

# Committee to Establish a Middlesex County Archives

## OFFICERS

**Chair** – Carol Small  
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**Secretary** – Bev Hughes

**Archivist** – Carolynn  
Bart-Riedstra

## MEMBERS

Ekfrid Community  
Museum

Glencoe & District  
Historical Society

Komoka Railway Museum

London & Middlesex  
County Branch, Ontario  
Genealogical Society

London & Middlesex  
Historical Society

Lucan Area Heritage  
Society

Middlesex Centre  
Archives

Middlesex Centre  
Historical Society

Mossley Post Heritage  
& Citizenship Society

Strathroy Historical  
Society

Wardsville Historical  
Museum

Westminster Township  
Historical Society

Representatives from all  
Middlesex Communities

## Challenges and Opportunities

### Challenges

1. The biggest challenge is the funding. At this time there are no capital funding programs or grants towards infrastructure for buildings. However, there might be other incentive programs available in the future.
2. Unlike libraries and museums, there is no funding for Archives operations from either Federal or Provincial governments. The onus is on the municipality to provide the funding. Fees can be charged for non-County residents, but the money will never equate to the cost of a staff person or any major expense.
3. A Consultant may be required to help with the planning and design of the Archives. This is beyond the scope of the Committee's mandate and expertise.
4. Middlesex County's historical societies and organizations are struggling with burn out. Succession planning for these historic records is absolutely required to prevent their loss forever.
5. Covid-19 has definitely affected every aspect of municipal management. It is expensive to construct a new building and the shortage of supplies has created an unprecedented increase in costs.

### Opportunities

1. There is a **need and an interest** for a Middlesex County Archives. An investment in a County Archives would provide constituents the realization that County Council is giving back to the community through investment in the future by preserving its past.
2. There is a wealth of knowledge from volunteers within the various CEMCA groups. It is vital to benefit from their expertise sooner than later.
3. Some of the CEMCA groups may have material to donate when their records are transferred. This could include shelving, acid-free supplies and even office furniture.
4. One of the main opportunities is having the appropriate facility to protect and store municipal records according to legislation guidelines. Records will be in a secure environment with authorized staff retrieving the documents and ensuring proper handling of material by patrons.
5. Environmentally-controlled storage facilities are necessary for preserving records. The temperature must be 18-21 degrees Celsius, which is colder than an office environment. Relative humidity (RH) should be between 45-50%. If both elements are not met, mold can occur if humidity is too high, and paper can deteriorate if the temperature and RH are too low.
6. Transferring records to a County Archives will reduce storage costs for lower-tier municipalities.
7. A pro-rated tax levy based on population can be used to help pay the costs of the Archives.