative, not the abbreviated descriptions in this paper.

A two-councillor ward has more opportunities to share attendance and political follow-up, but may also create duplicate referrals. A single-councillor ward needs a workable absence and appointment plan. Larger travel areas may need more locations rather than more daily staffing. Set a common minimum opportunity to request a meeting, with frequency and rotations based on barriers and demand. Identical facilities, hours or staffing in every ward would be a weak substitute for equitable access.

Shared arrangements in multi-councillor wards

Six wards elect two councillors; Wards 3 and 4 elect one each. A shared ward calendar and neutral intake arrangement would reduce duplicate referrals. Residents should still be able to choose either councillor, request a private meeting and disagree with one representative without losing access to the other.

Councillors could alternate attendance or hold joint sessions where suitable. If two councillors hear the same municipal concern, staff should link it to one service record rather than create duplicate work orders. Shared administrative information does not require sharing all personal advocacy correspondence. Disclosure rules and the resident's preferences should govern who sees case details.

Resource allocation should follow a published access policy. Councillors must receive the same opportunity to book facilities and obtain approved support regardless of agreement with the mayor or Council majority. Additional hours should respond to documented demand, geographic barriers or accessibility needs, rather than political standing. A single-councillor ward may need more administrative assistance per councillor to deliver the same ward service standard; this is an operational question, not a reason to award personal spending privileges.

No ward cabinet, permanent local executive or separate service authority is proposed. Ward priorities remain recommendations to the municipality. Residents should also remain free to contact councillors outside their ward and use municipality-wide services without obtaining a representative's endorsement.

4 Municipal ward office network

A service presence rather than a building program

A CK Local ward office should initially mean a published session at an approved location, with appointments and a route for follow-up. It need not mean an exclusive room, a reception desk or a permanent daily opening. Neutral signs should show the ward, participating councillors, scheduled hours and telephone booking route. Permanent alterations should wait until evidence justifies them.

Existing facilities are candidates for assessment, not promised offices. The library website identifies meeting rooms at Blenheim, Chatham, Dresden and Wallaceburg. Rooms operate during library opening hours and are subject to availability and booking requirements. [8] That does not establish suitable rooms in every ward. In particular, three Chatham wards may be able to share an accessible city location while testing additional neighbourhood sessions, subject to address mapping and access analysis.

Candidate coverage for the inventory

The following identifies places to examine, not reserved facilities. Smaller-community visits should be mapped to the adopted wards before schedules are issued.

Ward	Communities or settings to assess	Main access question
1	Tilbury and Wheatley, with smaller-settlement rotation	Can residents reach a session without a long trip across the ward?
2	Blenheim and Ridgetown, with outlying-community rotation	Can a rotation serve both major centres and residents between them?
3	Bothwell and Thamesville	Can sessions align with existing service desks while providing private meetings?
4	Dresden and Mitchell's Bay or other suitable ward sites	Are there accessible rooms and practical travel options outside Dresden?
5	Wallaceburg and surrounding ward communities	Can confidential appointments fit available community space?
6	Approved Chatham facilities and neighbourhood sites	Would a shared Chatham room leave a local access gap?
7	Approved Chatham facilities and neighbourhood sites	Can working residents attend outside standard business hours?
8	Approved Chatham facilities and neighbourhood sites	Is access convenient from the southern neighbourhoods?

Facility screening and library agreements

Each candidate requires a site visit covering step-free access, washrooms, seating, lighting, acoustics, exits, emergency arrangements, safe parking, nearby transit and the return trip after the session. A bus stop alone does not establish usable transit access. Check actual service times, transfers, walking routes and accessible transportation options.

Confidential housing, financial or enforcement matters should never be discussed at an open table within hearing of other patrons. A location without adequate privacy may host general information or appointment booking, with sensitive meetings arranged elsewhere. Screens and headphones do not necessarily make a room confidential. Consider document handling, sightlines, waiting arrangements and whether attendees can enter without publicly revealing the nature of their concern.

The Public Libraries Act places the library under its Board's management and control. Library staff operate through the library chief executive officer. [9] Municipal ownership of a building does not give councillors authority to occupy library space or assign tasks to library employees. Obtain the Board's agreement, or approval under its lawful delegation, and a written operating arrangement identifying scheduling, fees, cost recovery, cancellations and privacy responsibilities.

CKPL's Facilities Use Policy gives priority to library needs and allows restrictions on frequent or competing room bookings. It requires other uses to avoid interference with patrons and library activities. [10] CK Local should therefore offer predictable but non-exclusive bookings, reimburse agreed incremental costs and use a different municipal facility where library use would displace programming.

Include a capacity to cancel or relocate sessions during closures, emergencies or accessibility failures, with telephone notice and a replacement appointment. Dedicated leases should be considered only through a later business case comparing utilisation, opportunity cost and suitable existing alternatives. No such lease is recommended.

5 Councillor responsibilities

The alderman comparison and its limits

Ontario municipalities historically used the title alderman for local elected representatives. Toronto Public Library preserves municipal election literature from 1969 onward and describes the former ward alderman as addressing local problems within the broader Metropolitan Toronto structure. [41] This is a useful historical example of neighbourhood representation. It is not evidence that every Ontario alderman had the same powers, that all historical arrangements were efficient, or that CK should reproduce Toronto's former two-tier government.

CK Local can reasonably be described as a modern return to the accessible, neighbourhood-focused relationship associated with aldermen, provided the comparison concerns contact and advocacy. It does not create an office of alderman, rename CK's legal offices or restore historical operational powers. The elected office remains councillor. The paper does not claim that all former Kent municipalities used an identical alderman system or guaranteed regular office hours.

"Centralized administration. Decentralized representation." means that Council exercises municipal authority collectively, municipal officers and employees deliver services under lawful authority, and councillors remain physically and remotely accessible to constituents. Councillors bring local concerns into the municipal process and explain the response. They do not become a second management chain. Council's municipality-wide duties and the statutory strong-mayor framework remain applicable. [11,24,34]

The distinction should be reflected in every appointment notice. A resident can ask a councillor to raise an issue, seek an explanation or recommend a policy change. An individual councillor cannot independently authorize an expenditure, bypass a procurement process or instruct municipal employees outside approved procedures. The existing ward-funding policy provides a bounded role in supporting eligible requests; it does not transfer treasury, contract-signing or staff-management authority. Historical familiarity is useful only if the modern legal limits are equally clear.

Representation and advocacy

Councillors should meet residents, receive concerns, explain how municipal processes work, seek appropriate follow-up and identify recurring ward issues. They should communicate Council decisions accurately, including decisions they opposed, while remaining free to explain their own position. Public ward updates should distinguish a councillor's recommendation from an approved municipal project.

The Ontario councillor's guide separates elected policy leadership from staff implementation and advice. [11] CK's Council and Staff Relations Policy links conduct to municipal ethics, procedure and workplace policies. [12] The ward-office model should make those distinctions visible to residents so a conversation is not mistaken for a direction to a crew or an approval to spend.

A councillor may ask staff for clarification through approved channels and advocate that Council change a policy. A councillor should not promise an inspection outcome, overturn a permit decision, direct a repair crew, hire a worker, select a supplier or instruct staff to move a supporter ahead of other residents. Urgency should be determined by published service criteria and professional assessment.

A practical session protocol

Start each session by explaining its purpose and the limits of the councillor's role. Ask whether the resident wants general information, a municipal service request or assistance with advocacy. Check for an existing case reference. Identify immediate safety concerns and refer them to the appropriate urgent channel rather than holding them for the next ward meeting.

Record only the information necessary for the agreed purpose. Explain when details will be sent to staff and when further permission may be required. Give the resident a contact route and the next procedural step. Avoid assuring a completion date unless the responsible department has confirmed it. A resident should leave knowing who has the matter and how to follow up, even when the requested outcome cannot be promised.

Publish a short ward-priorities report at least annually, with optional quarterly updates. Describe recurring themes, proposals raised through Council and actions taken. Exclude identifiable constituent information and confidential municipal advice. Show the difference between requests made, projects approved and work completed.

Availability and continuity

Councillors should voluntarily agree a workable schedule within a Council-approved support policy. The Clerk and Legal Services should determine whether any formal attendance requirement or reporting obligation needs a policy or code amendment. Draft 2 does not assume Council can enforce new personal office-hour duties by a simple administrative instruction.

In a two-councillor ward, provide an alternative appointment if one representative is unavailable. In a single-councillor ward, preserve service intake and reschedule political appointments rather than treating a staff member as a substitute elected representative. Plan for illness, parental leave, vacancies and conflicts. Staff support should remain neutral and continue through an election transition under an approved records protocol.

6 Shared municipal service coordination

Build on existing functions

Existing customer-service, service-centre and administrative staff should be considered before creating a new position. Their contribution would be booking, explaining municipal processes, registering service requests and tracking referrals. The responsible managers must establish whether these tasks can be accommodated without lowering existing service standards.

CK already operates Community Navigators through a partnership between Employment and Social Services and the public library. They help residents navigate housing, education, employment, income and supportive services, with regular availability in Chatham and Wallaceburg and appointments elsewhere subject to capacity. [13] This is evidence that shared service arrangements can operate locally. It is not evidence that those employees have spare time or that their funding permits political constituent support.

Maintain the Navigators' service mandate. Refer residents to them when their needs fit that mandate, rather than converting the program into councillor assistance. Library employees should direct people to the approved booking channel and provide ordinary library help; they should not be expected to collect confidential municipal cases or perform political administrative work.

Operating alternatives

Model	Support arrangement	Principal advantage	Condition or limitation
Existing resources	Remote booking and intake through authorised existing staff	Lowest potential additional cash cost	Requires verified capacity and protected existing services
Scheduled support	Limited paid or backfilled support during selected periods	Tests whether staff presence improves navigation	Hours, overtime and reporting time must be costed
Shared coordinators	A municipal team supports several wards	Consistent procedures and coverage	Requires a business case and neutral reporting line
Dedicated ward staff	One staff position per ward	Greater on-site availability	High recurring cost and uneven workload risk

The first two models are preferred for testing. The latter two are comparators, not recommended staffing commitments. Staff should report to existing administrative management, not individual councillors. A coordinator's performance should concern accurate referrals and resident service, not political loyalty or favourable publicity.

Workload assessment

Separate time spent at sessions, preparation, travel, appointment scheduling, case entry, follow-up, accessibility support and reporting. Sample workload for at least an ordinary month and a peak period before drawing conclusions. Record tasks displaced by the pilot, overtime used and delays in existing work. The costs of supporting a busy ward may be different from the costs of providing geographic outreach in a sparsely populated ward.

For illustration, Access Scenario A requires 600 administrative hours annually across the network. It assumes remote coordination, not a staff member accompanying every visit. If on-site attendance is essential, include travel and session time as additional workload rather than quietly absorbing it. An assessment should explain which tasks stop, change or move when capacity is reallocated.

Human Resources should review job descriptions, collective agreements, working hours, overtime and health and safety. Any expanded role, temporary contract or new position should have a separate costed approval proposal. No volunteer or political campaign worker should obtain staff-level access to municipal case records as an informal substitute for trained personnel.

7 Case management and CK 311 integration

Use the existing entry points

The municipality offers CK 311 by telephone, email and online reporting; its Report It page allows an online service request at any time. [3,14] These entry points justify testing integration before buying software. Public information does not establish the complete backend workflow, councillor access permissions, automated updates or case-reporting capabilities. Those features remain to be demonstrated by municipal Information Technology and customer-service staff.

A resident should be able to receive a case reference when the matter is a municipal service request, learn the responsible department and obtain a meaningful next step. Telephone and paper intake should reach the same controlled municipal process as online submissions. Routine access must not depend on owning a smartphone or having an email address.

Political opinions and requests to change Council policy should be identified separately from repair or service cases. A councillor may keep political correspondence under an appropriate approved records protocol; the CK Local service log should not become a database of residents' voting preferences. Do not automatically copy a service request to every councillor in the ward.

Proposed workflow to test

1. Receive the concern, check urgency, explain collection and obtain any required permission for referral or councillor involvement.
2. Locate an existing case or create a municipal reference. Record issue category, location where necessary, preferred contact method and accessibility needs.
3. Send the case to the responsible department. Record the referral date and confirm acceptance or correct a mistaken referral.
4. Provide an acknowledgement and explain the applicable departmental standard or next update date. Acknowledgement is not resolution.
5. Follow overdue or disputed cases through an approved supervisor or manager. A councillor can seek explanation, but cannot override risk-based prioritisation.
6. Close or transfer the case with a recorded reason and notify the resident where possible. Permit reopening where relevant information was missed.

Proposed pilot targets are acknowledgement within two business days and referral acceptance within five business days for ordinary requests. These are design targets requiring staff-capacity review, not current CK standards or guaranteed repair deadlines. Emergency matters, statutory deadlines and specialised processes need their own rules. Explain holidays, incomplete submissions and transferred cases in reporting.

Ownership of follow-up and closure

Assign each municipal service case to a responsible department and a named administrative role for follow-up, not a councillor-controlled queue. The coordinator should check whether the department accepted the referral, communicate a next update date where feasible and record why a case is closed. Councillors may ask about a missed update through the approved escalation route. They should not change technical priorities or conceal a departmental response they dislike.

A useful proposed status set is received, awaiting necessary information, referred, accepted, under assessment, scheduled where confirmed, resolved, declined with explanation, transferred and closed. The technology review should test which statuses existing systems can support without duplicate records. Closure should distinguish completed work from an explanation, an ineligible request or withdrawal. Give residents a telephone route to question an apparent administrative error, and retain formal complaint and statutory appeal channels.

An acknowledgement should state the reference, responsible channel and next step. If a completion date is unknown, say so and offer an update date rather than invent a service promise. Publish aggregate acknowledgement, referral and outcome measures, with privacy suppression and case-mix context. CK Local should be judged on a better access and follow-up process, not a guaranteed favourable decision.

Privacy and records control

MFIPPA governs municipal collection, use and disclosure. The current indexed consolidation includes 2026 amendments and further changes scheduled for January 2027. Legal Services and the privacy lead should verify the provisions in force at pilot launch. [15] Consent to advocate should be specific about what may be shared, with whom and for what purpose; consent does not itself authorise otherwise unnecessary municipal collection.

The IPC explains that councillor records are not automatically municipal records: custody, control and the function being performed matter. [16] CK Local should deliberately place municipal service records under municipal custody and controls. Purely political or personal correspondence needs distinct handling; it should not be declared subject to MFIPPA merely because a councillor holds it.

Require role-based permissions, audit logs, municipal accounts, approved devices, secure transmission and training. A councillor should see only case information lawfully available for the agreed task. No broad ward-wide access to social-service, enforcement, health or employee records should follow from elected office. Residents who decline councillor involvement should still receive municipal service.

Apply the municipal retention schedule and any legal holds; have the Clerk confirm the applicable by-law and current amendments. Establish a departure and election-transition procedure, breach response and lawful destruction rules. Public dashboards should suppress small cells and avoid exact addresses where identification is possible. Test privacy, case numbering and workflow with fictitious cases before launch. If the existing system cannot support safe integration, revise the pilot or return with a limited business case rather than establishing councillor-controlled spreadsheets.

8 Funding choices and the future Ward Community Improvement Fund

Reconcile the existing and proposed programs

Chatham-Kent already has restricted community investment funding. CK Local should not introduce a second envelope merely because a new name is appealing. The policy question is whether better use and visibility of the existing Councillor Ward Funding Program can meet an eligible need, and whether any remaining gap warrants separately financed municipal investment. Options A–C below are funding-policy choices. They are distinct from the Access Scenarios A–D used to compare office and staffing costs in Section 14.

Funding choice	Relationship to existing allocations	Additional project appropriation	Main condition
Option A Reform existing program	Retains its restricted source and program; changes process or distribution only through approvals	None assumed by CK Local	Existing agreement, policy and annual budget govern eligible uses
Option B Supplementary fund	Adds an independent municipal envelope; does not replace or enlarge Hydro One eligibility	Up to illustrative \$400,000 annually at full scale	Verified separate source, fiscal capacity and project approvals
Option C Phased hybrid	Begins with Option A alongside access and service work; may add Option B later	Zero initially; later amount may remain zero	Demonstrated gap, operational review and separate Council decision

Option A Reform the existing program

Retain the Hydro One-supported program and improve public access to its rules, application support, geographical reporting and reasons for project choices. Use a common resident-idea route that identifies the correct funding source. Review allocation fairness across communities and the new wards, including what per-councillor allocations mean for single- and two-councillor wards. Confirm the status of Council's April 2025 direction and later decisions before drafting a new distribution policy. [\[47\]](#)

This option seeks better results from an existing restricted resource. It does not assume money can be taken from approved projects, earmarked maintenance or broader Hydro One commitments. Consultation and administrative changes have costs even without a new project envelope. Approved program administration may have a lawful existing funding route, but any expanded task needs capacity and eligibility review. Ordinary councillor office operations are not a proposed Hydro One use.

Option A cannot finance every local priority. A general road repair, an unrelated municipal service expense or a pedestrian project without an eligible recreational or cultural purpose cannot simply be recategorized. Staff should refer those concerns to normal budgets and plans. Restricting a source protects lawful expenditure; it is not evidence that all excluded projects need a new ward fund.

Option B Add a separately financed supplementary fund

Create a separate municipal capital or grant program only for justified improvements that existing lawful sources do not adequately cover. Its eligibility, account, appropriation and award authorities must be explicit. It would supplement existing allocations, not replace them, and would operate independently of Hydro One restrictions. At the illustrative full scale, eight wards at \$50,000 equal \$400,000 in new annual project authority before additional administration and maintenance costs. It is not an approved entitlement.

A supplementary program could address a modest publicly accessible amenity or eligible pedestrian connection after departmental assessment. It could also duplicate existing capital planning, invite pressure for unfunded work and create continuing asset costs. Staff should first show the gap, explain why normal departmental prioritisation is insufficient and quantify the net benefit of a separate small-project process. If that case is weak, retain Option A and ordinary capital planning.

Option C Reform first and invest only when justified

Option C is the preferred funding strategy. Improve the existing program's fairness and accountability while implementing a limited access pilot and consistent service tracking. Consider supplementary investment only after those operations are reviewed and Finance identifies a sustainable source. Existing mandatory funding reports and transition work should proceed in parallel with feasibility assessment; they must not wait for a successful pilot.

This is CK Local's phased hybrid, not an assertion that any similarly named staff allocation model has been adopted. The existing restricted program continues under the applicable policy. No part of its allocation is automatically replaced by CK Local, and the supplementary amount starts at zero. Even if Council later supports \$100,000 or \$200,000 before considering \$400,000, each year's authority must be approved separately through the applicable budget process.

Evaluate all three options fairly. Option A has the lowest assumed new project commitment but a narrower lawful scope. Option B offers broader possibilities at greater fiscal and administrative cost. Option C makes expansion depend on evidence and can finish successfully without supplementary spending. Prefer it because the present evidence supports testing access and improving an existing program before committing to another recurring allocation.

A separate future decision

The proposed Ward Community Improvement Fund is an optional later phase. The working figure is \$50,000 per ward annually, or \$400,000 for eight wards. It is neither approved nor guaranteed. It is per ward, not per councillor; two-councillor wards would not receive twice the amount under the equal-base scenario.

Consider the fund only after the access model has been reviewed and Finance identifies a sustainable source. Council should adopt a written eligibility and allocation policy before inviting funding applications. A decision to continue ward office hours should not create an expectation that a fund follows automatically.

Use "Ward Community Improvement Fund" as a program name only. It would not automatically be a community improvement plan under section 28 of the Planning Act or create authority to subsidise private commercial property. Legal Services should determine the authority for each project type and grant arrangement. For the initial design, prioritise municipal public-space projects rather than a broad discretionary grants system.

Allocation alternatives

Approach	Merit	Main concern	Safeguard proposed
Equal base	Simple and predictable geographic floor	Different populations and needs	Publish per-resident results without claiming equal dollars equal equity
Population adjusted	Recognises numbers served	Can underweight rural travel and dispersed assets	Retain a base and use current verified ward populations
Geography adjusted	Recognises distance and settlement dispersion	Area alone is a weak measure of need	Use measured coverage barriers, not land area alone
Infrastructure need adjusted	Directs money to documented local gaps	Can compete with essential capital planning	Staff validate eligible small-project needs separately
Multi-year accumulation	Allows a ward to plan a somewhat larger project	Idle balances and unfunded liabilities	Reserve controls, review dates and approved commitments
Joint ward projects	Supports assets benefiting several wards	Disputes about contributions	Written cost shares and one municipal project owner
Matching contributions	Can extend public benefit	Disadvantages low-income communities	No universal match requirement; value in-kind support consistently

An illustrative blended formula would allocate 50% equally, 30% by population and 20% by a validated access-and-need index. At a \$400,000 envelope, the equal component would be \$25,000 per ward, with the remaining \$200,000 distributed by the two other measures. This is a comparison formula, not a recommendation to use unverified population or asset data. Council should compare its actual distribution with the flat \$50,000 scenario before choosing.

Budget and carryforward controls

Accumulation should occur only through a Council-approved reserve or capital carryforward mechanism. A ward balance would be a municipal accounting allocation, not property of the councillor or a guaranteed future entitlement. Finance should report cash, uncommitted allocations, approved commitments and actual expenditure separately. An unspent appropriation is not necessarily cash available to redirect.

Review idle balances after two years as a proposed policy rule. Permit an extension for a credible project with cost estimates and delivery dependencies; otherwise return the matter to Council for reallocation or closure. Do not allow councillors to commit future budgets or force a project through to avoid losing a balance.

Joint projects should have one accountable department, a consolidated procurement plan and a clear method of reporting benefits across wards. Matching funds should be secured before contracting. Donor conditions must not influence supplier selection or give a donor preferential municipal service. Future grant recipients require agreements, reporting and recovery provisions appropriate to the risk.

9 Existing Councillor Ward Funding

Legal and financial basis

The published program provides \$25,000 annually per ward councillor and \$125,000 for the mayor, for eligible recreational, artistic and cultural capital projects. The official page describes a \$1 million annual Hydro One community-benefit contribution over ten years, with current-term applications closed and next-term applications planned for late 2026. [17] A program page is not the executed contract or an annual appropriation.

The September 14, 2022 staff report describes the proposed Community Support Agreement, including the recreational and cultural contribution with CPI adjustment, a separate \$30,000 annual safe-community donation, a \$150,000 annual transmission-project coordination fee and up to \$50,000 per project for specified external expenses. [43] These streams have different purposes. They must not be added together as discretionary ward money. The executed agreement, effective dates and amendments remain necessary to confirm enforceable restrictions and remaining receipts.

The April 2023 report records Council approval of execution of the agreement on September 26, 2022 and partial use of its funds for the ward program on October 3, 2022. It places allocations within annual Council budget decisions and municipal policies. [19] Municipal spending authority also depends on the applicable statutory budget, grant and procurement framework, not a member's personal ownership of an account. [24]

At the published rates, seventeen current councillors plus the mayor imply \$550,000 annually; fourteen councillors plus the mayor imply \$475,000 if the rates continue unchanged. The difference is \$75,000 within a restricted funding framework, not a verified tax saving or a CK Local operating source. Against the unadjusted \$1 million contribution, arithmetic differences of \$450,000 or \$525,000 are not available balances: broader eligible commitments, administration, maintenance provisions, carry-forwards and CPI must be reconciled first. No new-term appropriation is inferred from this arithmetic.

Reconcile the policy chronology

Draft 1 relied on the 2023 policy and described successor-councillor redistribution. Later records require correction. The July 14, 2025 staff report explicitly records approval on December 16, 2024 of a revised policy, use of program funds for project administration, and semi-annual ward reporting. [46] The December update report and revised Appendix C are separately referenced. [44,45] Their indexed official text was available, but direct retrieval of the complete eScribe documents was blocked. The Clerk should supply the current consolidated policy and adoption record before implementation.

The revised policy places administration with the Office of the CAO or designate. It requires maintenance and inspection provision for capital assets transferred to the municipality and specifies that their inclusion in the Asset Management Plan or replacement is not automatic. It retains carry-forward generally, but directs a councillor's unused funds to a maintenance reserve if the councillor is not re-elected. [44] Thus the 2023 successor-sharing examples should not guide the 2026 transition. Reconcile the mayor's balance, returning-member balances, existing agreements and split wards against the complete current policy rather than assume the same rule covers every situation.

The revised policy preserves agreement compliance, community-group operating-cost exclusion, purchasing requirements for municipal projects and signed grant agreements. [44] Draft 2 does not equate eligible asset-

related maintenance or approved project administration with permission to fund general constituent-office staffing. The latter remains separately costed under CK Local's operating model.

Eligibility and prohibited use

Eligible capital purposes include new or improved recreational, artistic and cultural assets; the revised policy illustrates benches, public art, recreational equipment and related amenities. [44] Eligibility depends on the purpose, ownership, agreement and policy, not simply the item's name. A recreation-site bench may fit; an ordinary highway repair does not become cultural capital because residents propose it at a ward session.

Do not redirect restricted funding to ordinary road maintenance, unrelated infrastructure, ward-office salaries, campaign activity, profit-driving projects or routine community-group operations. Existing approved project budgets should be used first under the applicable program rules. Obtain a specific Legal Services decision for doubtful uses, rather than provide councillors an informal exemption.

Applicant eligibility remains a verification issue. The 2023 report excludes individuals, businesses, industries, sports teams, schools, sole proprietorships and groups owing the municipality money. [19] The current engagement page includes individuals in its descriptive wording. [20] The complete current applicant rules were not established from the later indexed policy. Staff should reconcile the conflict in public guidance and the consolidated policy before accepting or rejecting an application. These older exclusions are recorded as historical guidance, not represented as conclusively current in Draft 2.

Approval administration and public reporting

Existing rules provide a bounded member role in choosing support for eligible projects after administrative review. That differs from councillor-controlled procurement. Staff must confirm contractual eligibility, realistic cost, ownership, lifecycle responsibility, conflicts and applicable award authority before funds are released. A member's endorsement is not a cheque, purchase order or instruction to a crew.

The public engagement page describes monthly internal review, an expected six-to-eight-week response and signed agreements before disbursement. [20] The 2023 process specifies financial, legal, purchasing and operating-department review, controlled advances and reimbursement records. [19] Preserve these safeguards, subject to confirmation of the current procedure. Do not repeat monthly intake as a settled 2027 requirement while later decisions are unresolved.

The July 2025 report proposed extending the Community Grants Coordinator contract for 2026–2027 at a combined \$213,731, including wages and associated administration, split equally between Hydro One and Together CK reserves. [46] This is a report recommendation, not a verified available position or a salary benchmark for CK Local. Confirm the Council decision, employment term, assigned duties and spending authority before relying on that capacity. Existing restricted grant work must not be displaced to support office hours.

Keep semi-annual reporting by ward and project costs under the policy, alongside the annual Hydro One reporting directed in April 2025. Report allocations, commitments, disbursements and balances separately. Where administration costs are lawfully charged to program resources, disclose them instead of treating all receipts as a project envelope.

Election periods and carry-forward

The revised policy retains a six-month pre-election prohibition on commitments and public announcements, while allowing previously committed work to proceed through normal scheduling. [44] The current engagement page gives April 13, 2026 as its application cutoff. [20] An application deadline and a commitment blackout are different controls. The Clerk should confirm their administration and applicable dates; do not invent a common cutoff from one webpage.

Carry-forward does not make an account personal property or create a perpetual entitlement. Finance should reconcile approved commitments before identifying an uncommitted amount. The revised reserve treatment for councillors not re-elected requires particular attention at the 2026 boundary and membership transition. Returning and departing members, the mayor and assets spanning new wards may have different treatment. The municipality should publish the transition rule after the necessary approval, with no promise that every old balance transfers to a successor representative.

April 7 2025 direction and later decisions

On April 7, 2025 Council carried Councillor Ceccacci's motion, seconded by Councillor Doyle, 17-0. It requested a strategic approach to distribution across communities aligned with arts, culture and recreation master plans, a report before the fall 2026 Budget Update, consideration of an end-of-term effective date to protect current commitments, and annual reporting on Hydro One expenditure and future commitments. [47] The motion's wording seeks equal distribution; CK Local should examine what equitable outcomes mean rather than assume equal dollars per seat or ward is the adopted answer.

The July 2025 update says that review was underway. [46] Later November 3, 2025 reporting describes further deliberations. CKXS reports retention of the existing member-based approach with quarterly intake from 2027 and referral of the \$75,000 question to the next Council. CK News Today describes a proposed \$285,000 strategic/\$190,000 community split and referral, but the accounts differ in vote descriptions. [50,51] These are secondary reports, not verified approval instruments. No proposed split, reserve transfer or intake timetable is treated as adopted funding authority here. Obtain the November minutes, final resolutions and any subsequent 2026 policy before finalising the new-term design.

This distinction matters: the April direction is a verified review mandate, not proof that its anticipated recommendations were approved. CK Local should build on the actual current decision rather than repeat the fall review as if it had never occurred or duplicate an adopted process. Its phased hybrid is a new proposal, independent of any earlier staff hybrid allocation recommendation.

Historical commitments and balances

Retain the published 2023–2026 commitments list as evidence of supported projects. Examples are \$4,000 for Black Historical Society digitisation, \$8,000 for a Mitchell's Bay kayak launch and \$145,000 for Taylor Park improvements. [21] They remain commitment figures, not audited paid expenditure or available cash. Draft 2 does not infer balances from project totals or assume a future fund has to finance similar eligible projects again.

No reconciled October 2026 ledger was obtained. Request the opening balance, contribution receipts, CPI adjustments, approved ward allocations, other Hydro One commitments, administration and maintenance charges, signed agreements, cancellations, payments and closing balances. Distinguish restricted cash from

uncommitted budget authority. Map old-ward projects to the new wards without retrospectively recasting old expenditure as a new-ward entitlement.

The 2025 approved budget contains a specific request concerning inspection, maintenance and renewal of new Wheatley fit-park equipment and the Tilbury Memorial Park trail, with a proposed Hydro One reserve funding route for 2025–2027. [49] This illustrates that small new assets create later obligations. It does not grant general permission to charge unrelated CK Local costs to that reserve. Confirm the relevant adopted line and current treatment before using it as a funding precedent.

Improve fairness within lawful uses

Review per-member allocation against beneficiaries and community access. If unchanged, two-councillor wards would have \$50,000 of new annual councillor allocations and single-councillor wards \$25,000, separate from mayoral support and carry-forward. This is arithmetic, not an adopted inequity finding. Population, need, travel barriers, eligible assets and historic commitments should inform Council's comparison.

Publish eligible proposals, costs, selection reasons and project status through an accessible annual community discussion coordinated with the actual intake timetable. Offer paper and telephone help, identify underrepresented communities and review repeated concentrations among successful organizations. Align eligible projects with relevant master plans without assuming a plan authorises expenditure. Do not award political allies better access to information or resources.

A common front door can route ideas to the correct program while keeping separate ledgers, eligibility tests and approvals. Each project should identify which source pays which cost, with no duplicate reimbursement. Reform may improve reach and accountability without adding an envelope; quantify its workload and any cash cost before calling it an efficiency.

10 Eligible local improvements

Initial scope recommended

The future fund should favour modest improvements to municipally controlled public space where a department can own, maintain and deliver the asset. Examples are seating, neighbourhood signs, small public-space enhancements, planting or landscaping compatible with maintenance capacity, and minor pedestrian or accessibility improvements that pass technical screening.

A low price does not remove engineering, accessibility or permitting requirements. A bench needs an appropriate surface, accessible approach, safe location and maintenance plan. A wayfinding sign needs an approved design and placement. A short path connection may require drainage review, land rights or utility clearance that make it unsuitable for a small ward envelope.

Project type	Possible eligibility	Required screening
Public seating and amenities	Potential municipal capital improvement	Accessible route, ownership, maintenance and safety
Minor accessibility upgrades	Potential improvement following technical review	Applicable standards, design and full cost

Project type	Possible eligibility	Required screening
Beautification and planting	Potential project with public benefit	Species, utilities, watering and ongoing care
Neighbourhood wayfinding	Potential public-space improvement	Sign standards, rights of way and accessibility
Recreation or community assets	May overlap with restricted existing funding	Eligible source, asset owner and no duplicate reimbursement
Modest safety improvement	Only after responsible-department assessment	Risk, traffic or engineering approval and maintenance
Essential repair or emergency response	Refer to normal departmental programs	Do not wait for ward consultation or fund approval

Protect core infrastructure duties

The fund should supplement the capital and maintenance plans, not provide a workaround when essential work lacks funding. Departments remain responsible for statutory obligations, emergency response and municipal service standards. A ward's low balance should never determine whether a dangerous condition receives appropriate attention.

CK's asset-management framework provides the appropriate context for evaluating new assets and service levels. [22] Require the asset-owning department to explain condition, useful life, operating requirements and replacement responsibility. A project should be screened out if it imposes maintenance costs the department cannot accept or displaces a higher-priority statutory obligation.

The fund's name should not create an expectation of grants for private renovations, business promotion or a councillor's chosen organization. A later grant stream would need specific authority, eligibility and agreements. Public-benefit criteria should exclude campaign activity, private household improvements, routine group operations and projects serving only members where broad public benefit has not been established.

Procurement and completion

CK's purchasing by-law establishes approval roles and prohibits splitting purchases to avoid its requirements. [23] Procurement staff should determine the correct process using the total project scope, applicable taxes and any current thresholds or amendments. A \$50,000 ward allocation does not mean every project can use the same procurement method.

Councillors may recommend projects and ask questions about value. Staff must prepare specifications, conduct competition where required, evaluate suppliers and exercise award and signing authority within lawful delegations. Councillors must not select contractors, privately negotiate municipal contracts or direct a recipient to use a political supporter.

Before a contract or grant is executed, confirm land rights, permits, insurance, liability, utility clearances, construction-season constraints and funding. Record completion acceptance, actual cost and the party responsible for the asset. Treat a cancelled or reduced project as a decision to explain publicly, not a reason to spend the remaining money hastily.

11 Transparent community priorities

A manageable annual process

A future project process should begin with a published envelope, rules and timetable. Accept ideas online, by telephone and on paper through existing locations. Staff should help residents describe a problem without requiring professional drawings, incorporation or political contacts. Applications should identify the location and intended public benefit, but should not require collecting signatures or endorsements from a councillor.

Use one annual consultation cycle rather than frequent competitive rounds if staff capacity is limited. Keep an all-year route for suggestions, acknowledging that receipt does not create funding entitlement. Urgent maintenance concerns should be redirected immediately to municipal services instead of being held for the annual project list.

Publish a screened longlist with reasons for exclusions and preliminary cost bands. Remove personal contact details and protect sensitive locations where necessary. Invite feedback on feasible options before a selection is made. Staff should identify which requests are already funded, which are essential departmental work and which fit existing restricted grants.

Selection method

Use eligibility first, followed by published assessment criteria. A proposed scoring framework is public access and benefit 30%, removal of a documented access or amenity gap 25%, lifecycle affordability 20%, deliverability 15% and evidence of resident support 10%. These weights are a design proposal. They intentionally avoid making a large online vote the sole basis for expenditure.

A resident vote or ranking can inform recommendations, but it should not override safety screening, legal eligibility or the approved budget. Publish the participation method and warn against treating self-selected responses as the preference of the entire ward. Matching donations should not carry enough weight to exclude communities with limited fundraising capacity.

Councillors should recommend priorities with written reasons. Staff should prepare the technically eligible, costed program for Council or an expressly authorised delegate to approve. The fund policy should determine how disagreements between two ward councillors are resolved. Without agreement, staff can present the alternatives and scores to Council; there should be no personal veto or private bargain between representatives.

Patronage prevention and review

Publish applicants, project descriptions, selection reasons and approved amounts where lawful. Require conflict disclosure for members and participating staff. Record reasons for departing from a scored recommendation. Offer administrative reconsideration of eligibility or scoring errors by an official who did not make the initial screening decision; this would not guarantee an appeal that overturns Council's discretionary budget choice.

Measure whether a few organizations receive most allocations over several years. Investigate whether repeated success reflects genuine public benefit, unequal application support or exclusion of less organized neighbourhoods. Provide basic assistance equitably rather than penalising a resident who cannot prepare a polished submission.

After completion, publish location, approved and actual cost, source of funds, date, outcomes and continuing maintenance obligations. Show deferred and cancelled projects as well as successes. A project page should describe a municipal investment rather than market it as a councillor's gift.

12 Municipal legal framework

Preserve the current legal offices and municipal structure

Decentralising councillor appointments does not change municipal boundaries, create a new legal office or delegate service control to a ward. “Alderman-style” describes a relationship only. Any proposal for an actual municipal service board, committee with delegated authority or change to electoral arrangements would require its own statutory analysis and approvals; none is recommended here.

Council should approve CK Local's policy framework and any pilot spending, while administration develops procedures within its existing lawful authority. A councillor should not establish the corporate program by independently booking space and directing staff. The mayor may champion the proposal and use lawful statutory powers, but those powers do not remove procurement, privacy, library governance or funding-source restrictions. The proposed Council direction is to be read with the applicable strong-mayor budget process, not as a claim that a mayor's announcement finances the program. [24,33,34]

Authority and limits

The Municipal Act supplies broad municipal service powers, lawful delegation rules and elected and staff roles. Relevant provisions include sections 9–11, 23.1–23.3, 224, 227, 238–239 and 270. Section 107 grant authority is subject to section 106 restrictions on assistance to commercial enterprises. Sections 290–291 and the strong-mayor framework affect budgeting. [24] These provisions support assessment of an access program; they do not establish unilateral councillor spending authority.

A ward office is not a municipal service board or separate municipality. Draft 2 proposes no ward-specific delegated procurement power. Keep approval of budgets and policy with the lawful municipal decision-makers and delivery with administration. Legal Services should confirm the implementation instruments, current delegations and applicable amendments before launch.

Decisions and approvals

Element	Possible administrative work	Council or other approval required
Facility inventory	Staff research within existing duties	Additional budget if the assessment cannot be absorbed
Booking and intake design	Develop workflow under existing authority	New policy or delegation where current authority is insufficient
Limited pilot	Prepare locations, costs and safeguards	Separate Council pilot decision and approved spending authority
Library participation	Discuss options with library administration	Board approval or approval under its authorised delegation and agreement

Element	Possible administrative work	Council or other approval required
Existing software configuration	Technical assessment and testing	Procurement and budget approval if new costs or contracts arise
Expanded staff support	Workload and Human Resources analysis	Any required staffing, contract, policy and budget approvals
Existing ward funding reform	Review current policy, contract and distribution	Council policy and budget decisions; contract amendment if legally required
Supplementary improvement fund	Draft eligibility and allocation options	Separate Council decision, sustainable source and annual budget approval
Individual projects	Engineering and procurement preparation	Spending and award under applicable approval authorities

This table is a proposed governance route, not a finding that every listed action is already delegated. CK's policies page identifies Delegation By-law 53-2026, purchasing rules and accountability policies. [25] Staff should verify their application and amendments. An administrative assessment cannot commit money or staff capacity beyond an existing lawful authority and budget.

Identify the required legal instrument

The Clerk and Legal Services should distinguish a Council resolution authorising assessment from instruments implementing it. A corporate access and resource policy would establish neutral booking and support rules. Administration can issue approved workflow, privacy and escalation procedures where authority already exists. Agreements are needed for participating facility operators, including appropriate Library Board approval. Operating and capital appropriations must identify the lawful budget authority before commitments.

A new by-law is not automatically necessary for every appointment. It may be needed where a delegation, signing authority, procedural rule, records schedule or other existing by-law must change. Do not describe all implementation as administrative simply because the facilities and personnel already exist. Equally, do not create a new authority structure where a policy and existing delegation can lawfully deliver the service.

The existing ward program's reform requires its own review of the Hydro One terms, current policy and annual allocation. A supplementary fund needs a separate policy, appropriation and project controls; a change exceeding contractual permission cannot be accomplished by renaming an account. Retain applicable grant authority and commercial-assistance restrictions. The label Community Improvement Fund does not automatically create a Planning Act community improvement plan or authority for private-business grants.

Conflicts and ethical conduct

The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act requires disclosure and non-participation where applicable and restricts use of office to influence relevant staff or delegated decisions involving a pecuniary interest. [26] Project recommendations and constituent advocacy require the same attention as formal votes. A councillor involved with an applicant should seek advice before advocating or screening the request; nonprofit status does not automatically eliminate a conflict.

CK's published November 21, 2024 Code of Conduct addresses confidential information, improper influence and staff relations. [27] Apply its current version to sessions, communications and project selection. A resident

must not receive better treatment because of campaign donations, personal connections or agreement with a councillor. The municipal Integrity Commissioner remains the appropriate ethics route; CK Local should not appoint a new political complaints investigator.

Privacy and accessibility

Municipal case records require legal collection, use, disclosure and retention controls under MFIPPA. The legal analysis should account for the 2026 privacy amendments and January 2027 commencement provisions rather than relying exclusively on older guidance. [15,16] The operational controls in Section 7 are proposed minimum safeguards, subject to legal validation. The published amendments scheduled for January 1, 2027 include a written privacy impact assessment before collection under section 28(3), unless regulations provide otherwise. Plan for that assessment and have the privacy lead confirm commencement, exceptions and the applicable collection process at launch. [15]

AODA and the Integrated Accessibility Standards apply to accessible service delivery. Physical design obligations can be triggered by construction or redevelopment; existing space is not automatically suitable simply because no work is proposed. [28,29] Site reviews should also consider the Human Rights Code, applicable building requirements and individualized accommodation. These are implementation screening matters, not a claim that every existing building must undergo the same retrofit.

Accessible information, booking and feedback must accompany physical access. Budget for interpretation, alternate formats and support arrangements according to actual need. Consult the municipal accessibility function and relevant advisory body. Where a site fails essential access or privacy requirements, choose another location or postpone that session. A low-cost assumption must not override legal duties.

Elections and library governance

Section 88.18 of the Municipal Elections Act requires rules for use of municipal and board resources during election campaigns. [5] CK Local should separate official service activity from campaigning: no campaign signs, donations, canvassing, supporter recruitment or campaign access to municipal contact records. Councillors can continue lawful official duties subject to the applicable rules. Do not invent a general ban on all constituent meetings during election periods.

Obtain and apply CK's current election-resource policy and CKPL's election-use policy before an election-period session. The library policies index confirms an election-use policy, but its complete current terms were not retrieved for this paper. [30] The existing ward-funding six-month restriction is a program rule, not proof that all municipal project activity stops before an election.

Meetings and strong mayor powers

Listening sessions should gather concerns and explain processes; they should not become an unadvertised Council or committee decision-making meeting. Ontario's guide explains that quorum and material advancement of business are central to the statutory meeting definition. [31] A two-councillor ward session does not automatically constitute a Council meeting, but a gathering of a smaller committee may meet its quorum. The Clerk should screen formats, attendance and any committee role.

CK's Procedure By-law 108-2024 is the published procedural instrument reviewed here. [32] The older 2021 Council and Staff Relations Policy still refers to 109-2018, so current amendments and cross-references need

confirmation. Keep decisions, motions and deputations in the established Council process; public listening is not a substitute for statutory consultation or appeal rights.

CK is subject to special mayoral powers under Part VI.1. Its official page describes written decisions and publication requirements. [33] The general principle of Council oversight must therefore be read with those statutory powers. CK Local does not add powers to the mayor or councillors, and should not establish a parallel mayor-controlled administrative chain. Budget proposals and adoption must follow the applicable statutory process, including Council's amendment and override roles, rather than assuming an ordinary resolution can bypass it. [34]

13 Phased financial implementation

Four phases within the three pillars

The three pillars are retained, with four implementation phases separating representation, service coordination, reform of existing funding and possible supplementary investment. The phases are proposed decision stages, not automatic spending commitments. Basic safe intake must be ready before a ward session opens; Phase 2 formalises and strengthens it rather than allowing Phase 1 to collect cases without controls. Existing funding administration, mandatory reports and time-sensitive transition work continue throughout.

Phase 1 Representation and access

Begin with the facility inventory, legal and privacy review, staff assessment and a limited pilot design. Use existing rooms and approved technology where suitable. Customer Service, the Clerk, facility managers and the relevant library authorities should coordinate through the CAO's existing reporting structure. Human Resources and Finance should confirm available hours, employment conditions, room costs and displaced work.

Additional signage, secure devices, travel, cleaning, insurance, accessibility accommodation and backfill may be unavoidable. The full-network Access Scenario A in Section 14 illustrates \$31,050 first-year cash, including \$5,750 one-time operating setup and \$11,500 one-time capital setup after contingency. Its recurring baseline is \$13,800, with 600 existing administrative hours valued separately at \$39,000. These are placeholders, not a pilot budget or confirmed capacity. The pilot needs an actual ceiling and funding source before approval.

If assessment cannot be completed within approved capacity, return to Council with options before taking on expenditure or displacing essential duties. A pilot should specify its locations, term, session schedule and resource limit. Agreements should protect ordinary facility operations. No permanent building, dedicated lease or permanent staffing commitment is presumed. Measure delivered hours, participation, access complaints, booking failures and incremental costs.

Phase 2 Service coordination

Customer Service and Information Technology should implement the agreed case workflow with departmental owners, privacy controls and telephone and paper routes. The Clerk and Legal Services should validate collection notices, permissions, records retention and election transition. Test acknowledgement, referral acceptance, next-update communication and meaningful closure before widening the network.

The Access Scenarios include baseline coordination rather than a separate automatic technology purchase. Additional configuration, training or paid support must be itemised to avoid double counting. If a gap cannot be absorbed, test scheduled support before considering shared permanent positions. Any business case must quantify tasks, hours, effects on existing services and sustainable cost. Human Resources and the responsible manager must confirm the reporting line and employment requirements.

Evaluate resident navigation, acknowledgement and referral measures alongside staff workload and satisfaction. Proposed two-business-day acknowledgement and five-business-day referral acceptance targets require capacity confirmation. They are not repair promises. Adjust hours and locations where evidence shows barriers, and reduce or end a poorly used arrangement after testing reasonable improvements.

Phase 3 Reform existing ward funding

The existing program administrator, Community Culture and Connections, Finance, Legal Services, Purchasing and asset-owning departments should reconcile the current policy, executed Hydro One terms, April 2025 direction and later resolutions. The titles describe functions to involve; the CAO should confirm current organizational assignments. Produce a new-ward transition schedule, geographical analysis, accessible consultation process and source-specific financial report.

Reform should seek better transparency and geographical fairness within permitted uses before adding money. Proposed changes to distribution, grant process, reserves or spending authority need the appropriate Council or delegated decision and annual budget treatment. Contracts and approved commitments must be honoured. Do not assume a ward-funding policy change permits unrelated office operations.

For separate planning, Section 14 illustrates 240 one-time reform hours and 120 additional annual engagement/reporting hours at the assumed \$65 rate. These are expressly additional tasks beyond ordinary program administration, not verified needs. The example is \$17,940 one-time and \$8,970 recurring after contingency if all hours require paid support. Finance must check overlap, permitted funding and existing capacity before adding any amount. Measure eligibility decisions explained, public reporting completeness, participation by community and treatment of commitments and balances.

Phase 4 Potential supplementary investment

Require a separate operating review, gap analysis and fiscal report. Finance should test sustainable capacity after essential services, existing obligations and asset requirements. Present zero supplementary funding alongside \$100,000, \$200,000 and the illustrative full \$400,000 annual project envelopes. Identify capital allocations, grants, administration and maintenance separately. The future model supplements existing funding; it does not redirect Hydro One balances.

Council approval must specify the source and amount for that budget year. Staff should assess engineering, procurement, delivery and asset ownership before projects are selected. Future budget decisions may reduce, defer or omit the allocation. A successful access pilot does not make supplementary funding mandatory.

Funding discipline across all phases

Internal reallocation requires an identified activity, amount, authority and service consequence. Count efficiencies only after verification, net of implementation costs and with evidence they recur. Do not use unverified grants, hypothetical savings or a restricted reserve to close a general operating gap. A one-time reserve cannot silently underwrite a permanent service commitment.

Do not promise no tax effect. Every additional cash requirement must be financed and every reassigned hour has an opportunity cost. If Council adopts spending without offsets or other revenue, it must address the budget pressure. CK Local can meet its access objective without new project funding, and can proceed at a smaller operational scale if that is the affordable model.

14 Financial scenarios

Model purpose and assumptions

The following models compare choices; they are not quotes, salary estimates or proposed appropriations. They show a full network operating for a year to make alternatives comparable. A short pilot would use its actual schedule and costs, not a mechanical fraction of these figures. Setup, legal work and accessibility requirements may not shrink with the pilot's duration.

All base inputs are illustrative 2027 planning dollars. If Year 1 is 2027, the five-year comparison extends through 2031, beyond the 2026–2030 Council term. It creates no commitment binding future budgets or Council decisions. Recurring costs rise by an assumed 2% each year after Year 1. This is a sensitivity assumption, not an inflation forecast. A 15% contingency applies to modelled cash costs, including setup. It is not a substitute for site-specific costing. No leases, buildings, major renovations, separate software platform or extra councillor remuneration are assumed.

The model uses \$65 per administrative hour as an arbitrary fully loaded planning rate, not a verified municipal rate. For dedicated positions it uses \$100,000 per full-time equivalent annually, with an \$85,000–\$125,000 sensitivity range. These two methods are alternatives, not costs added together. Human Resources and Finance must replace them with actual compensation, benefits, pension, leave, recruitment and support costs.

Annual workload and unit inputs

Access Scenario A assumes 96 monthly ward sessions and 32 quarterly outreach sessions, two hours each: 256 councillor session hours. Administrative work is 256 booking and remote intake-support hours, 64 preparation hours, 150 case-follow-up hours based on 600 cases at 15 minutes each, and 130 coordination/reporting hours, for 600 hours. The case volume and handling time are assumptions. Staff support may occur remotely; these hours do not include a staff member travelling to and attending every session.

Councillor time is not priced as an incremental salary. Preparation, travel and follow-up add to the elected workload and require a feasibility check. Existing remuneration is not assumed to change; approved incremental expenses are counted. Joint attendance does not double the number of resident-access session hours, although it increases councillor hours.

Access Scenario B assumes twice the session volume and 1,200 administrative hours, of which 400 are paid additional or backfill hours and 800 are reassigned existing hours. Access Scenarios C and D assume respectively two shared positions and eight dedicated positions. At 1,800 assumed productive hours per position they offer 3,600 and 14,400 staff hours, subject to workload and scheduling constraints. Capacity is not a demand forecast.

Input before contingency	A Existing capacity	B Expanded hours	C Two shared staff	D Eight ward staff
Additional staffing or backfill annually	\$0	\$26,000	\$200,000	\$800,000

Input before contingency	A Existing capacity	B Expanded hours	C Two shared staff	D Eight ward staff
Reassigned existing hours annually	600	800	0 in this illustration	0 in this illustration
Direct recurring non-staff costs	\$12,000	\$18,000	\$30,000	\$60,000
One-time operating setup	\$5,000	\$8,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
One-time capital setup	\$10,000	\$12,000	\$20,000	\$40,000

Access Scenario A's \$12,000 direct allowance consists of 128 room-use occasions at an assumed incremental \$25 each (\$3,200); 6,000 kilometres at an assumed \$0.65 (\$3,900); printing and information (\$1,500); minor recurring technology support (\$1,800); and incremental cleaning, security and insurance allowance (\$1,600). None is a confirmed fee, municipal mileage rate or quotation. Access Scenarios B–D use larger combined planning allowances rather than pretend to have verified item-level costs.

The one-time operating allowances cover initial training, communications and workflow preparation. Capital allowances cover limited approved equipment or modifications, subject to the municipal capitalization policy. Items below the capitalization threshold should be reclassified as operating expense without changing the total cash requirement. Actual retrofit needs could exceed these amounts; do not launch an unsuitable site on the strength of a placeholder.

Annual and five-year cash comparison

Let R equal additional recurring cash before contingency, O equal one-time operating setup and K equal one-time capital setup. Year 1 cash equals $1.15 \times (R + O + K)$. Years 2–5 cash equals $1.15 \times R \times 1.02^{(\text{year} - 1)}$. Five-year totals are undiscounted nominal cash, rounded to the nearest dollar after calculating unrounded amounts.

Model	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Five years
Access A Existing capacity	\$31,050	\$14,076	\$14,358	\$14,645	\$14,938	\$89,066
Access B Expanded hours	\$73,600	\$51,612	\$52,644	\$53,697	\$54,771	\$286,324
Access C Two shared staff	\$299,000	\$269,790	\$275,186	\$280,690	\$286,303	\$1,410,969
Access D Eight ward staff	\$1,058,000	\$1,008,780	\$1,028,956	\$1,049,535	\$1,070,525	\$5,215,796

Year 1 cash classification	A	B	C	D
Recurring operating including contingency	\$13,800	\$50,600	\$264,500	\$989,000
One-time operating including contingency	\$5,750	\$9,200	\$11,500	\$23,000
One-time capital including contingency	\$11,500	\$13,800	\$23,000	\$46,000

The recurring baseline after contingency is \$13,800 for A, \$50,600 for B, \$264,500 for C and \$989,000 for D. The scenarios are mutually exclusive staffing alternatives. Any supplementary fund, if approved, would be additional to the selected access model and would not replace existing restricted program allocations.

Existing-resource costs and sensitivity

Access Scenario A consumes \$39,000 of existing staff capacity annually at the assumed rate; B consumes \$52,000 in addition to its paid support. These opportunity costs are not added to the cash table because the model assumes the existing payroll continues regardless. Record them alongside cash to avoid calling the program cost-free or suggesting reassigned labour is a saving.

If all 600 A hours require paid backfill, add \$39,000 before contingency in Year 1 and the corresponding inflated amount in later years. That increases first-year cash to \$75,900 and recurring Year 1 cash to \$58,650. Backfill for B's remaining 800 hours would add \$59,800 after contingency to its first-year and recurring baseline. Actual paid rates may differ from the opportunity-cost rate.

At the \$85,000–\$125,000 position range, C's first-year cash varies from \$264,500 to \$356,500; D varies from \$920,000 to \$1,288,000. These ranges change only staff cost. Benefits or accommodation omitted from an actual salary figure must be added before applying the model; never treat the placeholder as a salary-only number.

Model	Five years at 2% growth	Five years at 5% growth	Difference
Access A Existing capacity	\$89,066	\$93,504	\$4,438
Access B Expanded hours	\$286,324	\$302,597	\$16,273
Access C Two shared staff	\$1,410,969	\$1,496,029	\$85,060
Access D Eight ward staff	\$5,215,796	\$5,533,849	\$318,053

Higher volumes would add follow-up hours and possibly departmental work beyond the access service itself. For every additional 100 cases at the assumed 15 minutes, intake/follow-up adds 25 hours, valued at \$1,625 before contingency if paid. That does not include repairs, inspections or professional advice. Complex cases could require far more time. Evaluate volume and case mix before selecting a coordinator model.

Major accessibility alterations, new software licensing, changes to insurance premiums and after-hours security remain unknown. The scenario totals exclude those unverified extraordinary amounts rather than claim the contingency covers them. Finance must price them or select another site before asking Council to approve a ceiling.

Separate the access scenarios from the funding options

Access Scenarios A–D are mutually exclusive service-support alternatives. Funding Options A–C in Section 8 describe what happens to community investment. Choosing Funding Option A does not automatically select Access Scenario A; Council must decide both on their merits. The preferred combination is the least-cost workable access arrangement with Funding Option C, initially no supplementary envelope.

The existing ward program is a baseline restricted activity and is excluded from the access cash totals. Its actual annual appropriation, receipts and reserve movement must be reported separately. Do not add the \$1 million Hydro One contribution, the ward allocations funded from it and the value of resulting projects as though they are three different resources.

An additional planning illustration for funding reform uses 240 one-time review and transition hours plus 120 annual extra consultation/reporting hours. At \$65 and 15% contingency, the cash-equivalent amounts are \$17,940 and \$8,970. If all hours are additional paid work and recurring costs grow 2%, five-year reform cash is approximately \$64,620. If reassigned without backfill, the incremental payroll payment may be zero, but 840 nominal staff hours across five years are still consumed. These are arbitrary incremental workload assumptions, excluding external legal advice, technology and project technical work. They must not be added where the same tasks are already included in the 600-hour access allowance or funded program administration.

If, solely for comparison, that entire reform cash illustration is incremental to Access Scenario A, their combined five-year cash is approximately \$153,686 before supplementary projects. This is a conditional combined planning result, not an approved cost or evidence that restricted funds may pay for access work. Finance must remove overlaps and identify lawful sources task by task.

Future fund illustrations

The supplementary fund figures below are nominal annual project envelopes with no automatic inflation adjustment. They are additional to access costs and exclude fund administration and incremental lifecycle obligations. A \$400,000 envelope is not \$400,000 of permanent staff capacity or an entitlement to distribute all funds regardless of eligible projects.

Future allocation option	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Five years
No fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Introductory \$12,500 per ward	\$0	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$400,000
Stepped to \$50,000 per ward	\$0	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$1,100,000
Full envelope from Year 2	\$0	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$1,600,000

A proposed stepped illustration therefore allocates \$100,000 in Year 2, \$200,000 in Year 3 and \$400,000 in Years 4 and 5, totalling \$1.1 million over five years. It illustrates the earliest possible staged path within this planning horizon, not a promised launch. Deferring the first allocation to Year 3 at \$100,000, followed by \$200,000 and \$400,000, totals \$700,000. Council may instead keep every year at zero.

Fund administration requires separate costing. For illustration only, 24 projects at four hours of screening and completion administration each, plus 80 consultation/reporting hours, require 176 staff hours. At \$65 per hour that is \$11,440 of capacity, or \$13,156 with contingency if entirely paid. Technical design, engineering, procurement, construction supervision and maintenance are excluded and must be costed by project. This illustration is not an assertion that 24 projects will be funded.

At the simple \$400,000 envelope, a hypothetical 1%–3% annual maintenance burden on newly installed assets would be \$4,000–\$12,000 for one year's project cohort. Do not apply this as an estimate to grants or all assets; actual owners and assets determine costs. Repeated annual cohorts can accumulate obligations. Include replacement, utilities and end-of-life removal where applicable, with future budget provision.

Funding discipline and recommended option

Recommend Access Scenario A only if managers verify the available 600 hours, approved sites and safe workflow. If capacity cannot be reassigned, consider fewer appointments, remote support or targeted paid hours before C or D. Access Scenario D's cost is not justified by the evidence presently available.

Finance should identify the source of every incremental dollar. Possible routes include a specific approved internal reallocation, verified recurring efficiency or a future budget appropriation. There are no confirmed savings or external grants assumed here. The municipality's financial-statements portal identifies audited statements and a multi-year budget exists, but neither proves discretionary capacity for CK Local. [18,35]

No household tax estimate is presented because the current applicable levy, assessment distribution and funding decisions were not verified. If requested later, Finance should calculate the levy impact from the adopted funding gap rather than dividing the cost equally among households. Compare gross additional cost, offsets, service consequences and net budget pressure transparently.

Compare the funding paths without double counting

Under Funding Option A, supplementary project appropriations are zero; the existing program continues within approved restricted resources. Under Option B, the illustrative full envelope from Year 2 adds \$1.6 million across five years, excluding administration and maintenance. Under the recommended Option C, no supplementary envelope is assumed until a separate review; the deferred illustration of \$100,000 in Year 3, \$200,000 in Year 4 and \$400,000 in Year 5 adds \$700,000. These alternatives are mutually exclusive illustrations and must not be added together.

For Option C, Access Scenario A plus the fully paid incremental reform illustration plus that deferred \$700,000 envelope would be approximately \$853,686 across five years, before supplementary project administration, technical delivery and maintenance. Existing restricted program spending is outside this incremental comparison and continues separately. The combined figure is a cost illustration, not the recommendation to appropriate it. A zero-fund Option C would remain approximately \$153,686 under the same paid-reform assumptions, and actual cash could be lower or higher after capacity and prices are verified.

The \$50,000-per-ward illustration is new supplementary project authority only if separately financed and approved. A two-councillor ward must not be described as receiving two supplementary allocations under that scenario. Existing \$25,000-per-councillor funding and any mayoral contribution remain source-specific. If a project uses both programs, separate eligible invoices or cost portions and count the project only once in completion reporting.

15 Mayoral access and accountability

A regular ward rotation

The mayor should participate in a published listening schedule across all eight wards, alongside the ordinary responsibilities of ward councillors. A starting proposal is one session each quarter rotating between wards, so all wards are visited over two years. A more intensive alternative is a quarterly session in every ward, or 32 annually. The latter should be considered only after participation and workload justify it.

Invite the ward councillors on equal terms and allow residents to speak directly to the mayor. Meetings should not replace ward representation, create a mayoral approval channel for repairs or suggest a resident must approach the mayor to obtain proper service. Keep telephone and appointment access available to residents unable to attend.

Documented follow-up

Use the same municipal case process for service concerns and the same privacy safeguards. For broader policy concerns, publish a short, anonymised issues summary showing the topic, referral route and next step. Clearly identify what was heard, what the mayor proposed and what Council or administration subsequently decided.

Do not promise to fulfil every request. Some concerns involve provincial services, private disputes or statutory processes the municipality cannot change through a listening session. Explain the appropriate referral and retain formal appeal or complaint routes. A concern about a councillor's conduct should go to the established ethics process; an access meeting should not investigate the allegation publicly.

No additional mayoral office, coordinator or reporting hierarchy is proposed. Municipal staff should follow their existing administrative supervision and lawful written directions where strong-mayor authority applies. A common accountability report should be available to all of Council rather than becoming the mayor's private case dashboard.

For costing, four two-hour sessions annually would add eight event hours plus preparation, travel and reporting unless they replace already-budgeted engagement. The optional 32-session model would add 64 event hours. Neither is included as a separate event program in Section 14's ward-access costs. Finance should price the selected schedule and count any overlap once.

16 Implementation schedule

Milestones depend on readiness

Use the new term's early months to assess rather than announce permanent offices. The following milestones begin when Council authorises the assessment; they are not legal deadlines or predetermined commitments. Budget timing, agreements, vacancies, labour capacity and suitable sites may require adjustment.

Period	Proposed work	Lead responsibility	Evidence before proceeding
First 90 days	Facility inventory, ward mapping, legal/privacy review, staff and systems assessment, consultations	CAO through existing departments, Clerk, Finance and library authorities	Suitable candidate sites, workload findings and verified pilot costs

Period	Proposed work	Lead responsibility	Evidence before proceeding
Months 4–6	Separate pilot decision; limited sessions in selected settings	Council approval with administrative delivery	Agreements, accessible locations, trained staff and functioning intake
Months 7–12	Review demand, navigation, costs and effects on existing services	Administrative sponsor with public reporting	Baseline comparison, limitations and continue/adjust/stop recommendation
Year 2	Consider broader access and Phase 2 improvements; decide Phase 3 reforms based on current records	Council, Customer Service, IT and funding administrator	Useful access, costed support and approved funding transition
Years 2–4	Consider Phase 4 supplementary funding after review	Finance, Legal Services, asset owners and Council	Demonstrated gap, separate policy, source and lifecycle commitments

Align the four phases with actual decisions

Phase 1 covers assessment and the separately approved access pilot. Phase 2 establishes reliable service tracking and evaluates capacity during the first year, with targeted improvements in Year 2 if supported. Phase 3 reviews and reforms existing funding, beginning records and transition work in the first 90 days where necessary and returning for policy decisions on the actual Council timetable. Phase 4 is the optional Years 2–4 supplementary decision. Neither the year nor completion of an earlier phase grants spending authority.

Do not delay existing grant agreements, required reports or lawful new-term allocations while CK Local is assessed. The April 2025 motion and reported later deliberations mean Council may already have determined parts of the transition. The Clerk must establish what remains open. Library agreements, privacy requirements, staffing shortages, a missing ledger or unsustainable finance can change the proposed sequence. Publish an interim explanation and revised date rather than announce automatic implementation.

Pilot scope and design

A reasonable initial design is a six-month pilot in two to four wards chosen by transparent operational criteria. Include an outlying rural setting, an urban setting and a two-councillor arrangement where feasible. Site readiness, privacy and access needs should guide selection. Publish the reasons and a path for other wards to be considered; early participation should not be a political reward.

Track session availability and support hours even if resident attendance is low. Compare pilot settings with their own baselines and describe seasonal effects. A small pilot will not provide precise municipality-wide demand estimates; treat findings as directional and verify them as coverage grows.

Do not launch before collection notices, secure access and escalation channels are approved. Confirm room agreements, accessibility arrangements, insurance, staff training and public information. If available space is unsuitable, test a different location or telephone appointment support. An unready site should delay its session, not the municipality's handling of ordinary service requests.

Expansion or exit

After review, Council may expand, modify or end the pilot. Recommend expansion only where residents gained useful access and existing municipal services were protected. Show the full cost of a network, including any backfill hidden during a short trial. If appointments are unused, identify whether publicity, timing or geographic access explains the result before committing to permanent facilities.

If the program ends, transfer active municipal cases to the responsible departments, notify residents and retain records under the approved schedule. Remove temporary signs and end bookings without withdrawing normal constituent access. No improvement-fund obligation should survive solely because a pilot was previously approved.

17 Performance and public reporting

Measure what the model can change

The program should be assessed on access, navigation, follow-up and cost. It should not claim credit for all department outcomes associated with a case. A road repaired after a ward visit may already have been scheduled. A denied request may reflect a correct application of policy rather than poor constituent service.

Indicator	Definition proposed	Reporting and interpretation
Session availability	Delivered public session hours divided by scheduled hours	Quarterly; include cancellations and replacement appointments
Participation	Visits and appointments, with repeat contacts distinguished where lawful	By ward and channel; do not equate contacts with unique residents
Request mix	New municipal cases by broad category and channel	Suppress small cells; identify repeat and multi-ward cases
Referral completion	Cases accepted by the responsible department divided by cases needing referral	Report mistaken referrals and transfers separately
Acknowledgement time	Business days from receipt to acknowledgement	Median and 90th percentile; show exceptions and incomplete cases
Service outcome	Closure reason and departmental resolution time	By category; distinguish work completed, explained, declined and transferred
Accessibility	Barriers, accommodation requests and complaints	Record corrective action without identifying individuals
Satisfaction	Residents' reported ease of access, navigation and follow-up	Report response rate and selection bias
Incremental cost	Cash spent plus reassigned hours and displaced work	Compare with approved ceiling; separate setup from recurring costs
Restricted program reporting	Existing allocations, commitments, payments and balances by source and community	Retain required reports; explain transition and selection decisions

Indicator	Definition proposed	Reporting and interpretation
Supplementary project spending	Approved, committed and paid amounts only if authorised	Separate source, lifecycle costs and unspent balances

Proposed review standards

Before launch, adopt feasible targets after staff confirm the baseline. Candidate targets are delivery of at least 90% of scheduled session hours, ordinary-case acknowledgement within two business days and referral acceptance within five business days. These are proposed evaluation standards, not verified municipal commitments. Missing a target should prompt explanation and adjustment, not automatic staffing growth.

Survey participating residents after appropriate follow-up and separately seek views from residents who did not attend. Ask whether the contact route was easier to understand, whether an explanation was received and whether the next step was clear. Satisfaction with the requested outcome and satisfaction with the access process should be separate questions.

High complaint volume can reflect greater awareness, a temporary service problem or repeated contacts on one issue. Low volume can reflect effective service, poor notice or barriers. Interpret counts with population, case mix, session hours and existing service data. Avoid league tables presenting councillors as winners or losers based on raw complaints.

Report through existing processes

Publish a quarterly pilot summary and a fuller review by the end of Year 1, preferably as part of existing municipal reporting. Use aggregated operational data and plain-language explanations. The administrative sponsor should provide the same information to every councillor. Councillors may add public ward-priority commentary, clearly distinguished from the staff evaluation.

If a fund is later approved, report financial commitments and completed projects at least semi-annually alongside the existing relevant accountability processes. Include procurement exceptions and cancelled projects where lawful. Council should receive a decision recommendation with evidence and cost implications, rather than a promotional success report.

18 Risks and criticisms

Assess weaknesses before expansion

This section retains and updates the policy risk assessment. It is not a separate hostile audit. The preferred model survives only if it adds useful access at a verified cost and respects existing services. Several more expensive elements should be removed from the starting proposal unless evidence later supports them.

Risk or criticism	Specific safeguard	Decision if the safeguard cannot be met
Unnecessary bureaucracy	Use existing reporting and staff supervision; no ward executive layer	Reduce scope or retain only improved booking and information

Risk or criticism	Specific safeguard	Decision if the safeguard cannot be met
Duplication of municipal offices	Inventory current services; route cases through existing systems	Align sessions with existing locations or stop duplicate intake
Inefficient library use	Library approval, capped bookings and program priority	Move sessions to another suitable site
Staffing cost escalation	Track displaced work and backfill; separate staffing business case	Reduce frequency before committing to posts
Councillor interference	Written role protocol, administrative case ownership and escalation	Suspend the unsafe practice and refer conduct appropriately
Political patronage	Public criteria, conflict controls and recorded reasons	Reject or reconsider affected project decisions
Ward favouritism	Published access rules and demand-based adjustments	Review allocation and provide a fair alternative
Unequal community access	Rotations, telephone and paper routes, accessible appointments	Modify locations and hours; do not claim universal coverage
Weak project selection	Staff eligibility, full costs and Council-approved program	Decline undeliverable or low-benefit projects
Tax pressure	Identify net cost and sustainable funding each budget year	Defer the fund or expansion
Misuse of constituent data	Municipal custody, access limits, logs and breach response	Halt affected data access until corrected
Unfunded accessibility	Site review, accommodation and priced remedial work	Choose another site or postpone launch
Unrealistic expectations	Distinguish advocacy, referral and resolution	Correct public statements and resident notices
Election misuse	Resource policies, neutral materials and no campaigning	Stop prohibited activity and seek established ethics guidance
Idle project balances	Separate commitments and cash, carryforward review	Return reallocation or closure to Council

How different residents and municipal functions should test the proposal

Residents of smaller communities should ask whether the calendar offers a realistic local meeting opportunity and telephone alternatives, rather than a distant nominal office. Chatham residents should ask whether the three city wards have clear, useful access and whether city-neighbourhood barriers receive the same attention as rural travel. Neither group should be promised a particular share of all infrastructure spending as a condition of participation.

Existing councillors should assess whether shared booking improves their accessibility without limiting constituents' choice or creating a personal staff entitlement. Administration should assess whether referrals

arrive complete, duplicates are reduced and workloads remain manageable. Access to a councillor should not create a privileged service queue. Finance and Treasury should require incremental cash, opportunity costs, restricted balances and ongoing asset obligations to be visible in the same decision report.

Library and community-facility operators should be able to protect regular programs, charge agreed incremental costs, require privacy and accessibility arrangements and decline unsuitable bookings. Taxpayers skeptical of spending should receive utilisation, staff-hour and cost reports, with a credible route to reduce or stop weak elements. Residents dissatisfied with amalgamation should see a practical opportunity for stronger relationships without being promised separate councils or restored taxing powers.

These perspectives need not agree on every project. Publish the evidence and explain tradeoffs through existing Council accountability, with no new advisory bureaucracy presumed. Accessible representation is the primary benefit to test. Responsiveness means receiving, referring and explaining concerns properly; it cannot guarantee a permit, repair schedule or funding award. If CK Local adds contacts but makes navigation worse or costs more than its benefit warrants, modify or end that element.

Elements that presently lack a sufficient case

Eight dedicated staff positions are not supported by demonstrated workload and carry substantial recurring costs in the illustration. They should be excluded from the initial implementation proposal. Dedicated permanent premises likewise lack a demonstrated need. A new software purchase should be removed unless current municipal systems are shown incapable of meeting the minimum privacy and workflow requirements.

A guaranteed equal \$50,000 annual entitlement should also be rejected. A fixed amount is useful for comparison, but needs, populations and delivery costs differ. Annual budgets and eligible projects should determine actual expenditure. Automatically starting the fund with ward offices would undermine the phased financial discipline.

An unrestricted grant envelope controlled personally by councillors cannot satisfy the proposed public accountability model. Residents should influence priorities, and councillors should recommend them, but municipal authorities must retain spending, agreement and procurement controls. Avoid any public description implying a councillor can personally order a neighbourhood project.

Risks the preferred model cannot eliminate

Scheduled sessions do not guarantee that everyone can attend, that councillors agree on priorities or that departments can resolve every problem quickly. A shared system may expose previously hidden demand and increase administrative work. Rural travel, privacy and accessibility can make even occasional meetings more expensive than expected.

The model's main uncertainty is whether existing capacity can support a meaningful service without degrading other work. That should be tested directly. If the pilot only shifts queues, creates duplicate records or provides meetings without follow-up, it should be redesigned or ended even if it is politically popular.

19 Proposed Council direction

Initial assessment resolution

The following is draft language for legal and procedural review. It is an assessment resolution and does not activate the pilot or the future fund.

1. That Council receive the CK Local Ward Representation Community Access and Local Improvement Strategy Draft 2 for consideration as a phased proposal to improve access to elected representatives and municipal service navigation.
2. That administration, through the Chief Administrative Officer and existing departmental responsibilities, undertake a feasibility and implementation assessment of scheduled councillor constituent hours using existing municipal facilities and service infrastructure, to the extent this work can be completed within approved budgets and lawful staff capacity.
3. That the assessment include an inventory of suitable facilities across the eight wards; confirmation of ward mapping; consultation with municipal service-centre authorities and the Chatham-Kent Public Library Board or its authorised representatives; and evaluation of physical access, privacy, transit access, scheduling, room charges and effects on existing services.
4. That administration review existing customer-service, administrative and departmental capacity, applicable employment requirements and CK 311 technology, and identify the workflow and safeguards needed for municipal case intake, referral, follow-up, records retention, privacy, accessibility and politically neutral support.
5. That administration consult ward councillors and residents through accessible channels and develop options for a limited pilot, including transparent site-selection criteria, proposed office hours, participation arrangements for multi-councillor wards and continuity for residents using ordinary municipal channels.
6. That the Municipal Clerk and Legal Services identify necessary policy, delegation, procedural, conflict-of-interest, election-resource and facility-use instruments, including any Library Board approval or agreement required before implementation.
7. That Finance report verified incremental operating and capital costs, internal resource requirements, backfill or displaced workload, lifecycle obligations where relevant and identified funding options, distinguishing assumptions from confirmed amounts.
8. That administration propose public performance measures and a pilot review method covering access, navigation, service follow-up, resident experience, cost and effects on existing services.
9. That administration report back within approximately 90 days of this direction, or provide an interim report explaining outstanding dependencies and a revised reporting date. If the assessment requires expenditure or capacity beyond existing approvals, administration shall return to Council before undertaking that additional commitment.
10. That a ward-office pilot proceed only following a separate Council decision specifying scope, term, safeguards, appropriate agreements, lawful authorities and an approved expenditure ceiling with an identified source of funds.

11. That this resolution does not authorise new permanent municipal positions, dedicated office leases, new municipal buildings, a Ward Community Improvement Fund, councillor-controlled procurement or unrestricted ward spending allocations.

12. That any future supplementary Ward Community Improvement Fund be the subject of a separate report and Council decision addressing eligibility, allocation alternatives, sustainable financing, interaction with existing restricted funding, spending and procurement controls, asset obligations and annual budget approval through the applicable statutory process.

13. That administration, with the Clerk, Finance and Legal Services, reconcile the current Councillor Ward Funding Program policy, executed Hydro One agreement, December 2024 revisions, April 7, 2025 Council direction and subsequent resolutions, and identify the decisions already made and any remaining new-term distribution or transition questions.

14. That the review present options for transparency, accessible community involvement and geographical fairness within existing permitted uses; report restricted contribution receipts, program allocations, commitments, paid expenditure, administrative and lifecycle charges, reserves and unspent balances separately; and preserve existing lawful agreements and project commitments.

15. That the assessment compare reform of existing funding, an independently financed supplementary program and a phased hybrid approach, with no automatic replacement, enlargement or redirection of existing restricted allocations, and return any recommended policy, reserve or budget change for the approval required by law and existing municipal instruments.

16. That assessment and reporting be coordinated through existing administrative and Council processes, continue current statutory and program obligations, and not establish a new ward government, legal office of alderman or additional administrative reporting layer.

What a later pilot report should contain

The report should let Council choose an affordable option without authorising undefined future obligations. Include the schedule, participating sites, access gaps, signed or proposed agreements, staff hours, verified prices, technology findings, privacy and accessibility sign-off, expense treatment, evaluation measures and an exit plan. Show any unresolved condition that would prevent launch.

For a later fund decision, identify the amount for that budget year and the precise source. State whether allocations are project appropriations, reserves or grants and who has authority to approve and execute expenditure. Adopt public criteria before soliciting projects. Do not use a policy statement that “local authority” exists as a substitute for a lawful delegation.

20 Source references and evidence requirements

Evidence conventions and research limits

Verified facts in this paper are supported by numbered references. Proposed schedules, targets, scoring weights, staffing models and allocation formulas are policy choices. Financial assumptions are illustrations and must be replaced by municipal evidence before spending approval. Unresolved matters are expressly identified; none should be treated as a confirmed saving, available facility or existing technology capability.

Primary municipal, provincial and regulatory sources were prioritised. The research reviewed published municipal pages, the ward-funding report and policy, project commitments, library facilities information, procurement and procedure by-laws, ethics materials and indexed Ontario legislative content. Some Ontario consolidated pages returned access errors while their official indexed text remained available. Statutory links below point to the official consolidated Acts; Legal Services should confirm currency and commencement at implementation. Historical version snippets were not treated as proof of current new powers.

The executed Hydro One agreement, the complete latest consolidated ward-funding policy, the November 2025 final resolutions and any subsequent amendments, an up-to-date reconciled ward-fund ledger, the full current election-resource policies, exact site availability and internal CK 311 capabilities were not established. The 2024–2027 draft budget remains historical evidence, supplemented by the 2025 approved publication and the current municipal budget page. [49,52] Neither older budget establishes current uncommitted CK Local capacity. The 2022 agreement staff report describes proposed terms rather than supplying the executed contract. [43]

The ward distribution and public boundary descriptions were verified against the current election information and published by-law text. Exact address assignment still requires the adopted map and Clerk validation. A search result containing the old six-ward map illustrates why a date-specific source check matters. Draft 2 does not reproduce a new legal boundary map or purport to resolve parcel-level boundaries.

New evidence and remaining reconciliation

The historical discussion uses a municipal master plan for the 1998 consolidation and a legislative record for the January 1 effective date. [39,40] It does not quantify former council membership, measure causation or treat intended efficiencies as savings. The master plan describes 23 municipalities including the County; Draft 2 does not independently reconstruct the full list of former legal entities. The alderman comparison is drawn from an Ontario library's historical collection and is expressly a relationship analogy. [41]

The October 2026 revision verified indexed primary records of December 2024 policy changes and July 2025 acknowledgement of their approval, and indexed April 2025 minutes. Direct eScribe page and document retrieval returned access errors. References [44,45,46,47,48] identify those primary records so the Clerk can provide complete authoritative copies. Secondary November 2025 accounts are used only to identify later decisions requiring reconciliation, not to establish votes, adopted allocations or current authority. [50,51] Current webpage descriptions are not treated as overriding Council policy.

Material new financial figures are either published source amounts or explicitly labelled arithmetic and planning assumptions. The funding-reform workload illustration is additional only where staff identify distinct tasks. The three funding options preserve the distinction between an existing restricted program and any newly financed supplementary envelope. Before publication as an implementation policy, obtain the complete adopted ward schedule, current legal instruments and reconciled funding documents.

Comparable municipal practice

London publishes a councillor-office allocation policy based on ward order and routes service requests through a corporate service portal. [36,37] These are useful examples of neutral resource arrangements and a municipal service channel separate from political representation. They do not prove the cost or effectiveness of distributed offices in Chatham-Kent.

Ottawa's official disclosure records document councillor ward-hours events in community centres. [38] This provides a primary-source example of rotating community engagement, without establishing a transferable staffing budget or service outcome. CK Local should borrow a workable procedure only after checking its fit; urban office arrangements are not a cost benchmark for a dispersed municipality.

Evidence needed for the next municipal decision

Unresolved item	Evidence required	Decision affected
Exact sites and ward assignment	Current adopted GIS mapping and Clerk confirmation	Calendar and equitable coverage
Facility capacity and fees	Room inventory, access/privacy reviews and written terms	Pilot feasibility and capital costs
Staff capacity	Workload sample, manager approval and Human Resources review	Existing-resource versus paid-support choice
CK 311 capabilities	Demonstration of references, permissions, workflow and reporting	Safe integration and any IT spending
Access baseline	Current service data and documented survey methods	Pilot evaluation and expansion
Ward-fund balance	Receipts, commitments, disbursements and reconciled balances	Coordination and no double counting
Hydro One agreement	Executed terms, effective date, CPI and amendments	Restricted uses and remaining duration
New-ward funding transition	Current policy, December 2024 changes and Council-approved transfer/allocation decision	Treatment of old-ward and departed-member balances
Later funding decisions	November 2025 minutes, final resolutions and later amendments	Actual intake, allocation and reserve rules
Current legal instruments	Consolidated statutes, delegations and policy amendments	Implementation authority
Sustainable budget capacity	Current approved budget and quantified offsets	Expansion or future fund approval
Project lifecycle costs	Asset-owner estimates and maintenance acceptance	Individual project eligibility

Numbered source references

Draft 1 sources were accessed or retrieved October 10, 2026; new and refreshed sources were reviewed October 13–14, 2026. Public links are provided for verification. A page's presence in this list does not mean every operational feature or financial question has been resolved.

[1] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. 2026 Municipal Election

Eight wards, fourteen councillors and public coverage descriptions.

[2] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. [Affidavit of Blaise Chevalier April 2 2024](#)

Background paragraph 2; approximate municipal area.

[3] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. [Contact Us](#)

CK 311 contact hours and listed local service desks; confirm hours before scheduling.

[4] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. [2022 Annual Report](#)

Historical customer-service count; not a current ward-access baseline.

[5] Ontario. [Municipal Elections Act 1996](#)

Sections 6 and 88.18; term commencement and resource-use rules. Official indexed text retrieved; consolidated-page access was limited.

[6] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. [Council Composition and Ward Boundaries and By law 29 2025](#)

Municipal project landing page. Indexed published by-law text identifies Ward 5 as Wallaceburg and area. The hosted by-law PDF was not downloadable in this research; obtain the adopted schedule from the Clerk. Approval notice is separately linked in the municipal records.

[7] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. [Ward Map legacy six ward map](#)

Legacy map encountered in retrieval; expressly unsuitable for the 2026 structure. New-ward mapping is linked from the current Council Meetings page.

[8] Chatham-Kent Public Library. [Spaces and Room Booking](#)

Room locations, opening-hours conditions and booking requirements; no reservation inferred.

[9] Ontario. [Public Libraries Act](#)

Sections 3(3) and 15; Board control and library staffing. Official indexed text retrieved.

[10] Chatham-Kent Public Library. [Facilities Use Policy](#)

Library priority, availability, rental and non-interference conditions.

[11] Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. [Municipal Councillors Guide Chapter 1](#)

Elected and administrative roles; guidance is read with current legislation.

[12] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. [Council and Staff Relations Policy](#)

Issued October 25, 2021; references older procedure by-law, requiring currency check.

[13] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. [Community Navigators](#)

Existing ESS and CKPL partnership, scope and appointment arrangements.

[14] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. [Report It](#)

Online service-request entry point; backend features not verified.

[15] Ontario. [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

Collection, retention, use and disclosure provisions; current indexed consolidation includes 2026 changes and future commencement notes.

[16] Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario. [MFIPPA and Councillors Records](#)

April 22, 2016 guidance; custody and control require assessment. Recheck against 2026 amendments.

[17] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Councillor Ward Funding Program

Published annual amounts, restricted purpose, source and application status.

[18] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Draft Budget 2024 to 2027

Community Support Agreement with Hydro One section; CPI adjustment and separate donation. Draft publication, not proof of the latest approved budget.

[19] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Councillor Ward Funding Program Update report and Appendix A

Historical April 3, 2023 report and policy; later December 2024 revisions supersede parts of the successor-balance analysis.

[20] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Councillor Ward Funding Program engagement page

Application process, timing and eligibility wording; discrepancy with report requires clarification.

[21] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Councillor Ward Funding Project Commitments 2023 to 2026

22-page commitments list; cited examples on pages 1, 13 and 22. Not a reconciled payment or reserve ledger.

[22] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Asset Management Plan

Corporate asset-management entry point; asset-specific costs still required.

[23] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Purchasing By law 205 2023

Approval authorities and threshold calculation/anti-avoidance; verify amendments and thresholds at procurement.

[24] Ontario. Municipal Act 2001

Relevant service, delegation, roles, meetings, grants and budget provisions. Official indexed current text retrieved; confirm commencement and consolidations through Legal Services.

[25] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Council Policies

Index identifies Delegation By-law 53-2026 and other instruments; complete current delegation requires legal review.

[26] Ontario. Municipal Conflict of Interest Act

Sections 5, 5.1 and 5.2; official indexed text retrieved.

[27] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Code of Conduct for Members of Council November 21 2024

Confidentiality, influence, communications and staff conduct provisions; confirm any subsequent amendments.

[28] Ontario. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005

Statutory accessibility framework; official indexed text retrieved.

[29] Ontario. Integrated Accessibility Standards O Reg 191 11

Accessible information and services, public-space design and customer service; current indexed version incorporates 69/26.

[30] Chatham-Kent Public Library. CKPL Policies

Policy index includes privacy, accessibility and election use; complete current election-use terms not retrieved.

[31] Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Municipal Councillors Guide Chapter 3 Meetings

Meeting definition and transparency; apply with current Act and procedure.

[32] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Procedure By law 108 2024

Council, committee and local-board procedures; passed September 9, 2024; confirm later amendments.

[33] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Mayoral Powers

Local special powers and published written decisions.

[34] Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Municipal Councillors Guide Chapter 10 Strong Mayor Powers and Duties

Statutory budget process and role qualifications; no additional CK Local authority inferred.

[35] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Our Financial Statements

Audited-statement portal; not evidence of a free budget allocation.

[36] City of London. Allocation of Councillors Offices Policy

Comparator for neutral resource allocation, not distributed office cost or effectiveness.

[37] City of London. Councillor Sam Trosow official page

Comparator for directing ordinary service requests to corporate intake.

[38] City of Ottawa. Stephanie Plante Ward 12 Disclosure of Office Expenses 2026

Indexed official disclosure documents community-centre ward-hours events; used only as a practice example.

[39] Municipality of Chatham-Kent Public Utilities Commission. Water and Wastewater Master Plan

Introduction section 1.1 describes the 1998 amalgamation of 23 municipalities including the County and creation of the PUC. Official indexed text retrieved; complete download was unavailable.

[40] Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Bill Pr12 Municipality of Chatham Kent Act 2002

Legislative record identifies January 1, 1998 as the restructuring order effective date. Used for historical context, not as a new CK Local authority.

[41] Toronto Public Library. Toronto History in Flashback Election Campaign Literature

October 20, 2014 description of the primary election-literature collection and historical ward aldermen. Relationship analogy only.

[42] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Notice of Ward Boundary By law Approval

Official notice of March 3, 2025 enactment of By-law 29-2025. Current election page separately confirms the implemented electoral structure.

[43] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Community Support Agreement with Hydro One Networks Inc staff report September 14 2022

Six-page staff report on proposed agreement terms; distinguishes benefit contribution, CPI, safety donation and transmission-related cost support. Not the executed contract.

[44] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Appendix C Revised Councillor Ward Funding Program Policy

Official indexed policy text includes asset costs, semi-annual reporting, election restrictions and revised unused-allocation rule. Direct download blocked; obtain complete current policy from the Clerk.

[45] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Councillor Ward Funding Program Update December 16 2024

Official indexed report recommends revised policy, program administration funding and semi-annual reporting. Later July 2025 report records approval.

[46] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Councillor Ward Funding July 2025 Update

Dated July 14, 2025. Official indexed report records December 2024 approval and April review; proposes 2026–2027 coordinator extension and reserve funding. That staffing recommendation is not treated as an established CK Local resource.

[47] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Council minutes April 7 2025 item 22 b

Indexed official minutes record Ceccacci/Doyle ward-funding direction carried 17–0. Strategic distribution review, commitment protection and annual Hydro One reporting.

[48] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Ceccacci motion concerning Councillor Ward Funding Program

Official indexed motion and administrative comments on April 2025 review, master-plan alignment and reporting. Adopted wording is separately referenced in the minutes.

[49] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. 2025 Approved Budget

Approved budget publication includes Operating Expenses for Ward Funding Program Projects concerning Wheatley fit-park equipment and Tilbury Memorial Park trail. Verify the specific adopted line and current treatment before using a reserve-funding precedent.

[50] 99.1 FM CKXS. Council Pushes Ward Funding Decision to Next Term

Secondary November 2025 reporting identifies later decisions and quarterly intake. Used only to flag primary records to reconcile, not as an approval instrument.

[51] CK News Today. Update CK Council refers funding to next council

Article updated November 3, 2025 reports proposals and referral. Its description differs from CKXS in vote details; no reported split is treated as adopted authority.

[52] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Our Municipal Budgets

Current budget portal and annual multi-year budget update explanation. Does not establish uncommitted funding or savings for CK Local.

[53] Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review Beginning in Chatham Kent

Official 2024 review announcement identifies effective representation, population, communities of interest and geography. Not a finding of amalgamation failure.