



Meeting Date: March 1, 2023

Submitted by: Colin Toth, Director of Emergency Services

Report No: FS-02-2023

Subject: Fire Services Master Plan and Community Risk Assessment 2023

Recommendation:

THAT Report FS-02-2023, re: Fire Services Master Plan and Community Risk Assessment 2023 be received;

AND THAT the Middlesex Centre Fire Services Master Plan and Community Risk Assessment 2023, attached as Appendix A, as developed by Behr Integrated Solutions be approved;

AND FURTHER THAT the recommendations contained in the Plan be reviewed on an annual basis as part of the Municipality's budget deliberations.

Purpose:

To make a recommendation to the Council regarding the adoption of the Fire Services Master Plan and Community Risk Assessment 2023

Background:

As part of the Municipal Modernization Grant Program Intake 3 – Third-Party Review Stream, Middlesex Centre Fire Services was successful in receiving a \$49,500 grant to cover 100% of the cost to complete a municipal review as it pertains to Fire Services. Derived from this review, two documents were created – the Fire Services Master Plan and the Community Risk Assessment.

The primary motivation for the development of these documents is to assist the Municipality and Middlesex Centre Fire Services to establish both short and long-term strategies based on community risk, safety, corporate priorities, and municipal council-approved budget allocations. The plan also includes an in-depth look at how organizational structure, staffing levels, operational functions, division of labour, use of technology and so forth ensure the Municipality can deliver against its core fire services priorities today and over the next ten years. These documents will be used as a tool to

evaluate and forecast immediate and future emergency service needs while observing additional cost savings for the community.

The Fire Services review accomplished various internal and external goals, inclusive of but not limited to:

1. Analyze cost impacts due to new development and growth in terms of the need for additional staffing, equipment, etc. to maintain infrastructure and facilities for fire services.
2. Recommendation of efficiencies concerning organizational capacity and response with a focus on the use of digital technologies.
4. Review risks associated with a lean operation and prioritize organizational changes to address this.
5. Ensure the function of fire services closely aligns with the Municipality's Strategic Plan, Official Plan and Development Charge Study.
6. Provide benchmarks which the municipality can follow when considering new staff positions, equipment, facilities, etc.
7. Support the delivery of open and transparent municipal programs and services such as those involved in public education and fire prevention.
8. Recommendation of efficiencies for response modelling and benchmarks.
9. Recommendation of efficiencies with respect to working collaboratively with neighbouring municipalities and,
10. Improved service delivery and responsiveness that is comparable to other growing municipalities.

Analysis:

The Fire Services review analyzed all facets of our Fire Services. These included organizational configuration, departmental staffing complements, response models, various operational functions and large-scale asset needs, (equipment, vehicles, facilities, etc.) to ensure our fire services possess the ability to provide core services today and into the future. The review also examined opportunities for enhanced use of digital technologies and other prospects to provide high-quality services to residents and businesses.

Funding for this project was provided under the Province of Ontario's Municipal Modernization Grant Program – Intake 3 – Review Stream. Interim reporting has been completed and final reporting will be finalized following the Council's adoption of this plan.

Given the current state and fire service priorities, there are fifteen (15) recommendations on which Fire Services must focus over the next ten (10) years. These fifteen (15) priorities are discussed in detail in the appended "Prioritization, Project Implementation and Progress Document 2023".

Financial Implications:

The total cost of the service delivery review and creation of the Fire Services Master Plan and Community Risk Assessment documents was \$49,500 with funding provided for the complete amount. There was no impact on the municipal tax levy.

The recommendations of the plan have financial implications over the next ten years with the most notable being the purchase of an aerial apparatus and the proposed hiring of a second Fire Prevention Officer. On the contrary, the potential for significant cost savings exists as anticipated throughout the fifteen recommendations.

As a note, some recommendations within the Fire Services Master Plan such as the hiring of a Deputy Fire Chief and integration of a new report management system have already been undertaken, in 2022.

Strategic Plan:

This matter aligns with the following strategic priorities:

- Responsive Government - Objective 5.3 – Foster a culture of innovation, continuous improvement, and cost-effective service delivery
- Responsive Government - Objective 5.4 – Expand our Partnerships

Attachments:

FS-02-2023 Prioritization, Project implementation and Progress Document 2023