



Meeting Date: October 18, 2023

Submitted by: Colin Toth, Director of Emergency Services & Fire Chief

Report No: FS-06-2023

Subject: Fire Services Master Plan Progress Update

Recommendation:

THAT Report FS-06-2023, re: Fire Services Master Plan Progress Update be received for information.

Purpose:

To update Council on the current progress and prioritization of the recommendations as noted in the 2023 Fire Services Master Plan.

Background:

The primary objective of the Fire Services Master Plan 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, supported by 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. This document 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 2023 Fire Services Master Plan review has identified 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.
3. Review risks associated with a lean operation and prioritize organizational changes to address this.
4. Ensure the function of fire services closely aligns with the Municipality's Strategic Plan, Official Plan and Development Charge Study.
5. Provide benchmarks which the municipality can follow when considering new staff positions, equipment, facilities, etc.
6. Support the delivery of open and transparent municipal programs and services such as those involved in public education and fire prevention.
7. Recommendation of efficiencies for response modelling and benchmarks.
8. Recommendation of efficiencies with respect to working collaboratively with neighbouring municipalities.
9. Improved service delivery and responsiveness that is comparable to other growing municipalities.
10. A thorough examination of our Fire Services ensuring that performance standards and guidelines reflect industry best practices, are following the Ontario Fire Protection and Prevention Act (1997) and the Occupational Health and Safety Act. (OHSA)

Analysis:

A comprehensive review and analysis of the 2023 Fire Services Master Plan and its recommendations has been completed at the department level. The attached Progress Update document attached to this Report which details the recommendations contained in the Plan, prioritization levels and suggested timeframes, projected financial costs and status of each.

Financial Implications:

Several recommendations contained within the 2023 Fire Services Master Plan have varying degrees of financial impact with the most notable being the purchase of an aerial apparatus. The potential for significant cost savings exists within many of the fifteen recommendations.

Any known projected costs for the recommendations currently being delivered have been noted within the Progress Update document and identified in the proposed 2024 Fire Services Operational budget. As subsequent progress updates are provided to Council, any additional financial implications will also be noted.

Strategic Plan:

This matter aligns with 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-06-2023a Fire Services Master Plan Progress Update