



Meeting Date: October 13, 2021

Submitted by: Michael Di Lullo, CAO and Tiffany Farrell, Treasurer

Report No: CAO-26-2021

Subject: Municipal Modernization Program – Intake 3

Recommendation:

THAT Report CAO-26-2021, re: Municipal Modernization Program – Intake 3 be received;

AND THAT the CAO and Treasurer continue with the submissions as outlined in Report 26-2021 to proceed with the identified projects.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update regarding the Municipal Modernization Program – Intake 3 and an explanation of the different intakes that the Government of Ontario has created and how the Municipality intends to make submissions and also make use of such funding.

Background:

To assist municipalities in the delivery of municipal services, the Province developed and launched the Municipal Modernization Program which is designed to assist small and rural municipalities across Ontario by supporting the review, development and delivery of modern and efficient municipal services. This program has been developed and carried out in phases.

Analysis:

Unconditional One-time Modernization Funding

In March of 2019, the Province announced a one-time investment for small and rural municipalities to improve service delivery and efficiency. This resulted in a one-time transfer of unconditional modernization funding dollars to 405 of Ontario's municipalities. Middlesex Centre received \$610,207 in one-time funds under the Municipal Modernization Program.

To ensure investments were targeted to where they were needed most, the Province developed their funding allocation based on the number of households in a municipality, and whether the municipality is urban or rural.

Municipal Modernization Program: Intake 1 & 2

In October 2019, the Province building on its previous investment to assist municipalities transform their service delivery, developed and launched an application-based funding program under the Municipal Modernization Program portfolio. The Municipal Modernization Program was launched with two intake periods. The first intake period saw applications submitted for Service Delivery Reviews in December of 2019.

The first intake was done in partnership with the County and other lower-tier municipalities to review various operating systems that could be upgraded/improved – as identified in the Analysis below. Middlesex Centre also submitted two independent applications, which were both denied.

The second intake period under the Municipal Modernization Program was recently announced in January of 2021. The second intake of the program has two streams: 1) Review Stream (as per first intake) and 2) Implementation Stream.

The Municipality was successful in the second intake for a project related to information technology services which is now underway. Not to mention that the Municipality, in partnership with the County and other lower-tier municipalities, was also successful in grant submissions related to reviewing of processing such as procurement, and planning.

Municipal Modernization Program - Intake 3: Application Deadline

On August 16, 2021, the Government announced the continuation of the modernization program with a further intake. Based on the previous intakes that examined ways to automate processes, the intent of this grant is to continue forward with implementation based on the following priorities:

- Digital modernization
- Service integration
- Streamlined development approvals
- Shared services/alternative delivery models

Upon reviewing the program requirements, the following projects are suggested to be put forward for consideration:

1. Third Party Review – Customer Relationship Management Review

The purpose of this application is to examine our customer service policy approach and ways in which we can automate to provide service to residents. The estimated cost for this project is between \$60-75K and is fully covered by the grant.

2. Third Party Review – Organizational Review \$40K-\$50K –

The purpose of this application is to examine the service levels of the organization against the growth demands experienced over the last couple of years along with how we respond to the continued growth that will occur over the foreseeable future. This review may be done in tandem with one or two other lower-tier municipalities who have expressed interest and the estimated cost for this project is between \$40-50K and is fully covered by the grant.

3. Third Party Review – Fire Services Master Plan

The purpose of this application is to undertake a fire master plan for the municipality to ensure that our fire organization is set up properly to respond to the growing and changing needs of the municipality. This review is fully covered and the estimated cost for this project is \$50K.

4. Modernization Intake 3 – Asset Essentials Live tracking

The purpose of this application is to put forward an application to advance our investment for asset management to purchase tablets for field use in outward facing operations. The estimated cost of this submission is \$25,375 and is 65% covered.

Should the Municipality be successful in these submissions, staff will report back accordingly.

Financial Implications:

The first three projects are 100% covered by the grant submission and the fourth project is 65% covered.

Strategic Plan:

This matter aligns with following strategic priorities:

- Responsive Municipal Government

Utilizing funds from the Government to address service and make improvements positions the municipality to manage future demands such as growth, pandemic and above all, ensuring that staff have the systems in place to operate effectively

Attachments:

Attachment – Correspondence from Minister Clark dated August 16, 2021