

# COUNTY OF DUFFERIN

## Service Delivery Review

→ Part A: Final Recommendations Report

December 18, 2020

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## Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this document is to present recommendations for the County of Dufferin based on the findings from the Service Delivery Review (SDR) undertaken in 2020. This Report outlines recommendations for the County with respect to shared municipal services/resources (Part A) and includes:

- A summary of current state strengths and challenges;
- Recommendations for operational efficiencies and service improvement
- Rationale for recommendations; and,
- Financial and resource implementation considerations.

In conjunction with the Recommendations Report for Part B of the SDR, these Reports represent the final deliverable for this SDR project. While a summary of key findings from the Part A Interim Report are included in this document, it is expected that readers will be familiar with that Report so that they may understand the context and rationale for the recommendations included here.

This Report has been divided into two primary sections, an Executive Summary and the Full Report.

# 1.Executive Summary

## Project Overview

In 2020, the management consulting firm, Optimus SBR, was engaged by the County of Dufferin and its eight Member Municipalities: Amaranth, East Garafraxa, Grand Valley, Melancthon, Mono, Mulmur, Orangeville, and Shelburne. The purpose of the engagement was to conduct a comprehensive service review of shared municipal services/resources (Part A), as well as internal County operations and human/community services (Part B) with the goal of identifying opportunities to modernize service delivery in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

This report provides a summary of recommendations associated with Part A of this project.

## Project Approach

The graphic below describes the approach taken by Optimus SBR to achieve project objectives. The approach included three major phases of work, each having its own discreet activities that built on one another.



## Principles Developing Recommendations

The process by which Optimus SBR developed recommendations to address current state findings was guided by a series of core principles that were detailed and agreed-to during the course of this project. These principles were key to the systematic development of recommendations:

- Recommendations were developed to address significant gaps identified during the review or to address the lack of adherence to leading practices.
- Where relevant leading practices did not appear to be followed by the County and/or Member Municipalities, Optimus SBR provided recommendations to adopt these practices.
- Wherever possible, engagement activities were conducted to support the development of recommendations to ensure they incorporated the knowledge and inputs of relevant stakeholders.

- Achieving full consensus on a recommendation was not requirement for their inclusion in this Report, as the recommendations here represent Optimus SBR's perspective on the best course of action for the County.

## Summary of Findings and Recommendations

This section is divided by service area and contains a brief summary of relevant findings and recommendations for each one.

### A1: Accounting

| Service Review Summary   |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Objective of the Review</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify potential efficiencies through shared service provision or technology resources.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Strengths</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff appear committed to sharing best practices and regularly share and engage in forums that go beyond Dufferin County;</li> <li>• Member Municipality and County staff demonstrate a strong team-oriented culture; and,</li> <li>• Orangeville and Shelburne have recently refined their budgeting process to establish an objectives-based approach to budgeting which includes developing a budget framework where the respective Councils will endorse the key priorities of the Member Municipality.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Gaps</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortages of administrative support roles (such as treasury assistant and financial analysts) is an issue among several Member Municipalities;</li> <li>• Limited online payment options for residents has not been a common concern in the past, however, additional options have increasingly been requested from residents of the Member Municipalities; and,</li> <li>• Duplication/completion of very similar tasks across the Member Municipalities on a regular basis.</li> </ul>                               |
| Recommendations  |   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a budget framework</li> <li>2. Explore a shared budgeting and accounting software</li> </ol> |   |

## A2: Indoor Recreation Facilities

| Service Review Summary   |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Objective of the Review</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify optimal approach for cost-sharing forthcoming infrastructure investments and ongoing operations and maintenance</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Strengths</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A commitment among the leadership of Member Municipalities to ensure that residents have access to Indoor Recreation Facilities; and</li> <li>Alignment among staff leadership of Member Municipalities in their priorities for delivering Indoor Recreation Facilities, including quality and sustainability.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Gaps</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A lack of a regional approach to planning for recreation services</li> <li>A lack of a clear understanding of the exact needs or preferences of the community with respect to Indoor Recreation services;</li> <li>No performance indicators (e.g., satisfaction, etc.) being recorded or produced by the Management Boards overseeing Indoor Recreation Facilities;</li> <li>Reporting structures that do not facilitate a direct line of sight into the operations of the facility for some Recreation Boards of Management</li> <li>No comprehensive financial sustainability report for each facility/Governance Board.</li> <li>Costs associated with the delivery of Indoor Recreation Facilities by the three Recreation Boards have increased significantly in recent years, without a corresponding increase in user fee revenue, resulting in higher levels of municipal funding.</li> </ul> |
| Recommendations  |   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore a revision to the current governance structure associated with Indoor Recreation Facilities in the Rural Municipalities</li> <li>Develop a regional Recreation &amp; Facilities Strategy</li> </ol> |   |

### A3: By-Law Enforcement

| Service Review Summary   |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Objective of the Review</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify shared service options to address capacity constraints and improve service outcomes, potentially including legal services related to By-Law Enforcement</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Strengths</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CAOs at each member municipality noted that by-law enforcement activities were being carried out effectively amongst their respective member municipalities,</li> <li>Resources were being shared wherever possible.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Gaps</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that with increasing growth in some member municipalities' built space and subdivision development, the number of by-law enforcement complaints has risen and will likely continue to rise. Therefore, there is a possibility for aligning by-laws to major infractions across the member municipalities except for Orangeville and Shelburne.</li> <li>Consideration of standardization of the major elements of by-law enforcement roles would support a process whereby resources could be shared to cover off gaps due to absences or turnover. This would promote a consistent approach to by-law enforcement across the County and potentially enhance service experience in the event that officers were being shared between municipalities.</li> </ul> |
| Recommendations  |   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update By-Law Enforcement policies</li> <li>Hire a shared By-Law Enforcement Officer</li> <li>Develop key performance indicators</li> </ol> |   |



## A4: Economic Development

| Service Review Summary  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Objective of the Review</b>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To Identify opportunities to align strategic priorities across the organizations and reduce duplication of effort.</li> <li>• To identify options for defining roles and responsibilities across County and Member Municipalities given available resources.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Strengths</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member Municipalities and their respective CAOs understand that economic development occurring in any Member Municipality has positive economic impacts across the County, and particularly for neighbouring municipalities.</li> <li>• Another strength that was noted was the active and engaged Economic Development Committee (EDC) public members.</li> <li>• The County of Dufferin, Orangeville and Shelburne have developed Economic Development Strategic Plans or Annual Reports identifying their goals and objectives for the service. The County and Orangeville have also determined key sectors to focus economic development activities on. The annual work of the Economic Development offices for these respective municipalities is shaped by those goals and strategic plans, with a particular aim by the County to act as a coordinator of economic development activities across the County.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Gaps</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Though there are areas of core economic development services being offered in the urban municipalities of the County, and at the County level itself, there are barriers to developing a regional coordinated economic development strategy in particular for the rural municipalities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lack of staff capacity; and,</li> <li>○ Limited access to economic development expertise.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Without dedicated support, there is limited capacity at the rural Member municipalities to develop robust economic development priorities.</li> </ul>   |
| Recommendations   |   |
| 8. Develop a Collaborative Framework and Action Plan for the region |   |

## A5: Fire Services

| Service Review Summary         |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Objective of the Review</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To Identify opportunities to streamline governance and accountability structures to better match service levels to local needs; and,</li> <li>• To identify opportunities to reduce risks associated with HR, IT, insurance and procurement.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Strengths</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated ability for Fire Departments to support each other and work together during emergency situations (e.g., mutual aid calls);</li> <li>• Clear roles and responsibilities associated with the areas covered by each Fire Department;</li> <li>• Commitment among Member Municipalities to work together in the provision of Fire Services;</li> <li>• Formal agreements are in place outlining coverage areas and funding for each Fire Department; and,</li> <li>• Stakeholders feel confident in the equipment and personnel of the Fire Departments across Dufferin County.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Gaps</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Boards do not appear to be reporting aggregate performance levels to Fire Boards, CAOs, or the Public</li> <li>• Performance targets / service levels are not clearly documented or included in Fire Board agreements;</li> <li>• At this time, it is unknown how the service level (e.g. response times) may vary across the County;</li> <li>• Governance structures that create concerns regarding risk management regarding the operations of the facility for some Fire Boards of Management, resulting in uncertainty among Municipal staff leadership regarding adherence to policies and procedures, despite being covered under Municipal insurance policies.</li> <li>• There are concerns with the governance of Fire Boards including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A lack of direct involvement by municipal staff in the discussions of Fire Boards</li> <li>○ The Fire Boards have not implemented a Board Skills Matrix to identify required Board Member Skills</li> <li>○ Limited training or orientation provided to new Board Members to orient them to the operations of the Department</li> <li>○ Limited training or orientation provided to Board Members regarding the municipal legislative requirements involved in providing fire services, and technical requirements of service delivery</li> </ul> </li> <li>• At least two of the Fire Boards operate under the insurance policy of one of the participating member municipalities, which is viewed as a risk by CAOs as they have no direct authority to ensure compliance</li> <li>• While Joint Board of Management agreements identify board Secretary and Treasury support provided by the municipality to the Fire Board, they do not account for other support/skills that are required for effective operations of a municipal department such as IT and IT security, Procurement, HR, etc.</li> </ul> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There does not appear to be any formal approach to procurement or asset planning across the Fire Departments;</li><li>• Municipal staff do not have full confidence that procurement guidelines are always followed for Board governed Fire Services</li><li>• Municipal staff stakeholders do not have full confidence that Human Resources policies are always followed (or even exist)</li><li>• Municipal staff expressed some concerns regarding the workload associated with the Secretary-Treasurer role on the Fire Board.</li></ul> |
| <b>Recommendations</b>   |  |
| 9. Explore alternative structures/governance mechanisms for Fire Departments currently governed by Fire Boards |  |
| 10. Establish a regional Fire Chiefs Association   |  |
| 11. Improve reporting and performance measurement  |  |

## A6: Human Resources (HR) Services

| Service Review Summary   |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Objective of the Review</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify shared service delivery models to improve service outcomes including Health and Safety.</li> <li>• To identify opportunities to mitigate costs, including potentially related legal services, through shared services.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Strengths</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A commitment to identifying gaps in HR services, policies, or procedures, and addressing them as quickly as possible;</li> <li>• A shared resource devoted to Health and Safety requirements at the County and Member Municipalities to improve capacity in this area;</li> <li>• Positive experiences working with external HR consultants to support compliance with specific legislation; and</li> <li>• A culture of support and commitment among CAOs to offer guidance on HR issues, where appropriate.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Gaps</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to updating HR policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the latest employment standards requirements and associated legislation;</li> <li>• Time-consuming activities spent on recruitment tasks such as candidate shortlists, ad placements, etc.</li> <li>• A lack of dedicated in-house HR expertise available in the smaller Member Municipalities to address concerns</li> <li>• Limited Health and Safety Support from the Shared Resource since their retirement approximately nine months ago, potentially leaving some Member Municipalities challenged to ensure compliance.</li> </ul> |
| Recommendations  |  |
| <p>12. Develop a Health and Safety Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>13. Explore retaining a shared HR consulting firm</p> <p>14. Explore the potential for a common HRIS shared platform</p> |  |

## A7: IT Services

| Service Review Summary                             |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Objective of the Review</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify opportunities to consolidate resources and standardize business processes and tools to improve service outcomes, potentially including website construction and maintenance.</li> <li>• To identify a service delivery model to fairly distribute costs.</li> <li>• To identify opportunities to pool resources for enhanced cybersecurity.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Strengths</b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT Support Services provided by the County are well received by client Member Municipalities. Interviewees indicated that staff were prompt, reliable and knowledgeable.</li> <li>• Member Municipalities providing internal IT Services are of the view that they meet their internal needs and are able to push innovations for online service delivery to residents and businesses.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Gaps</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Member Municipalities receiving IT Services from Dufferin County may not be paying the full cost of the services they receive</li> <li>• The only gap in County provided IT services was that no coverage was available beyond regular business hours, however those who were enrolled in the service indicate that that this had not impacted operations.</li> <li>• Some stakeholders are concerned about cybersecurity practices and infrastructure currently in place.</li> <li>• There are concerns regarding the capacity of IT staff (County or Member Municipality providing internal IT Services) to absorb additional workloads.</li> </ul> |
| Recommendations                                    |  |
| 15. Develop a costing model for County IT Services |  |
| 16. Establish a regional working group             |  |

## A8: Planning Services

| Service Review Summary  |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Objective of the Review</b>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify opportunities for a more coordinated approach to streamline resources and processes county-wide</li> <li>• To Identify opportunities for technology improvements</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Strengths</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong collaboration among Member Municipalities, as well as corresponding collaboration amongst planning staff and leadership, (though those Member Municipalities with a dedicated planner noted that aligning planning activities takes considerable effort);</li> <li>• A high degree of engagement and collaboration through the Planners of Dufferin (PoD) forum where planning staff meet regularly to discuss relevant planning concerns, upcoming policy changes, and share best practices; and</li> <li>• A clear distinction in the role of the County and that of Member Municipalities in the development of Official Plans, as well as Official Plan Amendments. Though there is overlap in the process and a need for collaboration, the County is responsible for planning priorities at the County level that impact more than one municipality, whereas Member Municipalities are responsible for local level and zoning by-law interpretations.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Gaps</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varied approaches to GIS support and the use of consultants across the County, which may represent duplication;</li> <li>• Different software platforms being used across the Member Municipalities</li> <li>• Planning services emerging as an increasing source of work, often driven by public inquiries, making it difficult to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ be proactive in undertaking planning activities;</li> <li>○ estimate work effort over time; and</li> <li>○ work on policy projects, and</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A lack of performance measurement with respect to planning activities.</li> </ul>  |
| Recommendations   |  |
| 17. Streamline and Make Consistent the Development Approval Process |  |
| 18. Explore GIS Support with the County                             |  |

## A9: Procurement Services

| Service Review Summary   |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Objective of the Review</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify opportunities for potential cost savings through group purchasing process</li> <li>• To identify opportunities for increased effectiveness through pooling resources</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Strengths</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All CAOs indicated that wherever possible group purchasing had been considered or implemented for cost efficiencies across the County.</li> <li>• There appeared to be a standard practice to include a clause for “Inclusion of Non-Participating Dufferin County Municipalities” to allow other municipalities to participate in group purchasing options.</li> <li>• There has been considerable informal sharing of procurement related documents, templates and tenders.</li> <li>• Every Member Municipality noted that they are very cost-conscious given their scope of services and budget, and drive for value for money in purchasing decisions.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Gaps</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lack of awareness of changes to and/or the existence of new free trade agreements impacting municipal procurement policies, and therefore updates required to ensure compliance (this is also linked to the finding that there has not been a regular review of procurement policy and by-laws by several Member Municipalities);</li> <li>• A lack of expertise in writing policies, or the lack of capacity for staff to spend time researching and being aware of best practices; and</li> <li>• A lack of a coordinated procurement strategy or approach across the County, though examples shared during interviews with Member Municipalities indicated informal opportunities for sharing procurement practices or group purchasing options.</li> <li>• A challenge that some of the rural municipalities faced was that given the size of tenders, and their distance from larger bidders, it could be difficult depending on the season and the product category to attract bids. Interviewees did note however that if a vendor was in the County for a specific service that may be beneficial to others, it was shared with staff at other Member Municipalities.</li> </ul> |
| Recommendations  |   |
| <p>19. Modernize Procurement Methods</p> <p>20. Establish a Dufferin Procurement Working Group</p> |   |

## A10: Roads Services

| Service Review Summary   |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Objective of the Review</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify opportunities for an integrated road network for greater efficiency</li> <li>• To identify opportunities to address duplication and capacity constraints by sharing resources</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Strengths</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boundary road agreements in place where necessary that address maintenance, and capital and operating cost requirements; and</li> <li>• A willingness to share equipment where it is possible and aligns with the timelines and needs of the equipment owner.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Gaps</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lack of a current, regional comprehensive Transportation Master Plan that includes the County and Member Municipalities;</li> <li>• In the absence of a current master plan, there is a risk that the current roads structure does not optimally service the community</li> <li>• Limited proactive sharing of Roads Services equipment, with sharing that does occur reactive and responding to urgent requirements;</li> <li>• Low utilization in several instances of pieces of equipment owned by multiple Member Municipalities or the County (e.g., multiple excavators and loaders across the Public Works departments); and</li> <li>• Limited meetings among members of the Dufferin Caledon Roads Supervisors Association</li> </ul> |
| Recommendations  |   |
| <p>21. Continue the development of the Transportation Master Plan</p> <p>22. Develop a Dufferin-wide Public Works Asset Management Plan for equipment/vehicles</p> |   |



## A11: Winter Control Services

| Service Review Summary   |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Objective of the Review</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify opportunities for an integrated winter maintenance plan to improve service delivery for residents</li> <li>• To identify opportunities to reduced costs through shared service/resource models</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Strengths</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong relationships across the public works departments of the County and Member Municipalities, with stakeholders indicating a strong willingness and proactive approach to provide support to one another when required;</li> <li>• Member Municipalities' inclusion of option of other municipalities to join in their Winter Control procurements;</li> <li>• A formal mechanism for regular meetings of Member Municipalities;</li> <li>• Ongoing equipment and information sharing to support Winter Control Services, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ access to Weather Monitoring applications;</li> <li>○ two-way radio for the six rural Member Municipalities; and</li> <li>○ access to and use of 511 to provide real-time updates for road closures.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |
| <b>Gaps</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly reactive and ad hoc collaborative support and mutual aid provided across the public works departments;</li> <li>• Difficulty of pre-staging winter control equipment at different locations, given that Public Works stakeholders commented that their public works yards are each at capacity for indoor vehicle storage;</li> <li>• A communications gap between municipal staff and politicians (and potentially the larger community) regarding the legislative requirements associated with road service levels and operational realities</li> <li>• Decisions by the County to close roads because of road conditions are not always well communicated to Member Municipalities, causing knock-on effects to winter control operations of Member Municipalities</li> <li>• Equipment used for Winter Control is not standardized, which results in the need to carry an inventory of spare parts across the County</li> </ul> |
| Recommendations  |   |
| 23. Develop a business case for establishing a second County operations centre<br>24. Enhance communications protocols<br>25. Increase storage space |   |

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Project Context

The County of Dufferin is located in Central Ontario and has approximately 62,000 residents. The Member Municipalities of the County are a rural and urban mix consisting of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, Grand Valley, Melancthon, Mono, Mulmur, Orangeville, and Shelburne.

Residents, businesses and partners in the County are currently served by a mix of local municipal, County, and shared services. Although many services appear to be working well, there is potential for service delivery improvements.

The County is growing rapidly every year, putting pressure on existing services and pushing the County and Member Municipalities to look for efficiencies to continue to provide strong services. In support of the County's Strategic Plan priorities and objectives of Service Efficiency and Value and Good Governance, in 2020, the County of Dufferin undertook a comprehensive service review of the following focus areas:

- o Shared municipal services/resources;
- o Internal County operations; and,
- o Human/community services.

To complete this SDR, the County contracted the services of Optimus SBR to support the review of service areas and identify areas of opportunity with regards to efficiency, effectiveness, and service level.

### 1.2 Project Mission & Success

#### Project Mission

The Project Mission defines why the County and its Member Municipalities have engaged Optimus SBR. For this engagement, the Mission is defined as:

- o To assist the County of Dufferin in conducting a comprehensive service review of shared municipal services/resources, internal County operations, and human/community services.

#### Project Success

Project success outlines what the County and its Member Municipalities were to expect at the conclusion of this engagement. For this engagement, project success was defined as:

- o An in-depth understanding of current services and service delivery methods
- o Provision of actionable recommendations for efficient, effective, and sustainable delivery of municipal Services
- o Alignment of all engagement and outcomes with the County's strategic priorities

- o Buy-in among County and Member Municipality stakeholders that the recommendations are aligned to the community needs and will reduce operational costs and improve service delivery
- o Continuous transfer of knowledge to County staff on tools, techniques and general methodology.

This engagement consisted of two parts:

- **Part A**, with a focus on existing and potential shared services across the County and Member Municipalities; and
- **Part B**, with a focus on services provided by the County of Dufferin itself.

### 1.3 Project Approach

The graphic below describes the approach taken by Optimus SBR to achieve project objectives. The approach included three major phases of work, each having its own discreet activities that built on one another.

*Project Approach*



## 1.4 Project Deliverables

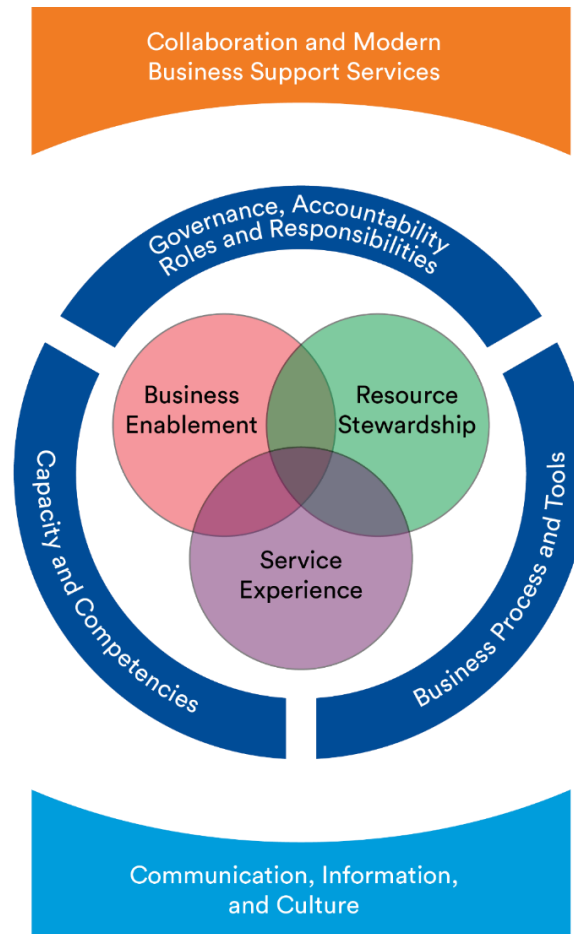
The table below outlines each deliverable of this engagement. Highlighted in orange is the deliverable represented by this document:

| DELIVERABLE  | DESCRIPTION  |
|--|--|
| <b>Project Plan</b>                                  | Sets key dates for deliverables and milestones, while also detailing accountabilities of both Optimus SBR and the County and its Member Municipalities project resources.  |
| <b>Consolidated Service Inventory</b>                | A complete list of services for both Part A and B compiled based on staff input.   |
| <b>Final In-Scope Service List</b>                   | Finalized lists of in-scope services for both Part A and B, validated and approved by the Working Group/Steering Committee (Part A services) and the County Service Review Team (Part B services).   |
| <b>Stakeholder Consultation Plans</b>                | Outlines proposed approach and methodologies for stakeholder engagement activities pertaining to Part A and B to ensure they are effective and produce meaningful outcomes.  |
| <b>Interim Report/ In-Scope Service Profiles</b>     | Profiles will be developed in conjunction with the Working Group and County Service Review Team for each in-scope service for both Part A and B and are expected to include Review Scope and Objectives, Current State Findings, Key Challenges, and Next Steps. |
| <b>Interim Presentations</b>                         | Consolidated current state findings which will be presented to the Joint Council Workshop, County Council, and each Member Municipality.   |
| <b>Consolidated Draft Report</b>                     | A consolidated Draft Report for County Council including engagement outputs for both Part A and B.   |
| <b>Final Reports</b>                                 | All feedback and revisions will be incorporated into the Draft Reports. The Reports will be finalized, including specific financial implications.  |
| <b>Presentations of Findings and Recommendations</b> | Key parts of the Final Reports will be presented to Member Municipalities, County Council, and County Staff. Provisional presentations, such as to the Joint Council Workshop, each Council, and public meetings can be discussed with the County at extra cost. |

## 2. Shared Services Delivery Review Framework

Optimus SBR is employed a Service Delivery Review Framework (SDRF) to effectively and efficiently review services in a consistent manner. The SDRF has two parts to ensure that Shared and County Services are reviewed in a manner that respects their unique structures, goals, and delivery mechanisms.

*Optimus SBR Shared Services Delivery Framework*



The Framework contains three fundamental objectives to be achieved for Shared Services in any public sector operating environment. Specifically, these objectives are:

- o **Business Enablement:** Shared services are supported and enabled with high quality and expert services that enable Member Municipalities to deliver on their mandates, programs, and goals.
- o **Resource Stewardship:** Shared services are efficient and support proper stewardship of resources, while maintaining compliance with any applicable legislation, policies and by-laws.
- o **Service Experience:** Shared services provide a positive service experience, based on shared values, expectations, and respect.

These three objectives are supported by three Success Factors and three Foundational Supports:

**Success Factors:**

- o **Governance, Accountability, Roles, and Responsibilities:** Governance and organizational structures are clear and understood by relevant service providers and partners.
- o **Business Processes and Tools:** Processes by which services are performed and the policies, guidelines, templates, and systems to support them are well designed and defined.
- o **Capacity and Competencies:** Shared services are properly resourced in terms of staff organization, competencies, expertise and numbers.

**Foundational Supports:**

- o **Communication:** Internal communication and information sharing among providers, partners, and residents is effective and efficient.
- o **Information:** Data supports providers/partners with information for evidence-based decision-making.
- o **Culture:** Shared services operations embrace a culture that supports a customer-centric service delivery.

This framework was used throughout the review of services and the subsequent development of recommendations.

### 3. Recommendations Overview

The following tables provides an evaluation guide for measuring the impact of each recommendation against the three fundamental objectives of shared services: business enablement, resource stewardship and service experience.

| Evaluation Guide                      |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Shared Service Objective              | High  | Medium  | Low   |
| <b>Impact on Business Enablement</b>  | Significant impact on providing staff/service provide with expertise, processes, tools, collaboration and resources to deliver on mandates, programs, and goals.                                    | Some positive impact on providing staff/service provide with expertise, processes, tools, collaboration and resources to deliver on mandates, programs, and goals.                                    | No, or minimal, impact on the enhancement of the expertise, processes, tools, collaboration, or resources to deliver on mandates, programs, and goals.  |
| <b>Impact on Resource Stewardship</b> | Significant impact on the potential to realize financial or resource savings (or reduce rate of increase for higher service volume requests) while maintaining or improving defined service levels. | Some positive impact on the potential to realize financial or resource savings (or reduce rate of increase for higher service volume requests) while maintaining or improving defined service levels. | No, or minimal, impact on the potential to realize financial or resource savings (or reduce rate of increase for higher service volume requests) while maintaining or improving defined service levels. |
| <b>Impact on Service Experience</b>   | Significant, noticeable, and measurable improvement on the quality/level of service provided is expected.   | Some positive and measurable improvement on the quality/level of service provided is expected.  | No, or minimal, measurable improvement on the quality/level of service provided is expected.  |

| Implementation Considerations         | High  | Medium   | Low   |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Implementation Difficulty/Cost</b> | <p>Significant new investments are required to implement the recommendation (one time and/or ongoing). Will require considerable external support to design and lead the implementation. (estimated greater than \$100k)</p> <p>Recommendation may require 12+ months for implementation</p> <p>Change management considerations will need to be accounted for as the recommendation will have impacts on processes, technology, and or culture beyond the focus service.</p> | <p>Some new costs (one time or ongoing) are anticipated as a result of new staff or one-time spends (IT, consulting, etc.). Likely requires some external support for specific, highly specialized activities (legal, HR, etc.) (estimated less than \$100k)</p> <p>Recommendations may require 12+ months to implement</p> <p>Will require consideration for organizational impacts beyond the focus serve and change management activities should be considered.</p> | <p>Minimal costs associated with new positions or external vendors. Minimal new system costs. Recommendation can be primarily be supported by staff and some external vendor support to augment capacity.</p> <p>Recommendation can be accomplished within 12 months.</p> <p>Minimal negative disruption on organization culture, process, etc.</p> |



### 3.1 Recommendation Summary: Impact on Shared Service Objectives & Applicability to Municipalities

Outlined below is a summary table of the recommendations under each service, which has been evaluated for impact in four key areas: business enablement, resource stewardship, service experience, and also on implementation cost/effort required. In addition, the applicability to the Member Municipalities and the County has been provided for quick reference.

| Recommendation  | Service            | Impact on Shared Service Objectives |                                |                              |                            | Applicability to individual Municipalities* |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|   |                    | Impact on Business Enablement       | Impact on Resource Stewardship | Impact on Service Experience | Implementation Cost/Effort | AM  | EG | GV | ME | MO | MU | OR | SH | CD |
| Development of a budget framework   | Accounting         | High                                | High                           | Medium                       | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |    |    |    |
| Explore a shared budgeting and municipal software   | Accounting         | Medium                              | Medium                         | Low                          | Medium                     | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |
| Explore a revision to the current governance structure associated with Indoor Recreation Facilities in the Rural Municipalities | Indoor Recreation  | High                                | Low                            | Low                          | Medium                     | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |    | x  |    |
| Develop a regional Recreation & Facilities Strategy   | Indoor Recreation  | High                                | Medium                         | High                         | High                       | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |
| Update By-Law Enforcement policies  | By-Law Enforcement | Medium                              | Low                            | Medium                       | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |

| Recommendation   | Service              | Impact on Shared Service Objectives |                                |                              |                            | Applicability to individual Municipalities* |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|  |                      | Impact on Business Enablement       | Impact on Resource Stewardship | Impact on Service Experience | Implementation Cost/Effort | AM  | EG | GV | ME | MO | MU | OR | SH | CD |
| Hire a shared By-Law Enforcement Officer   | By-Law Enforcement   | Medium                              | Medium                         | Medium                       | Medium                     | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |    |    |    |
| Develop key performance indicators   | By-Law Enforcement   | Medium                              | Low                            | Medium                       | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |    |
| Develop a Collaborative Framework and Action Plan for the region   | Economic Development | High                                | Low                            | High                         | High                       | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |
| Explore alternative structures/ governance mechanisms for Fire Departments currently governed by Fire Boards | Fire Services        | High                                | Low                            | Low                          | Medium                     | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |    |    |
| Establish a regional Fire Chiefs Association   | Fire Services        | High                                | Medium                         | Low                          | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |    |
| Improve reporting and performance measurement  | Fire Services        | Medium                              | Low                            | Medium                       | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |    | x  |    |
| Develop a Health and Safety Memorandum of Understanding  | Human Resources      | Medium                              | Low                            | Medium                       | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |    | x  | x  |

| Recommendation  | Service         | Impact on Shared Service Objectives   |                                |                              |                            | Applicability to individual Municipalities* |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---|-----------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|   |                 | Impact on Business Enablement   | Impact on Resource Stewardship | Impact on Service Experience | Implementation Cost/Effort | AM  | EG | GV | ME | MO | MU | OR | SH | CD |
| Explore retaining a shared HR consulting firm                   | Human Resources | Medium  | Medium                         | Medium                       | Medium                     | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |    | x  |    |
| Explore the potential for a common HRIS shared platform         | Human Resources | High  | Low                            | High                         | Medium                     | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |
| Develop a costing model for County IT Services**                | IT              | N/A – The County IT Services costing model will allow for informed decision making regarding the provision of this service to Member Municipalities. The model itself is not expected to impact services. |                                |                              | Medium                     | x   | x  |    | x  |    |    |    | x  | x  |
| Establish a regional Working Group                              | IT              | High  | Medium                         | Medium                       | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |
| Streamline and Make Consistent the Development Approval Process | Planning        | Medium  | Low                            | High                         | Medium                     | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |
| Explore GIS Support with the County                             | Planning        | Medium  | Medium                         | Medium                       | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |
| Modernize Procurement Methods                                   | Procurement     | High  | High                           | High                         | Medium                     | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |
| Establish a Dufferin Procurement Working Group                  | Procurement     | Medium  | Medium                         | Medium                       | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |

| Recommendation  | Service        | Impact on Shared Service Objectives |                                |                              |                            | Applicability to individual Municipalities* |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---|----------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|   |                | Impact on Business Enablement       | Impact on Resource Stewardship | Impact on Service Experience | Implementation Cost/Effort | AM  | EG | GV | ME | MO | MU | OR | SH | CD |
| Continue the development of the Transportation Master Plan                        | Roads          | High                                | Low                            | High                         | High                       | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |
| Develop a Dufferin wide Public Works Asset Management Plan for equipment/vehicles | Roads          | Medium                              | Medium                         | Low                          | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |
| Develop a business case for establishing a second County operations centre        | Winter Control | Medium                              | Low                            | High                         | Low                        |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | x  |
| Enhance communications protocols  | Winter Control | High                                | Low                            | Medium                       | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |
| Increase storage space  | Winter Control | Medium                              | Low                            | Medium                       | Low                        | x   | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  |

\*Acronyms

- AM - Amaranth
- EG – East Garafraxa
- GV – Grand Valley
- ME – Melancthon
- MO – Mono

- MU – Mono
- OR - Orangeville
- SH – Shelburne
- CD – County of Dufferin

\*\* The applicability to individual Municipalities indicates those Member Municipalities that currently receive services from the County.

## 4. Accounting

The goal of the review of Accounting services was to identify potential areas of duplication, and where formal or informal agreements for technology sharing may exist. In order to achieve that there are two recommendations proposed below:

1. Development of a budget framework
2. Explore a shared budgeting and municipal software

These recommendations are detailed further below, and align to the following Service Delivery Review Framework focus areas:

- Governance, Accountability, Business Processes and Tools
- Business Processes and Tools

The expansion of digital online payment options was identified as an opportunity in the Draft Interim Report, however due to the pandemic, it was noted that many Member Municipalities have since already expanded online payment options due to the measures put in place for COVID-19. It is recommended that online payment options continue to be provided for municipal services, and that it continue to be explored for the purposes of paying municipal property taxes, as is done so by several Member Municipalities currently (including Amaranth, Mono, Orangeville).

### 4.1 Recommendation 1: Development of a Budget Framework

Development of a budget framework for the rural Member Municipalities that would tie the budget to key strategic priorities.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Orangeville and Shelburne have recently refined their budgeting process to establish an objectives-based approach to budgeting which includes developing a budget framework where the respective Councils will endorse the key priorities of the Member Municipality.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

Municipalities are allocated scarce resources to operate programs and services through the budget process. The budgeting process is therefore one of the most important activities undertaken by governments and the budgeting process can be a powerful tool. The quality of decisions resulting from the budget process and the level of their buy in to budget decisions depends on the budget process that is used. The National Advisory Council of

State and Local Budgeting<sup>1</sup> states that a good budget process is characterized by several essential features including:

- Incorporates a long-term perspective;
- Establishes linkages to broad organizational goals;
- Focuses budget decisions on results and outcomes;
- Involves and promotes effective communication with stakeholders; and,
- Provide incentives to management and employees.

The budget framework should include the following key components<sup>2</sup>:

- **Establish strategic broad goals to guide government:** Where long term community plans or strategic plans have not been developed, its important to start by assessing the community needs and priorities to identify opportunities and challenges to understand the goals of the municipality. These goals then need to be reviewed with key stakeholders (staff, elected officials, citizens) and any input and feedback incorporated into the organizational goals.
- **Determining approaches to achieve goals:** Policies would need to be developed for the use of key budgeting tools, including fees and charges for services, debt issuance and management, revenue diversification and contingency planning. It should also include the development of plans for each division or program area, including operating and capital components.
- **Develop a budget consistent with approaches to achieve goals:** At this point, it is key that the processes around the preparation and adoption of the budget be solidified if they have not already been done. This includes developing a budget guidelines and instructions and procedures to facilitate the review, modification and adoption of the budget. When preparing the budget the items put forward for approval must link back to the goals identified earlier in the process. Those that do not must either be removed from consideration, or rationale provided for informed strategic decision making.
- **Evaluate performance and make adjustments:** The budget should be adopted with staff reports that identify the relevant performance metrics for each budgetary investment. Once the budget has been adopted, it is key to evaluate the performance of the budgetary investments. Between budgeting cycles, its important to monitor the budgetary investment and report at the next cycle whether metrics and to adjust as needed.

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<sup>1</sup> 2008. Recommended Budget Practices: A Framework for Improved State and Local Government Budgeting. Government Finance Officers Association.

<sup>2</sup> 2008. Recommended Budget Practices: A Framework for Improved State and Local Government Budgeting. Government Finance Officers Association.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

It should be noted that though it is beyond the scope of this review, Orangeville noted several beneficial shifts in their approach to accounting, budget and finance to move the municipality forward. In particular, rather than bringing forward a budget for Council endorsement which includes a list of items, there was a narrative included for why the investments were beneficial, aligned it to Council's strategic priorities, and tied to performance measures. The Town is also exploring initiatives related to protecting their tax base through representation for tax assessments, reviewing the investment portfolio, and reviewing opportunities for proactive debt management. It is suggested that Orangeville staff share their best practices beyond the budgeting framework with Member Municipalities to gather lessons learned and share best practices.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are financial implications for this recommendation, as this would require external contracts to build and develop the budget framework. The approximate cost for developing a budget framework for each municipalities would vary between \$25,000 to 50,000.

## SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A budget process that is well-integrated with municipal operations, such as the planning and management functions, will provide better financial and program decisions and lead to improved governmental operations.
- In the medium to long term a budget framework would ensure that funds are always linked to the municipalities' priorities and lessens ad-hoc or reactive spending.

### 4.2 Recommendation 2: Explore a shared budgeting and accounting software

It is recommended that the Member Municipalities and the County explore shared budgeting and accounting software to find efficiencies. While we understand shared software has been possible in some domains, purchasing shared software has been challenging in others. Given provincial initiatives with respect to supply chain and making services more digitally accessible, there may be opportunities to seek provincial support with vendors for such an initiative.

The cost of implementing technology changes would be dependent on the software solution and the customization required for implementation.



## CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Duplication/completion of very similar tasks across the Member Municipalities on a regular basis.
- Member Municipalities did not raise major concerns or issues with respect to payroll activities. However, it was noted that payroll is a subject where Member Municipalities would benefit from access to best practices or knowledge sharing to support stakeholders to keep up with evolving legislation such as new tax rates, new EI and CPP rates, or OMERS changes and its knowing taxable benefits.
- The most common time tracking method for Member Municipalities was manual Excel-based time recording or paper time cards. Orangeville utilizes NovaTime, a time and attendance tracker. The County has a number of time tracking tools including Penny, WorxHub, Advance Tracker (Dufferin Oaks LTC) and manual paper/Excel-based processes. Time is approved and entered into an accounting and payroll software (Great Plains). With the exception of Orangeville, all other municipalities complete their payroll activities in-house.
- Keystone is the accounting software used by most Member Municipalities. Grand Valley uses Vadim, which was described as a batch-based system that is well received by staff for its ease of use. Moreover, pre-authorized payments also flow through Vadim. Grand Valley also uses Vadim to provide accounting support to the Boards and Services it enables.
- Most of the member municipalities use Microsoft Office Excel to support budget activities. Although Keystone has a budget component, municipalities use it as a tool for reporting to the Council; Orangeville use FMW for budgeting. The municipalities upload the budget and pull data from Keystone and add that into Excel to prepare the financial reports. Though this adds to the redundancy in the process, municipalities find it easy to use Excel to tailor the reports as per the needs of the Council. One of the Member Municipalities (Mulmur) uses Excel for analysis and Office to do letters.

## PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

The County of Dufferin has been recommended to conduct a technology assessment which spans several functional areas, including its Corporate Finance portfolio. As the County undergoes this assessment, the software best suited for budgeting and accounting will be determined. It is recommended that Member Municipalities who are interested in an innovative, comprehensive solution consider the decision of the County and the software that has been decided upon. As the County goes into the requirements gathering phase, select Member Municipalities who are interested should be invited to participate to identify County and local municipal requirements. Depending on the scope of the software solutions and the number of Member Municipalities participating, this could be cost-effective for smaller municipalities.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

It should be noted that though there was support for a budgeting software, there was a lack of stakeholder buy-in for changing existing accounting systems expressed among Member Municipalities. A change in municipal accounting software may impact other functional areas such as asset management or billing where the software is linked into other services.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is recommended that the software procurement process consider the option for Member Municipalities to take advantage of the solution, as there may be cost efficiencies identified for purchasing a larger number of licenses. This would be similar to the purchase of ESRI licenses for the County and Member Municipalities that resulted in cost savings.

## SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A technology solution that can enhance budgeting and account operations would be beneficial in the long run for Member Municipalities and the County. Though it would require an initial investment, a comprehensive solution can potentially reduce the administrative burden, increase functionality for staff for better reporting, and improve decision making.

## 5. Indoor Recreation Facilities

The goal of the review was to understand gaps in the current governance structure and recommend a governance and reporting structure that better enables municipal oversight and involvement in Recreation Facilities, given that they are their largest funders. In order to achieve that there are two recommendations proposed below:

3. Explore a revision to the current governance structure associated with Indoor Recreation Facilities in the Rural Municipalities
4. Develop a regional Recreation & Facilities Strategy

These recommendations are detailed further below, and align to the following Service Delivery Review Framework focus areas:

- Governance, Accountability, Roles and Responsibilities
- Business Processes and Tools

### 5.1 Recommendation 3: Explore a revision to the current governance structure associated with Indoor Recreation Facilities in the Rural Municipalities

Changes to the current structure in how indoor recreation facilities are governed in the rural member municipalities are recommended to allow for increased municipal oversight into a significantly visible and costly municipal function and set of assets.

Note that this would change the governance framework under which municipalities collaborate today, not the fact of their collaboration. Municipalities that have shared indoor recreation service delivery to date would continue to collaborate and work together (including through the development of a regional Recreation & Facilities Strategy recommended below) within a revised governance structure.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Reporting structures that do not facilitate a direct line of sight into the operations of the facility for some Recreation Boards of Management, resulting in uncertainty among Municipal staff leadership regarding adherence to policies and procedures, despite being covered under Municipal insurance policies.
- There is no comprehensive financial sustainability report for each facility/Governance Board. Discussions may be focused on user fees or the differential between resident/non-resident fee structures, however fees do not pay 100% of costs including replacement cost of the facility – nor is this anticipated as it is common that some recreation costs are subsidized by Municipalities.

- Costs associated the delivery of Indoor Recreation Facilities by the three Recreation Boards have increased significantly in recent years, without a corresponding increase in user fee revenue, resulting in higher levels of municipal funding.
- A lack of oversight and ability to manage recreation services as part of a larger strategy and portfolio which would promote cross-functional partnerships (e.g. parks, trails, arts, and culture).

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

Outside of Orangeville, the three indoor recreation facilities in Dufferin are collaborative partnerships among participating municipalities. The Centre Dufferin Recreation Complex, Grand Valley and District Community Centre, and North Dufferin Community Centre are jointly funded by the participating Municipalities and Governed by a Committee of Management (CDRC and GCDCC) or a Joint Board of Management (NDCC).

Numerous examples of upcoming infrastructure costs were identified during consultations and stakeholders recognized that those are likely to be large and will require more collaboration. Municipal stakeholders are well aware of the need to be fiscally responsible in the provision of Indoor Recreation Facilities (a non-critical service).

In light of the gaps and rising costs identified by stakeholders for this service, two options are proposed that would require an amendment to the current governance structures. It should be noted that the same solution may not be preferred for all and that boards may take different options.

#### **OPTION A:**

Consider revising the reporting structure of recreation Boards of Management so that in all boards the Facility Manager reports to the Municipal CAO (or other senior municipal staff member).

- Currently, staff of the CDRC and the NDCC are each employed by their respective Boards and have no formal reporting relationship to staff leadership of any of the participating municipalities. In these cases, the Township of Mulmur and Town of Shelburne are both owners of the Indoor Recreation facilities in their municipalities yet have no direct control over their largest assets.
- It is recommended that the current reporting structure be altered so that the Facility Managers of the CDRC and NDCC report to the leadership at the municipality, rather than to the Board itself.
  - The Facility Manager of the CDRC would report to the Town of Shelburne
  - The Facility Manager of the NDCC would report to the Township of Mulmur
- The Boards of Management would shift to provide strategic, rather than operational, oversight of the recreational facilities, and are provided with a holistic picture of the financial status of recreational services as they fit within the municipal budget, not as a standalone. The Board would continue to provide

insight on programming in place at the facility, ensuring the needs of all participating communities are met.

- The budget would be prepared by the Facility Manager with input and review by the CAO. The budget would then be submitted to the Board for approval.

**Expected Benefits:**

Participating municipalities would have a direct line of sight into the following key areas:

- Operations and service levels of the indoor recreational facility including key performance indicators to make informed decisions regarding investments required.
- Investments required and their timelines for a significant asset.
- Policies and procedures, in particular as it relates to the municipalities insurance agreements with the indoor recreation facilities.
- The ability to coordinate indoor recreational facility assets with other recreational municipal assets – including parks, trails, sports-fields, and other community events/activities. The Board could continue to provide strategic leadership to direct this.

**OPTION B:**

Explore options to dissolve recreation Boards of Management and enable a Member Municipality to fully operate the facilities they already own, which could include establishing contracted funding arrangements with neighbouring municipalities to share costs and protect access for residents.

- Dissolving the Recreation Boards of Management for CDRC, GVDCC and NDCC would result in the three indoor recreation facilities to be owned and operated by the Municipality, and therefore management and operations, including programming, would be the responsibility of municipal staff.
- The budgets for each facility would be included in the Town or Township's budget, and would be considered by the respective Council.
- Participating Municipalities could develop contracted funding arrangements to gain access and to share in costs in 5 year increments.
- Given that the current Boards have played a key role in providing insights into programming for the facilities, an advisory committee of community members may be established to provide input and can be used as a program sounding board moving forward.

**Expected Benefits:**

- Municipalities which own the asset would have direct responsibility of operations, service levels, and investments.
- This would eliminate the current staff effort which goes towards supporting current Boards of Management, including attending and facilitating all Board activities.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

In consultation with board members, it was noted that the option to dissolve boards was not fully supported as it was believed that those municipalities that owned the facility were able to provide input through the current board arrangements.

In addition, it was noted that tracking resident's usage by municipality is not currently done and was believed to be challenging for the purpose of determining cost distributions if moved to a contractual arrangement. However, population numbers and forecasting of these estimates can be used as the foundation for future contractual agreements.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications related to changes in governance structure are anticipated to be minor. One-time legal costs may be incurred as a result of the need to alter the Board arrangements and formalize any changes. These are not anticipated to be significant given the overall funding requirements of these facilities. There are no significant ongoing/long-term financial implications of this recommendation as it relates to how the arenas are governed.

Note, however, that the proposed changes will provide for better general and risk management for the municipalities, potentially reducing one-time and/or large financial losses.

Additional municipal staff time would be allocated to supporting the operation of these facilities – primarily from a budget and planning perspective. However, this may be offset in a reduced need/requirement for secretarial/treasurer functions currently provided. However, the objective of revising the current governance structure is to have increased control and oversight over continuously rising costs related to indoor facilities and their programming, in order to find efficiencies while meeting the needs of the community. As an asset and program of a municipality, recreation services would benefit from a broader understanding of the communities needs beyond recreation to allow for more strategic decision making.

## SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A revised governance structure allows for a reduction in risk from a staff management, risk and liability perspective and increases direct oversight for better policy alignment.
- Streamlining effort through the use of municipal procedures for finance, maintenance, and other corporate services.

## 5.2 Recommendation 4: Develop a regional Recreation & Facilities Strategy

Develop a regional Recreation Strategy with a focus on making strategic investments in Indoor Recreation Facilities to ensure long-term sustainability (e.g., potential facilities to close; facilities to renovate; new build facilities; better link and integrate with programming provided at other facilities – including outdoor facilities).

### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- A lack of a regional approach to planning for recreation services. Asset management plans are specific to each facility and do not consider “bigger picture” options related to new/replacement facilities with different or expanded collaborations among Member Municipalities.
- A lack of a clear understanding of the exact needs or preferences of the community with respect to Indoor Recreation services.
- No performance indicators (e.g., satisfaction, etc.) being recorded or produced by the Management Boards overseeing Indoor Recreation Facilities.

### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

To execute the Recreation & Facilities Strategy, a Steering Committee would need to be struck which includes representation from the Member Municipalities. Members should include staff that have a strong understanding of the operational needs of current recreational facilities, as well as staff or leadership that can provide oversight into the capital impacts and broader understanding of municipal service delivery as it relates to recreation services.

The Steering Committee would be responsible for leading the development of the strategy, and it is recommended that the Committee develop a terms of reference indicating the voting standard. It was indicated that there was a preference for equal voting in decisions related to recreation services across the County, as the impact of facilities goes beyond the boundaries of a municipality.

The Recreation & Facilities Strategy should identify gaps and develop strategic investment priorities by facility type based on the vision and guiding principles determined by Dufferin:

- **Create a Vision:** Create the Vision and Guiding Principles for Dufferin’s Facility Strategy that reflect the highly collaborative nature of recreation services in Dufferin
- **Develop Standards:** Establish municipal recreation facility infrastructure standards and its critical elements. These standards will be included in designs for major renovation or newly built municipal recreation facilities

- **Understanding User Needs:** Learn about who is using Dufferin's recreation facilities and identify barriers for users and non-users to forecast demand effectively
- **Aligns with Growth:** Develop a Recreation Facility Strategy, consistent with growth in Dufferin that recommends renovation, re-purposing, decommissioning or the development of new facilities

The development of a regional strategy would require an understanding of several elements and therefore planning for indoor facilities must consider the following:

- Having a broader understanding of recreation services which includes local arts, culture and heritage.
- Balancing demand for conventional programming with interest in new/emerging areas of organized recreation and individual participation, including consideration of:
  - the geographic distribution of facilities across the city
  - levels of use at existing facilities
  - demographic information
  - recreation trends
  - other recreation service providers
- Motivating and supporting a demand for increased participation in physical activity for health and wellbeing.
- Forecasting and reviewing trends along with community expectations to the municipality's mandate and capacity to provide services.
- Determining the role of the municipalities in providing services in a milieu of public, not for profit and private sector options to ensure the role defined is appropriate and implementable.

#### IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

It was noted by municipal leadership that the best time to consider implementing this recommendation would be upon the completion of the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process, once official plans have been completed for the Member Municipalities and the County which would provide population estimates for forecasting purposes. In the interim, the Dufferin Municipal Officers Association (DMOA) or Planners of Dufferin (PoD) could be leveraged as a mechanism for increased collaboration across the county. In order to create dialogue and identify opportunities for collaboration, or to better understand the trends of the community it is suggested that those Member Municipalities who have recently completed, or are undergoing a needs assessment (Mulmur, Shelburne) share their findings with the broader group.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are financial implications to this recommendation, as it is recommended that a consultant be used for the development of the Strategy and the user needs assessment



required. It is estimated that external consultant costs would be approximately \$150,000 to complete this engagement.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A regional Recreation & Facilities Strategy will guide decisions regarding programs, services, indoor recreation facilities and infrastructure in order to provide a long-term sustainable strategy for managing the resources of Member Municipalities in a cost-effective manner that addresses both the current and future needs of the community.

## 6. By-law Enforcement

With increasing growth in built space for some Member Municipalities and subdivision development, stakeholders involved in by-law enforcement noted that the number of by-law enforcement complaints has risen and will likely continue to rise. The goal for reviewing by-law enforcement services was to address capacity constraints occurring across the County and to improve service outcomes. In order to achieve that there are three recommendations proposed below:

5. Update By-Law Enforcement policies
6. Hire a shared By-Law Enforcement Officer
7. Develop key performance indicators

These recommendations are detailed further below, and align to the following Service Delivery Review Framework focus areas:

- Capacity and Competencies
- Business Processes & Tools

### 6.1 Recommendation 5: Update By-Law Enforcement policies

It is recommended that all Member Municipalities (with the exception of the Town of Orangeville and Shelburne who have codified their enforcement approach in by-law enforcement policies) update and/or draft a by-law enforcement policy that incorporates the enforcement approach, roles of Council and staff, appeals processes, service level standards, and guidelines for decisions.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Not all member municipalities have codified their enforcement approach within a by-law enforcement policy, and where by-law enforcement policies exist, each Council has its own approach to enforcement.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that each Member Municipality review their existing by-law enforcement policies, or draft a policy that addresses the following key elements:

- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Clearly defined roles of by-law enforcement staff and, Council as a whole. The policy should clearly indicate that Council members are not to be involved in day-to-day bylaw enforcement decisions, as current state findings indicated that this was an area that required clarification.

- **Stance on Enforcement:** The approach to enforcement – here Council must make a decision on whether this is a complaints-driven approach or a proactive stance on by-law enforcement. Council should consider that a proactive approach may require additional resourcing. This should also speak to ensuring that enforcement decisions will be applied fairly and proportionately.
- **Service Levels:** A commitment to and statement of levels of service, including timelines for investigations and requirements to report back to complaints for different enforcement types.
- **Criticality:** Prioritization of enforcement activities into categories that takes into account the criticality of the complaint.
- **Process:** A well-documented process for receiving and investigating complaints, and appeals.
- **Outcomes:** A commitment to share service outcomes annually through a report to Council.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

By-law enforcement staff or the Clerk's team at a Member Municipality would develop the policy. Staff time is therefore required – it is estimated that this would be 5-7 days of work collectively for individual municipalities. To streamline policy development, a template with the key components could be created by one Member Municipality and shared with staff across Dufferin.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Align to Leading Practices by ensuring that the enforcement approach of each Member Municipality has been codified.
- Increase transparency with the public by setting service standards and demonstrating a commitment to by-law enforcement.

### 6.2 Recommendation 6: Hire a shared By-Law Enforcement resource

The recommendation to hire a shared By-Law Enforcement Officer is not one that is unfamiliar to Dufferin, however in this instance an alternative cost arrangement is proposed.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Of the 8 Member Municipalities, 6 have either contracted out by-law enforcement from another Member Municipality, or hired a part time by-law enforcement officer, as there is not enough volume at these municipalities individually to hire a full-time resource.

- Previously, the County had provided a shared by-law enforcement officer to Member Municipalities (except Orangeville), however issues arose as there was an imbalance in volume between the Member Municipalities and costs were shared evenly. In addition, the enforcement approach was cited as not being proactive enough for most contracting out the service.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

Based on research, the average salary of a municipal enforcement resource in Ontario varies between \$60,000-70,000 annually (\$30 to \$36/hour).

Excluding the Towns of Shelburne and Orangeville, listed below are the current costs for by-law enforcement resources. Based on this, it is presumed that there are cost efficiencies to be found by hiring a shared resource using a fee for service model.

| <i><b>Municipality</b></i> | <i><b>Cost for a By-Law Enforcement Resource*</b></i> |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Amaranth</b>            | \$45/hr (a weekend rate applies)                      |
| <b>East Garafraxa</b>      | \$45/hr (a weekend rate applies)                      |
| <b>Grand Valley</b>        | ~ 0.25 FTE salary of PW Foreman                       |
| <b>Melancthon</b>          | \$57.40/hr  |
| <b>Mono</b>                | \$45/hr (a weekend rate applies)                      |
| <b>Mulmur</b>              | \$50/hr   |

Mileage and any retainer costs have not been included above\*.

It is suggested that one municipality takes on the shared resource contract. Given that the Town of Mono is handling the by-law enforcement resource for themselves, and the Townships of Amaranth and East Garafraxa, this shared resource could be housed within Mono. Based on the available baseline data on the volume of by-law enforcement activities, the Member Municipalities must determine the minimum cost per municipality, which also determines the priority level the resource would take. This would also determine whether additional resources are required, if all six Member Municipalities were to share by-law enforcement resources. A minimum number of hours per month would be applied.

A sample cost sharing arrangement has been provided below.

| <i>Municipality</i>          | <i>Sample Cost Sharing Arrangement</i> |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b><i>Amaranth</i></b>       | 10%                                    |
| <b><i>East Garafraxa</i></b> | 10%                                    |
| <b><i>Grand Valley</i></b>   | 15%                                    |
| <b><i>Melancthon</i></b>     | 20%                                    |
| <b><i>Mono</i></b>           | 25%                                    |
| <b><i>Mulmur</i></b>         | 20%                                    |

#### IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

For a shared resource to be a success within Dufferin, there are several factors to consider and incorporate, including:

- **A standardized approach to enforcement:** A shared service would require member municipalities to be aligned in their approach to enforcement, and prioritization of infractions would have to be clear and consistent. The prioritization of enforcement activities would also allow a shared resource to more effectively administer by-law enforcement.
- **Standardize Complaint Process:** It is recommended that all Member Municipalities standardize the process for accepting by-law enforcement complaints by transitioning these to the website wherever applicable. Currently, some Member Municipalities require in person or phone complaints which are then processed by a staff member, and assigned to the by-law enforcement officer. It would be more efficient to allow set up an online form on each municipal website that is submitted to the by-law enforcement officer, with a copy retained for municipal records and for tracking purposes.
- **Develop a Consistent Service Standard:** There are no aggregate level metrics established currently to determine the efficacy of service levels. It is recommended that service standards be developed indicating when complaints will be responded to based on criticality, and how complaint decisions will be communicated.
- **Tracking:** In order for a fee for service model to be successfully implemented, there must be tracking at every Member Municipality of incoming complaints, resolved complaints, and tracking by category. A clear, regular reporting process is essential to ensuring that all stakeholders understand the activities completed throughout the year.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Please see the proposed recommendation above.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A shared by-law enforcement resource be used to consolidate the multiple contractors currently in use by Member Municipalities to find efficiencies in cost and service delivery.

### 6.3 Recommendation 7: Develop Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) should be collected and presented to the respective municipal Councils on an annual basis to allow for ongoing monitoring and evaluation by municipal leadership.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- There was no indication that by-laws were not being enforced in compliance with the applicable legislation, policies, and by-laws. However, while most staff are tracking by-law investigations, there was no aggregate level metrics or KPIs established to determine the efficacy of service levels.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

Sample KPIs that should be considered for collection include the following:

- Public satisfaction survey results;
- Average number of business days before the complaint is addressed;
- Average number of business days to resolve complaints; and,
- Number of complaints considered resolved.

This could continue to be tracked using Microsoft applications as was the case for most Member Municipalities.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This could be developed internally. However, given constraints on staff time, external vendors could be engaged to develop the KPIs and to develop a tool/template for tracking and reporting that could be used across all municipalities. Costs for such work could range from \$25,000 to \$50,000. By-law enforcement staff would then track these KPIs on an ongoing basis.

#### IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

It is recommended as a long-term consideration that Member Municipalities consider investing in modules for by-law enforcement as an add-on to their existing asset management

software. Since this was not noted as a priority, this opportunity could be reviewed again once the KPIs have been developed and tracked to gather a baseline. Note that the County is currently implementing an enforcement module within Cityview, and that lessons learned from its implementation can inform the decision of the Member Municipalities to pursue an online module.

## 7. Economic Development

The goal of the review has been to create a framework for fostering strategic planning and alignment between the County and the Member Municipalities and a regional approach to Economic Development, which would be gained by further delineation of roles and responsibilities which recognize current capacity constraints. In order to achieve that there are two recommendations proposed below:

### 8. Develop a Collaborative Framework and Action Plan for the region

These recommendations are detailed further below, and align to the following Service Delivery Review Framework focus areas:

- Governance, Accountability, Roles and Responsibilities
- Business Processes and Tools

#### 7.1 Recommendation 8: Develop a Collaborative Framework and Action Plan for the region

Develop a Collaborative Framework and Action Plan for the region that builds on the existing ED strategies developed by the County, Orangeville and Shelburne. At present the County's primary role is as a "coordinator, leader and advocate for regional economic development interests and initiatives, including ensuring that business and agricultural enterprises are connected to programs, funding and sources of advice and support".

A collaboration framework for implementing Economic Development ensures alignment in priorities across Dufferin through the development of an implementation plan for Member Municipalities and the County. A coordinated approach amongst the municipalities would position Dufferin for investment, remove local barriers, attract and retain talent and partner with businesses and community in a strategic manner.

With a Collaboration Framework in place, Member Municipalities could have access to resources that will support them in ED activities generally and executing on actions that cascade from larger (i.e., Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus, the County) entities. For smaller municipalities without an ED strategy at present, action plans could drive their activities with additional Collaboration Framework support.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- The County of Dufferin, Orangeville and Shelburne have developed Economic Development Strategic Plans and/or include commentary in their Annual Reports identifying their goals and objectives for the service. The County and Orangeville have also identified key sectors to focus economic development activities on. The annual work of the Economic Development offices for these respective municipalities is



shaped by those goals and strategic plans, with a particular aim by the County to act as a coordinator of economic development activities across the County.

- Though there has been financial support provided to the rural Member Municipalities through the Economic Development Fund, without dedicated resources and expertise, there is limited capacity at the rural Member municipalities to develop robust economic development priorities.
- Optimus SBR noted that with the exception of the County, and the Towns of Shelburne and Orangeville, there was no documentation or performance metrics collected by Member Municipalities that indicated service experience of clients served by economic development functions (existing businesses, developers and potential investors).
- The County has indicated in its Strategic Plan that it wishes to pursue the development of key performance indicators and service level standards; however, staff noted that this work had not begun yet and would require more time for the department and service to evolve, having been in place for two years only.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

The Collaboration Framework would identify, pool and coordinate Economic Development resources across the Member Municipalities. Currently, there are two roles within the County: Economic Development Officer (1 FTE) and a Business Retention & Expansion Coordinator (1 FTE, contract). The Economic Development Officer role has several initiatives under their portfolio including bringing ED initiatives forward across the County that are focused on the rural Member Municipalities, such as Agriculture.

While support is being provided to the rural Member Municipalities, they face capacity challenges to drive key initiatives forward. It is recommended that the County take on a more active role and that a Collaboration Framework for economic development be developed to align efforts across the County and Member Municipalities. This will help ensure a regional lens on ED activities and that ED strategic support is available to rural municipalities.

The County has planned 1 additional FTE role for a Tourism Services Manager for 2021 and beyond. It is recommended that the County explore the addition of 1 FTE resource for economic development to the County's team. With the planned addition of the second role, and the recommended third role, there is an opportunity here to use a cluster approach to propel ED activities for Dufferin.

These resources may be organized to focus on clusters, supporting urban and rural municipalities. This would allow staff to become familiar with an industry and see opportunities that cross the boundaries of municipalities. Some examples of clusters that the County and Member Municipalities should consider include:

- **Manufacturing and Agriculture:** Employment Growth is expected to continue, and a significant portion of that growth is projected within the manufacturing sector.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus Economic Development Strategic Plan, 2017

- **Tourism:** With the dissolution of the Headwaters Tourism Association and the development of the new Tourism Strategy, there is a renewed focus in this area for Dufferin.
- **Downtown Revitalization and Small Business:** Commercial areas and main streets are a vital part of Ontario towns and there are many revitalization tools to consider. Improving social, economic and physical aspects of local area municipalities' downtown areas is heavily linked to community engagement and partnerships, and this role can leverage the work of the Small Business Enterprise Centre.
- **Other/Emerging Sectors:** Other emerging sectors that might take advantage of the region's proximity to the Greater Toronto Area include professional engineering, health and wellness, and advanced manufacturing.

County resources would provide strategic planning support to the rural municipalities, including advice on templates, tools, and considerations for implementation. They would also work with the local municipalities on identifying opportunities based on the clusters, determining what funding exists, and collaborating on the development of grants or funding requests. All Member Municipalities would be able to access these services, including Orangeville and Shelburne.

Such resources could also include investments in Customer Relationship Management software to ensure that opportunities are tracked and available to the different Member Municipalities to avoid duplication of effort.

The objective of the Economic Development Action Plan is to link the economic development priorities of the County and Member Municipalities, reduce duplication of effort, and develop a more coordinated approach for ED Committees. Strategies (for municipalities with them) and action plans will outline what local municipalities can undertake within the broader ED strategy at the County level.

#### IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

For this model to be successful, Member Municipalities and the County would commit to working in a collaborative manner for strategic ED priorities. Within the revised model the County would lead strategic planning for the rural Member Municipalities, with direction from Member Municipality leadership. It would become the County's role to draft strategic priorities and initiatives, and approval would be sought from Member Municipality CAO, with endorsement from Council where required.

Please see the table below for more information regarding the roles and responsibilities involved as they relate to core functions of economic development activities.

| <i><b>Activities</b></i>                                     | <i><b>Role of the County</b></i>  | <i><b>Role of Member Municipalities</b></i>   |
|--|---|---|
| <i><b>Business Retention &amp; Expansion Programming</b></i> | Act as facilitator and advocate business opportunities to provide support for businesses. | Execute BR&E programming at municipal level, by proactively engaging the local business community to identify and |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|   | <p>Identify which sectors are relevant for County-wide economic development growth.</p> <p>Advise Member Municipalities on BR&amp;E programming.</p>   | <p>implement actions that address barriers to business growth.</p>  |
|   | <p>Identify which sectors are relevant for Member Municipalities, through an understanding of key stakeholders in the community, and identifying the challenges which face businesses today (e.g. workforce challenges).</p>                                 |   |
| <b><i>Development of Partnerships</i></b> | <p>Identify and encourage partnerships amongst neighboring municipalities for special projects, where applicable.</p>  | <p>Identify stakeholders that align to local ED priorities, and</p>   |
| <b><i>Performance and Measurement</i></b> | <p>Identify key performance indicators that indicate growth at the County level.</p> <p>Provide insights on performance of economic development activities to Joint Council.</p>   | <p>Provide necessary local level data and information for input into performance indicators.</p>  |
| <b><i>Funding Support</i></b>             | <p>Continue to provide <i>ad hoc</i> funding where available to support local ED initiatives.</p> <p>Inform Member Municipalities of provincial/federal funding opportunities and initiate/lead funding applications on behalf of Member Municipalities.</p> | <p>Access funding through County or provincial/ federal agencies where appropriate.</p> <p>Support County in funding application development.</p> |
| <b><i>Support of ED Committees*</i></b>   | <p>Supports and attends the County ED Committee meetings.</p> <p>County resources would attend local ED Committee meetings to discuss matters related to strategic priorities, or for educational purposes.</p>  | <p>Supports and attends local ED Committee meetings.</p> <p>Identify local strategic ED priorities that would require County support.</p>         |
|   | <p>A planning meeting between County and local resources to determine a calendar for the year, which identifies topics of</p>  |   |

discussion/education for County presentations that would align to any County and local ED priorities.

\*Attendance at local ED Committee meetings has been noted as requiring significant effort given that every rural Member Municipality has a Committee, as well as the County. To that end, it is recommended that the frequency of local ED Committee meetings be transitioned to quarterly meetings, and that the calendar for all EDC meetings be coordinated across the County.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The addition of a resource has financial implications for the County and Member Municipalities. The approximate cost of an additional resource within the Economic Development office at the County level is \$80,000 to 110,000. It is recommended that the County house the three staff members and is responsible for staff salary and benefits. It is recognized that by the County taking on the financial responsibility of the portfolio, that all Member Municipalities (urban and rural) will be contributing to this cost, however all municipalities would benefit from economic development activities in their neighboring municipalities.

CRM software would be dependent on the type and scale of solution purchased, and could have moderate financial implications.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- In the wake of COVID-19, every community will be faced with the challenge of rebuilding their local economies. Those municipalities that move forward now to enhance and define their ED priorities and implement are poised to reap the benefits sooner.
- A robust ED suite of services that recognizes the potential for Dufferin to advance its regional economy and has the capacity and skills to execute on strategic ED initiatives.
- Having a regional ED Action Plan would allow the Member Municipalities, in particular the rural municipalities, and the County to have a framework in place that allows collaboration to occur and to ensure that strategic priorities are aligned.

## 8. Fire Services

The responsibilities of local municipal Councils for the delivery of fire protection services are included in The Fire Protection and Prevention Act (1997) (“FPPA”). At a high level, the services provided by fire departments include public safety and prevention, providing fire suppression and conducting inspections to enforce the Fire Code. Across the County, Fire Services are provided by eight different Fire Departments, including three fire departments from outside of Dufferin County. The objective of the review was to streamline governance and accountability structures in order to reduce risks and find efficiencies within fire services. In order to achieve that there are three recommendations proposed below:

9. Explore alternative structures/governance mechanisms for Fire Departments currently governed by Fire Boards
10. Establish a regional Fire Chiefs Association
11. Improve reporting and performance measurement

These recommendations are detailed further below, and align to the following Service Delivery Review Framework focus areas:

- Governance (Boards), Accountability, Roles and Responsibilities
- Capacity and Competencies

### 8.1 Recommendation 9: Explore alternative structures/governance mechanisms for Fire Departments currently governed by Fire Boards

Explore the dissolution of current Fire Boards of Management and transfer the Fire Departments to a Member Municipality to reduce risk and increase efficiencies.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Governance structures that create operational risk management concerns for some Fire Boards of Management, resulting in uncertainty among Municipal staff leadership regarding adherence to policies and procedures, despite Fire Boards being covered under Municipal insurance policies.
- A lack of direct involvement by municipal staff in the discussions of Fire Boards.
- The Fire Boards have not implemented a Board Skills Matrix to identify required Board Member Skills sets to ensure the board has the best composition of skills and expertise possible to oversee a Fire Department.
- There is no formally documented training or orientation provided to new Board Members to orient them to the operations of the Fire Board/Fire Department.
- Limited training or orientation provided to Board Members regarding the municipal legislative requirements involved in providing fire services, and technical requirements of service delivery

- At least two of the Fire Boards operate under the insurance policy of one of the participating member municipalities, which is viewed as a risk by CAOs as they have no direct authority to ensure compliance with policies and procedures.
- There does not appear to be any formal approach to a coordinated approach to procurement or asset planning across the Fire Departments.
- Fire Chiefs overall felt that the scope of their portfolio was significant, in particular for part-time resources. They noted that additional help in ensuring that procurement guidelines, IT requirements, and Human Resources policies were followed and budgeting and financial management support would be welcome.
- While Joint Board of Management agreements identify board Secretary and Treasury support provided by the municipality to the Fire Board, they do not account for other support/skills that are required for effective operations of a municipal department such as IT and IT security, Procurement, HR, etc.
- Municipal staff expressed some concerns regarding the workload associated with the Secretary-Treasurer role on the Fire Board.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Councils explore the dissolution of all or a subset of Fire Boards of Management that would end Fire Board Agreements and transfer Fire Department assets/function to a Municipality to operate as a municipal department. Given the technical complexity, regulatory requirements, and potentially large liabilities associated with delivering the service, board arrangements are a challenging governance structure with which to operate fire services. The recommendations below pertain to the following fire departments:

- Grand Valley and District Fire Department
- Mulmur-Melancthon Fire Department
- Rosemont District Fire Department
- Shelburne and District Fire Department

Establishing fire services as a municipal department allows the critical role of providing emergency services to residents to be brought into the municipal structure. The dissolution of fire boards would result in the development of a fee-for-service fire agreement between the municipalities that house the Fire Department, and those that are contracting services from them. The revised agreement would be for a period of 5 years, with options included to extend for another 5 years. This provides an opportunity to reassess the costs associated with delivery of this service. Closest hall response would continue to be provided, and the agreement will include language to that effect. Mutual aid agreements may also continue without a need to be changed.

For future consideration it is recommended that Fire Departments review the distribution of fire assets and departments to see if there are opportunities for consolidation recognizing that Orangeville has a largely urban population, Shelburne has a growing urban population, and the remaining Member Municipalities are largely rural. Through this review, consolidation if it occurs may allow for service levels to change to fit rural needs where possible. In addition, a review of assets would provide an opportunity to better understand where any investments

in any additional fire halls would be most appropriate to best provide fire services to Dufferin residents.

When discussed with key stakeholders, which included municipal leadership, Fire Chiefs and board chairs, there were varying levels of support to pursue a change in governance. The comments have been summarized below:

- **Grand Valley and District Fire Department:** Stakeholders were not in favour of dissolution, and noted concerns that dissolving the fire board would result in a lack of input into fire services for those municipalities that were contracting services, and were not in favour of dissolution.
- **Mulmur-Melancthon Fire Department:** Stakeholders were not in favour of dissolution and believed that bringing fire services into the municipality would overload the municipality. They also indicated that the board was able to manage costs effectively due to their understanding of fire services, and that operations were running without any concerns.
- **Rosemont District Fire Department:** Stakeholders were not in favour of dissolution, indicating that this board had multiple education sessions throughout the year in order to ensure that board members had insights into operational concerns. They also indicated that the Secretary/Treasurer role provides a link to municipal HR, Finance and other resources informally.
- **Shelburne and District Fire Department:** Board Chair and Fire chief consultations indicated support to explore dissolving the fire board with a desire to create a revised contractual agreement that has currently been in place since 1991. It was noted that there was a considerable scope to manage fire operations, which includes HR, IT, Procurement, and other corporate services in addition to fire suppression, enforcing the Fire Code and fire prevention activities. Stakeholders felt that having the Fire Department within the municipal structure would allow for efficiencies.

A representative from Ontario's Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management was also engaged as part of this review. Key themes from that discussion include:

- Decisions on how fire services are provided are ultimately the discretion of Municipal Councils. The OFMEM emphasizes the importance of their 'three lines of defense': Fire Prevention (building codes and inspections); Education; and Suppression. Municipalities must provide public education on fire safety and components of fire prevention. Other service levels, including suppression, are to be provided in accordance with the "needs and circumstances" of the municipality.
- Municipalities should have establishing by-laws that clearly outline what services are provided across a municipality, and how they are to be provided. This should align to the three lines of defense referenced above.
- Municipalities will be required by 2024 to complete Community Risk Assessments. The work contained in completing these should inform council on the risks within a community and plans to address these.
- The OFMEM is not in a position to comment specifically on Fire Boards.

Across the fire boards, the determination of fire service levels was discussed as a key area of input. It was noted that the fire board arrangement allows all municipalities to have input into and vote on the level of service they deemed appropriate for the particular area – for example whether emergency medical response, automobile extrication or water/ice rescue were to be included as fire services. It was discussed with stakeholders that if fire boards were to be dissolved, that contracted fire services would involve a determination of fire service levels at the outset of discussions. These would then be included in a contract (similar to a fire board agreement), however, the recommended term for contracted services would be 5 years. It was also discussed that differentiated service levels for contracting municipalities may be possible, as dispatch could funnel the requests based on the level of service provided to the appropriate covering fire hall.

It was also discussed that currently any decisions of the fire board require ratification by the board and every municipality involved. With fire services being provided by a municipal department, the effort placed into administration and budget processes would be streamlined while providing the same level of services.

Concerns regarding policies and procedures that mitigate risks for fire services would remain with the current governance structures, as Fire Department staff are not expected to have expertise in managing human resources, policy development, financial and budgetary reporting or data collection for performance management. In addition, many of the Fire Chiefs are fulfilling this role as part-time staff with a mandate that is fitting a full-time role.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

There are resourcing impacts associated with a change in governance structure and establishing a municipal department, as it would require that there is a higher degree of involvement from the municipal CAO. They would be supported however by the Fire Chief, who would advise on operational requirements of taking on fire services. For municipal CAOs taking on this department, as well as for those municipalities that choose to maintain the current governance structure, it is strongly recommended that there is a concentrated effort by staff and elected officials to ensure that those responsible for oversight of fire services (staff or board members) are prepared for their roles appropriately. The Office of the Fire Marshall (OFM) also provides courses for education fire boards on key issues, and recommend that all members of Council, CAOs and the fire board members educate themselves on the responsibilities under the FPPA. The “OFM Essentials Course” is available and can be requested from staff throughout the year.

In particular for boards, it is recommended that the Secretary/Treasurer with the support of Fire Chiefs, do the following:

- Conduct a review of the competencies of Board Members based on skills and backgrounds (i.e., finance, HR, legal, emergency services)
- Establish Board onboarding / orientation material for Board Members and develop a Board Skills Matrix to document skills and expertise needs of the Board composition.



- Conduct a formal review of Fire Department policies and procedures (starting with Procurement and HR policies) to ensure compliance with all regulations. Share updated policies with participating Municipalities. Implement processes to ensure fire chiefs have access to this professional skills/expertise for ongoing operations.
- Establish clear bylaws that fully articulate the fire services activities offered by each Municipality and the method for delivery. This should include specific reference to fire prevention, education, and suppression activities.
- When completing the Community Risk Profile required under FPPA by 2024, Member Municipalities still participating in Fire Boards should use this opportunity to again re-evaluate this matter, to ensure that the fire services received continue to meet the

It should be noted that residents would see no change in services if fire boards were to be dissolved, as changing the fire board does not result in changes to operations or service levels.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications related to changes in governance structure are anticipated to include one-time legal costs where boards have been dissolved and for new contractual arrangements.

There are no significant ongoing/long-term financial implications of this recommendation as it relates to how fire services are governed. At the time of dissolution, there would be costs associated with determining asset valuation for the fire halls and other physical assets.

It should be noted that capital costs for the fire hall would become the responsibility of the municipal department, and not that of the municipalities who were to contract services and would be factored into the fee for service cost structure. The fee-for-service agreement should also recognize that administrative costs will lessen over the span of the contract as the effort by the Secretary/Treasurer and other administrative costs is reduced and this effort would be disseminated to the appropriate corporate services departments.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Improve transparency and oversight of Fire Department operations for municipal leadership, as it relates to human resources, budget and compliance with procurement.
- Improved reporting relationship that promotes a higher level of understanding of board responsibilities under the FPPA and enhances professional insights into operations.
- Leverage procurement savings, and benefit from an economies of scale in the day to day operation and management of fire services from being embedded within the municipal organization.
- A well-negotiated fee-for-service agreement would result in better financial control of the fire department, as well as for contracting municipalities.

- Become aligned to good governance and operational practices by ensuring access to ensuring access to skills and expertise required to administer modern Municipal departments.

## 8.2 Recommendation 10: Establish a regional Fire Chiefs Association

Establish a formal mechanism for Fire Departments to share asset management plans, discuss upcoming procurement needs, and identify opportunities for group purchases (for potential cost savings, and to ensure ongoing compatibility of equipment across Fire Departments). In order to find efficiencies and opportunities for joint procurement of significant assets, it is recommended that Fire Chiefs across Dufferin develop an Association for collaboration.

### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- There does not appear to be any formal approach to a coordinated approach to procurement or asset planning across the Fire Departments.
- Municipal staff stakeholders do not have full confidence that procurement guidelines are always followed; procurement summaries do not appear to be developed/shared with municipal staff.

### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

Creating a formal mechanism that would allow the Fire Chiefs to collaborate with on another on important procurement, policy and investment related decisions allows Dufferin residents to receive efficient and standardized emergency services across the County. An association of the Fire Chiefs of each Fire department within Dufferin be established, to meet quarterly. This would include the Fire Chiefs for:

- Grand Valley and District Fire Department
- Mulmur-Melancthon Fire Department
- Orangeville Fire Division
- Rosemont District Fire Department
- Shelburne and District Fire Department

The Association would discuss opportunities for joint procurement, or standardization of services, as well as best practices related to:

- Training of voluntary fire fighters
- Procurement related decisions on fire trucks, radio equipment, and other significant assets
- Determine where investments are required with a holistic view of the Dufferin County

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications to this recommendation, however this does require minimal time from staff or volunteer fire chiefs. This may however reduce the need for *ad hoc* discussions and meetings among fire chiefs if regularly scheduled meetings can be used to facilitate discussion.

## SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Savings realized due to joint procurement.
- Sharing of best practices regarding policies and procedures.
- Efficacy of training and potential for increasing productivity of firefighters (scheduling, etc.) through sharing of resources.

### 8.3 Recommendation 11: Improve reporting and performance measurement

It is recommended that reporting of fire services related performance be recorded for all fire departments and reported to the appropriate governing body.

## CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Fire Boards do not appear to be reporting aggregate performance levels to Fire Boards, CAOs, or the Public. Reporting requirements are not included in Fire Board agreements, only Rosemont Fire Department's annual report appears to be available online.
- Performance targets / service levels are not clearly documented or included in Fire Board agreements.
- At this time, it is unknown how the service level (e.g. response times) may vary across the County.

## PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

To improve operations through informed decision making and to increase transparency of the Fire Departments' operations, it is recommended that a formal process for annual reporting be established. This would depend on the governance structure of the Fire Department, whether it's a fire board or a municipal department, however fire department staff would be responsible for collecting the data, analyzing the information and presenting it in a consumable format.

In order to report performance, each fire department must establish and commit to service/performance targets for Fire Services so that variations in service delivery across the County can be identified, and improvement targets identified. The metrics must be linked to the overall goals of the department. For example, the goals could include:

- Providing a timely response for fire services through a trained, skilled and efficient team;

- Reducing injury, loss of life or property damage;
- Providing public education programs and other prevention services to ensure public safety; and,
- Confirm to government acts, regulations, and municipal by-laws and policies.

In order to develop the key metrics, it is recommended that fire departments do the following<sup>4</sup>:

- Develop an inventory of current key performance indicators (such as response times);
- Identify gaps in performance indicators and determine data sets required to evaluate those indicators;
- Determine which information is essential for management and oversight bodies to know to effectively manage the operation;
- Ensure that the performance indicators selected align to the goals of the fire department;
- Develop the performance indicators by compiling the appropriate data sets;
- Determine the frequency of collection for each performance indicator;
- Develop a worksheet to gather performance indicators and outcomes;
- Test the performance indicators for a period of 3-6 months;
- Update as necessary;
- Provide the report on a quarterly or annual basis to the oversight function for the fire department (fire board or municipal Council) and ensure that the documents are publicly available.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Several Fire Chiefs noted that the IT system in use for fire operations was a niche software and support was provided through the particular service provider. Consultation with the IT service provider to understand the data gathering capacities of the software as well as any built in reporting functionality would be beneficial. Where real-time performance monitoring is available that should be captured, possibly with the support of an IT professional or software support help desk.

It is suggested that the Fire Chiefs Association be leveraged for this exercise, as the Fire Chiefs could more efficiently work towards developing metrics and reporting collectively. Note that Rosemont department currently publishes some performance reporting on service levels already and understanding the process used here would be beneficial across fire departments.

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<sup>4</sup> 2017. Measuring what Matters: Performance Measurement in Local Governments. University of Fraser Valley.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The expected financial impacts of this recommendation are relatively low. Whether completed in-house or through an external consultant, the development of indicators may cost approximately \$25,000. Beyond the initial planning and indicator development phase, during which staff's time will be required, there are no major cost drivers expected for this recommendation.

## SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Data and metrics to support evidence-based decision making for fire operations.
- Increased transparency for the public on the operations of fire services.

## 9. Human Resources (HR) Services

Member Municipalities are compliant with current practices and also able to adapt to new and upcoming changes as they occur with subject matter expertise available when required. In addition, with the transition to a new Health and Safety Coordinator it is necessary to ensure that a shared service delivery model is able to meet service outcomes. In order to achieve that there are two recommendations proposed below:

12. Develop a Health and Safety Memorandum of Understanding
13. Explore retaining a shared HR consulting firm
14. Explore the potential for a common HRIS shared platform

These recommendations are detailed further below, and align to the following Service Delivery Review Framework focus area:

- Governance, Accountability, Roles, and Responsibilities
- Business Process and Tools

### 9.1 Recommendation 12: Develop a Health and Safety Memorandum of Understanding

Establish clear terms of reference or a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the new Health and Safety resource that has been hired by the County of Dufferin, along with key performance indicators and targets and anticipated allocation of time across Member Municipalities sharing the resource (with the exception of Orangeville).

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Limited health and safety support from a shared resource due to a transition in staff which left some Member Municipalities challenged to ensure compliance. COVID-19 has also exacerbated these pressures.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

A Health and Safety Advisor was added to the County of Dufferin HR team recently, with a revised job description. Under this role, the Health and Safety advisor is responsible for the development and implementation of an Occupational Health and Safety program for the County of Dufferin and participating Member Municipalities. The areas which pertain to the participating Member Municipalities accounts for approximately 45% of the role and includes the following key areas:

- Policy development and amendment in accordance with industry standards and best practices;
- Implementation and monitoring of training related to safety in the workplace; and,
- Joint Health and Safety Committee and Health and Safety Representative Support.

It is recommended that an MOU be prepared and agreed upon between the County and Member Municipalities to ensure that there is clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the Health and Safety Advisor as well as Health and Safety representatives. The MOU should address where responsibilities lie for the following matters:

- Purpose of the municipal site visits by the Health and Safety Advisor;
- Cadence and logistics of municipal site visits;
- Development of training guidelines and procedures; and,
- Attendance tracking for training purposes.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications of this recommendation as the Health and Safety Advisor was recently added to the County of Dufferin HR team to fill the advisor role that has been vacant since the retirement of the past advisor. Terms of the MOU may alter potential financial impacts.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Clarity on the responsibilities of the Health and Safety Coordinator for the participating Member Municipalities, and the direction of the role.

### 9.2 Recommendation 13: Explore retaining a shared HR consulting firm

Currently several of the Member Municipalities use external support from third-party consulting firms of their choosing, when required. It is recommended that those Member Municipalities that do not have a dedicated Human Resources team (except for Orangeville and the County of Dufferin) share a common HR consulting firm for *ad hoc* yet required HR support.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- While not a formal shared service agreement, Member Municipalities indicated that they may sometimes reach out to the County's HR leadership for general advice on HR services. While there is a desire to support the Member Municipalities in this way, it is not always possible or appropriate for advice to be provided.
- A lack of dedicated in-house HR expertise available to address concerns for several Member Municipalities.
- There is a clear need to have policy creation and regular updates. Currently, half of the member municipalities do not have updated HR policies and one municipality does not have any policies. To update the policies, the municipalities need to keep up with provincial changes.

## PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

At present, HR services are generally overseen by the CAO/Clerk often with support from Treasurer (or Deputy Treasurer). As larger organizations, the Town of Orangeville and Dufferin County each have HR Departments that focus on HR services. Though the County has provided advice on sensitive matters to leadership to Member Municipalities, it was cited that capacity and the legal implications of providing advice to other municipalities should be considered moving forward. In addition, several Member Municipalities are partnering with different external consultants for a myriad of services, ranging from end to end HR services, to recruitment support, and compensation analysis.

Given that HR needs ebb and flow throughout the year and depend on recruiting needs, sensitive legal issues arising, legislative changes, etc. it would be more efficient to determine a common HR full-service partner for the region. This could be done through a vendor of record (please see the Procurement service profile for more information). Legislative policy changes can be administered efficiently across all Member Municipalities rather than being serviced by different consultants across the county. Municipal leadership could also seek advice on sensitive union or legal HR matters from a legitimate third-party resource. In addition, policy updates of a more comprehensive nature can be viewed as one-time projects that could be outsourced where capacity does not exist internally, in order to ensure that policies and procedures are not only compliant but able to take advantage of best practices in the industry.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

As the Member Municipalities look to procure an HR vendor, these are the functional areas identified as pain points that should be considered:

- HR Strategy and Organizational Planning;
- Labour Relations;
- Compensation Assessment;
- Policy and Procedures review;
- Onboarding and Training;
- Benefits Administration; and,
- Succession Planning.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are financial implications to this recommendation for the Member Municipalities; however the impact would depend on the services required by Member Municipalities on a yearly basis, and the difference in rates between current and future consultant costs, if any.

Costs associated with developing a Vendor of Record have been provided in *Recommendation #21: Modernization of Procurement Methods*.



#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Ensuring that Member Municipalities are compliant with current practices and also able to adapt to new and upcoming changes as they occur with subject matter expertise available when required.

### 9.3 Recommendation 14: Explore the potential for a common HRIS shared platform

It is recommended that the Member Municipalities and the County explore shared Human Resources Information System (HRIS) software to find efficiencies as a long-term consideration. This was identified as a tool that may benefit municipal operations, however was not critical or disrupting operations currently.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Currently, member municipalities other than Orangeville are not using any significant HR management technologies or systems. Only Orangeville uses an HRIS (InfoHR) and a time system (NOVAtime). The rural Member Municipalities do not have an HRIS and use Microsoft Office Excel to track timesheets. Some of the member municipalities use Easypay as a tool; however, there are limitations while using Easypay as it is not a full HRIS.
- Some member municipalities also use other technology such as SharePoint, payroll tools (Great Plains) and document management tool (TOMRMS) for the overall management of the HR services. A staff member from the County acknowledged that the current state of the technology is inadequate. However, a few member municipalities do take initiatives to explore different HR tools.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

Exploring a potential common Human Resources Information System (HRIS) was identified as an opportunity in the Draft Interim Report. Given that the County of Dufferin has been recommended to conduct a technology assessment which spans several functional areas, including human resources, it is recommended that the Member Municipalities review the HRIS solutions identified by the County.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is recommended that the software procurement process consider the option for Member Municipalities to take advantage of the solution, and that there be cost efficiencies identified for purchasing a larger number of licenses. This would be similar to a past initiative that we understand has resulted in cost savings.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A comprehensive HRIS solution could be beneficial in the long run for Member Municipalities and the County if the solution was able to reduce the administrative burden and improve decision making for municipal leadership regarding key HR concerns.

## 10. IT Services

The review of IT services looked to understand how the services are provided overall, and to identify opportunities to pool resources for enhanced cybersecurity, and to review the service delivery model for a fair distribution of costs. In order to achieve that there are three recommendations proposed below:

15. Develop a costing model for County IT Services
16. Establish a regional working group

These recommendations are detailed further below, and align to the following Service Delivery Review Framework focus areas:

- Business Processes and Tools
- Capacity and Competencies
- Service Experience

### 10.1 Recommendation 15: Develop a costing model for County IT Services

The cost and service levels of service provided by the County has made it attractive to many Member Municipalities, however a true understanding of costs incurred by the County to provide this support needs to be developed, and reviewed against the fees/charges to Member Municipalities by the County for the service.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- There are concerns regarding the capacity of IT staff (County or Member Municipality providing internal IT Services) to absorb additional workloads.
- The Member Municipalities receiving IT Services from Dufferin County may not be paying the full cost of the services they receive.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the County develop a costing model for being a managed service provider on behalf of the smaller Member Municipalities. This would be done in partnership with existing Member Municipalities who are participating in the shared service model currently. In conversations with the County IT leadership it was noted that building the costing model would require considerable effort and collaboration between the County and participating Member Municipalities which goes beyond the current involvement and scope of this review.

To align to best practices, it is recommended that the costing model change the cost structure from an hourly rate to a fixed price per month. This is beneficial for both parties as it allows the County to plan services, network updates, training, etc. for the year, and allows Member Municipalities to have a consistent forecasted amount included in their corporate services budget for increased cost control. This would mean that Member Municipalities could determine the

appropriate cost and service level that fits their organizational needs. At the same, the County may include a minimum level of service to create efficiencies in service, but also to ensure that the appropriate security protocols are in place where required.

To develop the costing model, there are a series of inputs that are required to understand true costs. These include, but are not limited to:

- Salaries;
- Number of services (e.g., GIS, Network Planning, Cybersecurity);
- Complexity of services;
- Average number of requests per user; and,
- Software purchases.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the review of costing within the model, it is important to consider the need for governance around the provision of services and overall IT security. Decisions around which software to bring into the network environment must be made at the County level for those receiving the service, with any risks associated with software or practices being escalated by Member Municipalities to senior IT leadership. There must be clear guidelines on how decisions are made regarding service levels, encoded within Memorandums of Understanding with each Member Municipality.

In the medium to long term, it is recommended that the County consider the creation of an IT security governance model internally that would then solidify governance for the smaller local municipalities and third party boards that the County provides services to as a manage service provider.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Though costs related to each external contractors has not been compiled, based on estimated hourly rates provided, the rates of external contractors for IT services are considerably higher than that of IT services provided by the County of Dufferin. However, the current rate charged to Member Municipalities receiving County IT services is not correct or sustainable. Once the costing model has been completed, contemplated monthly fee minimums should be compared to costs for internal and contracted IT services for smaller municipalities. The approximate costs to develop the cost model could range up to \$50,000 to \$75,000, depending on data availability and participation.

Note that, at present, those Member Municipalities not receiving IT services from the County are essentially subsidizing the costs for those Member Municipalities that are contracting services, as it is clear the services are not provided on a full cost recovery model.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Both the County and Member Municipalities are able to participate in the development of a costing model that fairly distributes costs for IT service delivery, while also building a more robust and sustainable service for the long term.

### 10.2 Recommendation 16: Establish a regional Working Group

Establish a regional working group to develop and/or share best practices (policies; practices; infrastructure).

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Some stakeholders are concerned about cybersecurity practices and infrastructure currently in place.
- Review Lessons learned from COVID-19 and impact on IT Services.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

Given the high degree of collaboration which occurs amongst Member Municipalities in Dufferin, there are several functional regional working groups in place. Similar to these, an IT regional Working Group is recommended to discuss key aspects of operations, including the following:

- **Policies & Procedures:** Sharing best practices and lessons learned on policies and procedures.
- **Procurement:** Exploring joint procurement for cost efficiencies
- **Network Planning:** Exploring joint procurement or management of networks and redundancies required.
- **Licensing:** Exploring joint licensing where required for cost efficiencies.
- **GIS:** Sharing best practices and exploring standardized approach to GIS for public.
- **Cybersecurity:** Sharing best practices related to cybersecurity enhancement, conducting audits.

It is recommended that because “IT” is a broad term, encompassing many different aspects of municipal function and services, and that the County provides services to several Member Municipalities, the membership of the Working Group be a subcommittee of the Dufferin Municipal Officer’s Association (DMOA).

For any Member Municipality receiving IT Services from the County, it is suggested that County IT represent Member Municipalities at these meetings. A County responsibility in providing IT services to a Member Municipality would be to report any relevant information or updates to the municipal leadership as needed.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Given the heightened importance of IT services during the COVID-19 pandemic, municipal leadership felt strongly that lessons learned from transitions to virtual and the shift to digitizing services wherever possible should be discussed in a broader sense among the Member Municipalities and with the County.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are minimal financial implications related to the implementation of this recommendation, which are related to staff time dedicated to attending the meetings. However, there are also anticipated efficiencies and lessons learned regarding cybersecurity and other key issues that would benefit the participating municipalities in the long run.

Should the costing model and lessons learned from the Working Group highlight significant investments are required in cybersecurity or other areas of IT services, staff time or an external consultant would be required to define the requirements, and ultimately purchase a solution and therefore additional costs would be incurred on the part of the Member Municipalities and/or the County. Costs for cybersecurity solutions can be up to \$100,000 or more depending on the cost, scale, and sophistication of the solution.

## SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A forum for sharing best practices on complex IT related matters, as well as information sharing for enhanced security.

## 11. Planning Services

In reviewing Planning services, the goal was to identify a coordinated approach across Dufferin for streamlining planning resources and processes across Dufferin and identify any opportunities for enhancing technologies. Two recommendations are proposed below:

17. Streamline and Make Consistent the Development Approvals Process
18. Explore GIS Support with the County

These recommendations are detailed further below, and align to the following Service Delivery Review Framework focus areas:

- Business Process and Tools
- Capacity and Competencies

### 11.1 Recommendation 17: Streamline and Make Consistent the Development Approval Process

The *Planning Act* specifies the timelines that municipalities are required to adhere to for addressing all types of development approvals. The Act also specifies the role of the municipality versus the applicant throughout the process. It is within the municipalities' domain however to determine the processes and tools that are in place to facilitate approvals. It is recommended that the Member Municipalities streamline and make consistent current processes for responding to development approvals, and enhance the tools used to facilitate the municipal application process.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Interviewees noted that though the high-level process for official plan amendments is similar across Member Municipalities, every municipality has different processes and requirements for consultation based on their respective Official Plans.
- The variation in planning requirements was noted as a deterrent or barrier for economic development activities as investors were dealing with both upper and lower tier planning timelines or across multiple municipalities. Investors find that the process is different across the municipalities and find it difficult to understand what the process is in any given municipality.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

To streamline and make consistent the approval process, there are key steps of the planning process that can be changed. It should be noted that some Member Municipalities already conduct a selection of these proposed activities; however, the goal is to ensure that the planning process and access to information is standardized across Dufferin for a seamless applicant experience. These tools and processes listed below can be used during the different steps of the

development approval process and align to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) best practices guide.<sup>5</sup>

- **Website Content:** To encourage better quality applications and approvals, and to enhance the applicants experience in determining and gathering requirements for approvals, it is recommended that information regarding the planning process be available, relevant and accessible.
  - It is recommended that those Member Municipalities who do not have their Official Plans or any documents/plans related to their vision of growth publicly available make them available online on their respective websites. It was also recommended by several stakeholders that copies (or web links) to the official plans of all Member Municipalities, and contact information, be made available on the County's website so that there is one central repository to make the process easier for applicants. The County's website was cited as the 'first stop' for and this will ease the search for information.
  - In addition to official plans, informing applicants through land use maps about prime development areas where the Member Municipalities can accommodate growth and infrastructure is seen as best practice. This would also include identifying any vacant land parcels. The County website, for example, currently host maps with featured content such as assessment lot parcels, conservation authority jurisdictions, and the Town of Mono hosts a planning map for to allow review of parcels and subdivision boundaries within the municipality.
  - Add messaging and contact information which demonstrates that discussions with staff (in the form of a pre-consultation meeting) before submitting an application is encouraged to ensure that the applicant has gathered all the requirements necessary and understood the timelines associated with the process.
- **Pre-consultation Meeting:** A pre-consultation meeting with key Planning personnel and the applicant at the start of the approval process can reduce delays caused by incomplete or low-quality applications and ensure a more coordinated approval process. Mono indicated that their municipality also charges a pre-consultation fee, as it requires staff effort to prepare, and conduct the pre-consultation meeting; however, introducing a pre-consultation meeting has helped to reduce timelines overall. Pre-consultation meetings can include a site visit with all parties involved in the process (such as building inspectors, conservation authority, etc.) or through the use of an information package that is provided to the applicant. Pre-consultation meetings can help to determine where proposals are more complex versus straightforward to set expectations around timelines for approval. It is recommended that all Member Municipalities move to this.
- **Checklist & FAQ:** A planning checklist is a helpful tool that should be made available online for the most common planning approval requests. Several Member Municipalities host Frequently Answered Questions (FAQ) or Guides to such requests,

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<sup>5</sup> January 23, 2020. Association of Municipalities of Ontario. *Streamlining the Municipal Development Review Process*.



and those could be leveraged to create a checklist of documents, reports, surveys, etc. that are required for the submission of a complete application. Member Municipalities are also able to request letters from a registered planner that states the application is complete. Another tool available to municipalities is the ability to provide a conditional approval, which would allow staff to bring the report forward to Council with conditions. Council can attach timelines to those conditions to enforce approval and it's the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they meet those conditions or timelines would be delayed. It is recommended that Councils review this tool as an option.

In addition to the changes to the key planning process steps, a model that could be considered for the long term is the Community Planning Permit System (CPPS), also known as the development permit system and is an alternative to traditional zoning and site plan minor variance approvals. Councils can establish a by-law that allows the CPPS, which combined zoning, site plan control, and minor variance applications into one process – to achieve local growth objectives. This requires a study of planning and infrastructure related matters, and public input is required. However it has been shown to not only reduce application timelines but to also enhance the applicant's experience (this has been used in the Town of Gananoque).

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

As changes to the planning process occur, there are several factors that would need to be considered for successful implementation:

- **Municipal Comprehensive Review:** At this time, the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) is a considerable effort for planning staff across the Member Municipalities and Dufferin. Where possible, these recommendations should dovetail with changes required by the MCR process.
- **Standardizing Timelines and Processes:** Where possible, as changes are being made to the planning process to streamline timelines it is important for Member Municipalities to review how these changes and the current timelines align with other Member Municipalities to ensure that these match up as closely as possible barring significant resourcing concerns.
- **GIS Support:** GIS support is considered in the subsequent recommendation, and would need to be leveraged for online mapping capabilities for planning purposes. There has been significant work in this area by County, Mono and Orangeville staff to date, and it would be most efficient and enhance the applicant experience if a central online map for Dufferin was made available with local municipal information added as layers.
- **Change Management:** There may be some change management involved for applicant that have previously dealt with the Member Municipalities on changes made to the planning process. There may be opportunities to use any information sessions to advise the developer community of changes to the process to get buy in and more uptake of pre-consultation meetings or publicly available information.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are financial implications to this process, as staff time would be required. It is recommended that the already occurring Planners of Dufferin (PoD) meetings be leveraged to discuss and coordinate the content required. It would be a most efficient use of staff time if there was a sub-committee, or lead municipality that took ownership of different aspects of the content development which could then be shared by the remaining Member Municipalities.

## SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Consistent and streamlined municipal application process that enhances the applicant experience in Dufferin so developers can better navigate the development approval process.

### 11.2 Recommendation 18: Explore GIS Support with the County

It is recommended that all Member Municipalities explore the cost benefit analysis of receiving GIS Support from the County.

## CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Currently, the 9 Member Municipalities have a varied approach to GIS support and planning software. Three of the nine municipalities are currently contracting out GIS related software support to external consultants, whereas two others are contracting out to consultants and have GIS capabilities in-house.
- Though external consultant fees were not provided for all Member Municipalities, these are likely important cost drivers as planning work has been indicated by interviewees to be on the rise. It was noted in interviews that there are opportunities to review consultant spending across the County.

## PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

As recommended under IT services, a cost recovery model must be developed in order to determine the true costs of the County's IT services. It is recommended that as part of that model, GIS support also be factored in and then compared to the cost of internal support and external consultants.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

It should be noted that the local area municipalities have shifted to using CityWide software for building services. A similar rollout across the Member Municipalities for planning services could be explored as part of the cost benefit analysis. This would allow for there to be integration

between building and planning services, and also for there to be a more seamless experience for the residents and development community who use these services, often simultaneously.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications for each Member Municipality are pending the development of the cost recovery model developed in partnership between the County and Member Municipalities.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A review of GIS support costs would determine whether there are cost efficiencies to be found for the Member Municipalities.

## 12. Procurement Services

Due to the many changes in procurement legislation that impacts municipalities (e.g. recent Free Trade agreements, etc.) it is important to ensure that procurement practices in Dufferin align to Broader Public Sector guidelines and requirements that promote fair and effective procurement. In addition, the business of running municipalities requires the purchase of much of the same goods and services, and procurement services can maximize cost savings by pooling resources where possible. In order to achieve that there are two recommendations proposed below:

19. Modernize of Procurement Methods
20. Establish a Dufferin Procurement Working Group

These recommendations are detailed further below, and align to the following Service Delivery Review Framework focus area:

- Business Processes & Tools

### 12.1 Recommendation 19: Modernize Procurement Methods

Modern procurement methodologies can be used to reduce staff time and effort for various procurement methods, improving ROI, and procuring solutions sooner. While some activities are already in use within the Member Municipalities, formally codifying these will ensure that all staff know acceptable procurement methods.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- A lack of awareness of changes to and/or the existence of new free trade agreements impacting municipal procurement policies, and therefore updates required to ensure compliance for several Member Municipalities (this is also linked to the finding that there has not been a regular review of procurement policy and by-laws by all Member Municipalities).

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

In order to modernize procurement methods across the Member Municipalities, it is recommended that the following key elements be explored:

- **Updates and Review of Existing Policies:** To ensure that all policies are in line with the current free trade agreements impacting municipal procurement policies, there are updates required where this has not already occurred. When looking at the current landscape, Ontario is recently impacted by the Canadian Free Trade Agreement and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).
- **Establishing a Vendor of Record:** A Vendor of Record (VOR) will enable Member Municipalities to have a faster, easier procurement process for those items that are frequently purchased. VORs effectively create a prequalified lists of suppliers who can

support the Member Municipalities for a number of tasks for periods ranging from 1 – 5 years. These systems usually will make it clear that the Vendor of Record is not a guarantee of activity for proponents (even those who qualify), and that those proponents who do qualify should not expect a minimum level of work as a result of prequalifying. Multiple VORs can be established to reflect different goods and services purchased by the Member Municipalities. These are effective tools as they allow the Member Municipalities to identify preferred suppliers and can reduce the need to source three or more quotes if it is known that a prequalified vendor is able to effectively meet procurement needs.

- **Participating in a Group Purchasing Organization:** These are agreements with a third party company (such as the Municipal Group Buying Program) where the Member Municipalities would agree to purchase specific items through this group, in return for lower costs than they would otherwise receive. Participating in a Group Purchasing Organization allows Member Municipalities to reduce administrative challenges and support swift, efficient, and cost-effective procurements.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

The administration of the Vendor of Record can take shape in three different ways, depending on what the Member Municipality desires:

- **Secondary RFx Processes:** Once an initial list of vendors is approved, secondary RFx processes are issued to the entire group, or a subset of the group.
  - These usually request more specific information, such as exact processes that would be used to address a specific challenge, binding quotes, or the name of staff who would provide services.
  - The Member Municipality would then review all responses and select a bidder dependent on previously developed evaluation criteria, which would be specific to the project in question.
- **Sequential Awards:** Once an initial list of vendors is approved, the Member Municipality would move through the list and award contracts in a sequential manner.
  - The list could be organized alphabetically or in some other manner, but the core of this is that each contract to be issued is issued in sequence. Once the full list has received a contract, the Member Municipality would once again start from the beginning and would continue the process.
- **On-Demand, Rate Approved Services:** Where one or more vendors prequalify to provide support on a specific task on an on-demand format (e.g., snow plowing or HVAC support).
  - The vendors' hourly rates are guaranteed through the initial procurement process, and they are now "prequalified" to be contacted for on-demand services.
  - In the event that the first proponent on the list is unable to provide the on-demand service for any reason, the second individual can be contacted.
- The selection of which model to use would be based on the Member Municipality's needs, and what it believes to be most beneficial for its purposes.

- Regardless of the model selected, the Member Municipality will need to be clear with potential proponents at the outset of the pre-qualifying stage how future work will be distributed.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are financial implications related to the implementation of this recommendation, including staff time or the use of an external consultant dedicated to policy review and coordinating procurement activities. The approximate cost of updating policies and procedures for each municipality can range from \$20,000 to 35,000. The cost to establish a vendor of record would require effort in the front end to set up the VOR, and would have an approximate total cost of \$25,000. There are anticipated savings, however, for Member Municipalities that would come as a result of group purchasing, as well as more streamlined contract and procurement administration which would also result in savings of staff time.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Updated Procurement methods will support the Member Municipalities in ensuring they have all of the required tools and processes they need to conduct efficient, cost-effective procurements with minimal administrative burden or hassle.

### 12.2 Recommendation 20: Establish a Dufferin Procurement Working Group

Given the high degree of collaboration which occurs amongst Member Municipalities in Dufferin, there are several functional county-wide working groups in place. It is recommended that a regular (annual or more frequent) meeting of procurement officers (or those designated as such) occur for enhancing and formalizing best practice sharing.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- A lack of expertise in writing policies, or the lack of capacity for staff to spend time researching and being aware of best practices.
- A lack of a coordinated procurement strategy or approach across the County, though examples shared during interviews with Member Municipalities indicated informal opportunities for sharing procurement practices or group purchasing options.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

The Dufferin Procurement Working Group is recommended to discuss key aspects of procurement operations, including:

- Review and sharing of existing policies;

- New provincial or federal procurement agreements and their impact on municipal policies;
- Participation in a Group Purchasing Organization;
- Best practices regarding the establishment of a vendor of record;
- Develop a Dufferin-wide list of group buy discounts available to municipalities;
- Sharing of any municipal resources on procurement; and,
- Discussing upcoming items for procurement that may be eligible for group purchases.

#### IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

As stated in the last bullet, the Working Group can be a productive forum for the discussion of upcoming procurement activities. It was noted during discussions with staff that Member Municipalities often informally shared information regarding opportunities for group purchases, vendor availability, and group discounts available to municipalities. Staff believed that there were potential additional savings available if the timing of purchases at Member Municipalities were coordinated. In order to take further advantage of such collaboration, it is recommended that the Working Group captures timelines around when key municipal items are procured and items where group purchases are possible (such as vehicles, equipment, salt, etc.). Creating an inventory of these items and their timelines for each Member Municipality would allow the Working Group to identify where timelines for procurement can be shifted in order to collaborate on significant procurement initiatives and achieve cost efficiencies through group purchases. Several Member Municipalities cited that they add clauses allowing other Member Municipalities in Dufferin to participate in Requests for Proposals at the same price. This practice should also be leveraged by the Working Group as they identify efficiencies related to coordinate purchases.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are minimal financial implications related to the implementation of this recommendation, which are related to staff time dedicated to attending the meetings. However, there are also anticipated efficiencies to be found in the process which would attribute to reducing the administrative burden of procurement activities and to identify additional cost savings.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A forum for sharing best practices on complex procurement matters, as well as information sharing for more cost-effective purchasing.

## 13. Roads Services

The objective of the review of Roads was to reduce duplication of resources and address any capacity constraint through resource sharing, and to enhance the overall road network. In order to achieve that there are two recommendations proposed below:

21. Continue the development of the Transportation Master Plan
22. Develop a Dufferin-wide Public Works Asset Management Plan for equipment/vehicles

These recommendations are detailed further below, and align to the following Service Delivery Review Framework focus areas:

- Governance, Accountability, Roles and Responsibilities
- Capacity and Competencies

### 13.1 Recommendation 21: Continue the development of the Transportation Master Plan

Since the Interim Report was issued, the County of Dufferin and its Member Municipalities identified the need for a Regional Transportation Master Plan (TMP), and have used the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) Process to begin the development of the Plan. The development of a regional TMP would include within it, strategies, policies and tools to meet the County's transportation needs in a safe, effective and cost-efficient manner. This is an important step for Dufferin, as many municipalities in the Southern GTA have invested in the development of TMPs at the upper tier (York Region, Halton Region, Waterloo Region, Peel Region) and local municipal level to further their planning priorities of sustainable, and economically prosperous regions.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- A lack of a current, county-wide comprehensive Transportation Master Plan that includes the County and Member Municipalities.
- In the absence of a current master plan, there is a risk that the current roads structure does not optimally service the community – i.e. limited guidance on a road network to facilitate or accommodate growth in the region; use and access to employment lands; transit considerations; safety; and alignment with various infrastructure policies.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of a Regional TMP is to guide transportation planning and infrastructure needs that accommodates anticipated population growth in the County. The plan should serve as a foundation for future transportation infrastructure programming, capital investments and act as an input into development charges. The development of an integrated plan requires a high



degree of involvement from all Member Municipalities and the County to ensure that there is an integrated road network and transportation planning activities for the county.

The TMP is being executed by an external consultant, and the timelines are as follows:

- **Q4 2020/Q1 2021:** TMP initial assessment;
- **Q1/Q2 2021:** Transportation assessment alternatives;
- **In Q1/early Q2, 2021:** Develop a Public Information Centre for Growth Management and TMP; and,
- **Q3/Q4 2021 and Q1,2022:** Draft and finalize the TMP.

The MCR and the TMP are due to the Province by July 1, 2022.

Based on leading practices, the following are key components of an Integrated Regional TMP for consideration:

- **Vision/Mission & Guiding Principles:** The Steering Committee should define the goals, objectives and outcomes of the TMP for the overall region (e.g. fostering a strong economy, promoting travel options, sustainable development).
- **Community consultations:** Incorporate public and agency consultation in the process to provide opportunities for key stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogue.
- **Leading Practices:** Research into the leading practices in the transportation master planning process and initiatives throughout North America.
- **Technical Considerations:** Identify growth scenarios to inform policy discussion and development.
- **Strategies & Actions:** Define the strategies and actions/initiatives that would allow Dufferin to achieve the goals and outcomes outlined in the vision, with an understanding of the growth scenarios and community needs.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

As a forum for collaboration with neighboring municipalities, and amongst the Dufferin public works network, the Dufferin Caledon Roads Supervisors Association could be leveraged to have discussions on emerging trends, operational issues, and collaborative planning.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications to indicate here, as this work has already begun and been accounted for.

## SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- An integrated Regional TMP reviews transportation holistically and brings Dufferin County together on a key priority to foster economic development and strategic capital planning.

- The development of a Regional TMP, the plan streamlines the effort required to duplicate the process at the local level, rather it would be done in conjunction with the County for a more efficient process.

### 13.2 Recommendation 22: Develop a Dufferin-wide Public Works Asset Management Plan for equipment/vehicles

Asset management is an essential service for municipalities and drives economic development and determines quality of life for residents in these communities. Though not within scope of this review, it was noted that asset management planning is happening to varying degrees within each Member Municipality and at the County. It is recommended that a shared asset management plan be developed for Dufferin which focuses on the public works equipment in order to facilitate more efficient use of public works assets and solidify an existing understanding of collaboration between the municipalities.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Limited proactive sharing of Roads Services equipment, with sharing that does occur reactive and responding to urgent requirements.
- Low utilization in several instances of pieces of equipment owned by multiple Member Municipalities or the County (e.g., multiple excavators and loaders across the Public Works departments).
- Stakeholders from the County and Member Municipalities did not identify any gaps or barriers related to equipment that prevents the delivery of Roads Services. Staff generally have access to the equipment required, whether owned or rented for one-off/infrequent jobs. There were however comments that equipment could be better shared so that its use is more cost effective (e.g., prevent the need for multiple rentals, overlapping purchases of equipment that is not fully utilized, etc.).

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

As was indicated in the current state, there is a high degree of collaboration, with municipalities sharing equipment when the need arises. The goal of developing a shared Public Works Asset Management Plan would be to take on a proactive stance on the use of public work assets to allow for better operational and capital planning. A shared Public Works Asset Management Plan would include the following components:

- **Establish a Process:** Establish an approach and process for annual information sharing and planning of work requiring specialized equipment that could be shared, along with workplans that coordinate the usage of equipment.
- **Develop Inventory:** Inventory Public Works Roads equipment (and frequency of any rented equipment) from across the County, its annual usage, and current condition to identify surpluses in equipment at a regional level to identify potential sharing opportunities.

- **Rebalance equipment:** Identify opportunities from rebalancing equipment and vehicle inventories and coordinated planning activities
- **Share inventory records:** Ensure equipment inventories are shared so that Public Works stakeholders are aware of common equipment across the County, and can potentially pool spare parts to reduce inventory costs and storage space requirements
- **Inform future procurements:** As outlined in *Recommendation 19* it is recommended that opportunities to collaborate on procurement needs be explored by the County and Member Municipalities. A Dufferin-wide County Asset Management Plan could be used to inform that process – by either identifying opportunities to eliminate the need to purchase new equipment (i.e. by finding opportunities for cross-municipality sharing) and/or reduce purchase costs through collaborative purchasing.

#### IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

The Public Works Asset Management Plan requires that Member Municipalities are currently employing asset management planning for operational and capital decisions. To avoid duplication of effort, wherever existing inventories and conditions of assets have been recorded, this would be exported for the purpose of a shared Public Works Asset Management Plan.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are minimal financial implications to this recommendation, as there is some staff time required to pull the information together to develop the Plan. The approximate cost of staff time or an external consultant for this work is \$40,000.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- By developing this plan, the goal is to find cost efficiencies where renting or purchasing of equipment is avoided due to better information sharing and coordination of equipment usage across the county.

## 14. Winter Control Services

Improvements in service delivery for Winter Control services are heavily dependent on recommendations proposed for Roads services. For Winter Control in particular it was important to identify ways in which to integrate winter maintenance across Dufferin to improve services for residents, and to identify opportunities to reduce costs where possible. In order to achieve that there are three recommendations proposed below:

23. Develop a business case for establishing a second County operations centre
24. Enhance communications protocols
25. Increase storage space

These recommendations are detailed further below, and align to the following Service Delivery Review Framework focus areas:

- Business Processes and Tools
- Capacity & Competencies

### 14.1 Recommendation 23: Develop a business case for establishing a second County operations centre

Develop a business case that explores the financial and operational impacts of establishing a second County operations centre in the southern part of the County.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- The County and Member Municipalities each maintain a Public Works Yard used to store vehicles, equipment, and supplies used for Road Services. Stakeholders believed that these facilities were generally operating at capacity with respect to available space for any additional equipment.
- there is difficulty pre-staging winter control equipment at different locations. Public Works stakeholders commented that their Public Works Yards are each at capacity for indoor vehicle storage and there is limited available space for additional equipment.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

The County noted that a new Operations Centre/Public Works Yard in the South of the County could provide additional storage space and enhanced operational response to network issues. It is recommended that the County develop a business case to review the feasibility for a second Operations Centre. The business case should be presented to senior leadership, and then to Council for approval. It should consider the following key elements:

- **Equipment Inventory:** Update the current equipment inventory to determine the space required and consider seasonal usage of equipment.

- **Site Options:** Determine the best suited location(s) for a new public works yard, and determine the size required based on the equipment inventory.
- **Environmental Scan:** Conduct a review of Canadian municipalities with similar road network size and scope of winter control services to understand operational needs, and any lessons learned. For neighboring municipalities, site visits may be considered.
- **Cost estimate:** The planned budget, including capital reserves, should be reviewed in order to determine the financial feasibility of the yard. A cost estimate should be determined based on land purchase and construction costs.
- **Cost sharing opportunities:** There may be an opportunity to consider sharing costs with Member municipalities who may want to use the second Operations Centre/Public Works Yard on a permanent basis.

Following the initial business case prepared by staff, a formal, external review by a third-party should be undertaken to complete detailed requirements gathering, planning and option consideration, and cost estimates.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Some comparable upper-tier Counties in Ontario operate out of more than one Operations Centre/Public Works Yard (or equivalent). Select examples include:

- The County of Essex has a slightly higher land mass (sq Km) than the County of Dufferin, and more than double the Km of total roads paved and Km lanes maintained in the Winter. The County of Essex has 4 Active Depots.
- Similarly, the County of Simcoe has a land mass nearly three times larger than the County of Dufferin, and nearly 3x the total Km of total paved roads and Km lanes maintained in the Winter. Winter maintenance equipment in the County is dispatched from 5 district garages.

There are several phases for the County to consider for the financial impact of an additional operations centre.

- **Phase 1:** Staff to develop a business case, as is recommended;
- **Phase 2:** County to engage external support to develop a Public Works Yard strategy which would confirm where equipment would need to be housed, space use analysis and if renovations in the existing operations centre are required.
- **Phase 3:** Site identification once the appropriate studies required for the development of the Operations Centre (site analysis, environmental, engineering) have been conducted.
- **Phase 4:** Proceed with construction if approved by Council.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are minimal financial implications to this recommendation, however this does require staff effort in order to complete a business case. It should be noted however that the cost of building an additional operations centre would be a significant investment, the amount would be determined during the business case. Additionally, a public works yard strategy, if conducted externally as recommended, may cost between \$200-250,000.

Please note that the County has allocated funds through development charges and reserve funds for the capital costs of an additional Operations Centre. During the development of the business case, the DMOA should table a discussion around whether any Member Municipalities would have interest in a partnership with the County which would result in a cost and space sharing arrangement for the Operations Centre. A shift in equipment or resources from the existing Rosemont facility to a southern operation could free up space for Member Municipalities in the north. Vice versa municipalities in the South may benefit from additional storage space in the new facility and can participate in cost sharing with the County.

## SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Additional storage space for winter control equipment and an enhanced operational response to network issues; and
- Opportunity for efficiencies and cost-savings in partnership with Member Municipalities who may wish to pursue cost sharing arrangements.
- Ability to strategically position specific equipment required to service areas of the County
- Reduced reliance on a single facility (single point of failure)
- Can be planned and designed to support anticipated growth across the County

### 14.2 Recommendation 24: Enhance communications protocols

Currently there has been ongoing equipment and information sharing to support Winter Control Services, including:

- access to Weather Monitoring applications;
- two-way radio for the six rural Member Municipalities; and
- access to and use of Municipal511.ca to provide real-time updates for road closures.

However, based on discussions with staff and elected officials, gaps in communication were identified, and therefore two communication protocols are recommended.

## CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- A communications gap between municipal staff and politicians (and potentially the larger community) regarding the legislative requirements associated with road service levels

and operational realities (e.g., a vehicle may travel in a 'plow up/spreader off' condition because it is loaded with sand for a gravel road and the road it is traveling on is a paved road requiring a mix of brine and pre-treatment and salt, rather than for a lack of cooperation or concern about potential liability).

- Decisions by the County to close roads because of road conditions are not always well communicated to Member Municipalities, causing knock-on effects to winter control operations of Member Municipalities as travelers look to find alternate routes, resulting in turn in a need to redeploy resources to maintain local roads to a higher standard than is planned for/required.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

Developing communications (such as Frequently Asked Questions style guide) that highlights key operating considerations and guidelines for winter control operations would be beneficial for the public. Communications could be posted on County and/or municipal websites where road conditions and Municipal 511 data is reported. Ensure that communication is targeted towards individuals without experience in public works or winter control (i.e. plain language).

An example of communications aimed at the public regarding service standards regarding winter control is depicted below, from the City of Orillia:

## Winter Control

Snow removal service for the City of Orillia follows a Council-approved [Winter Control Policy](#). This Policy was developed to ensure that roads and sidewalks are plowed, sanded or salted in the most timely and effective manner.

According to past climate data, Orillia's historical low snowfall occurred in 1935 where 136 centimetres (4.5 ft) was received. Orillia's historical high occurred in 2008 when we received a total of 543 centimetres (17.8 ft) of snow. The average winter, according to the overall climate data (ranging from 1925 to 2017), provides approximately 272 centimetres (8.9 ft); however the average snowfall has been increasing, resulting in a 5 year average (2013-2017) snow accumulation of 367 centimetres (12.05 ft). December and January tend to be the months we receive the most snow within the City. A major snowfall event can product an accumulation of 30 to 60 centimetres (12 to 24 inches) of snow.

The City of Orillia maintains the following equipment to clear snow from 504 (lane) kilometres of roads, 143 kilometres of sidewalks, 19 parking lots, 34 signalized intersections, and five bridges:

- Nine snow plows
- Four sanders
- Eight sidewalk plows
- two motor graders
- One loader plow
- One tractor/blower

Residents in the expanding Stoneridge Subdivision may be struggling with whether the City has assumed maintenance of their street or whether it is still the developers responsibility. There are several variables that determine whether a street can be assumed for winter control operations in the winter season. Streets under continued development have obstructions including incomplete buildout of infrastructure, like incomplete sidewalks, grades and raised maintenance holes due to asphalt not being completed; contractor parking (many active build sites have contractors parking on them); and storage of materials and supplies used in the construction that become undetectable beneath the snow.

Those streets that are not complete are the responsibility of the developer to ensure winter maintenance occurs. Attached is a [map](#) of where the City has assumed maintenance operations and where the developer is still responsible.

20 James Street West  
Orillia, ON L3V 6Y3  
Phone **705-326-4585**  
Collection & Distribution Inquiries  
**705-329-7249**  
Email: [enviroservices@orillia.ca](mailto:enviroservices@orillia.ca)

In addition to the information regarding equipment and a change in their winter control program, common areas of resident concern have also been highlighted:



Plowing

Sanding and Salting

Sand/salt trucks are dispatched at the start of a snowfall and at the first sign that roads are becoming icy. Streets with the greatest volume of traffic, called arterial roads, are sanded or salted first. Examples of arterial roads are: Atherley Road, Front Street, Laclie Street, Coldwater Road, Memorial Avenue and West Street.

Collector roads that lead to arterial roads are sanded or salted next. Examples of collector roads are: Barrie Road, Fittons Road, James Street and Westmount Drive.

Sand is used on snow-packed local residential streets at intersections, hills and curves. The City typically does not sand the entire street.

Salt (sodium chloride) is the most commonly used chemical for snow and ice control. Salt is widely used because of its effectiveness at moderate subfreezing temperatures, availability and ease of application in the solid form with current spreader equipment. At pavement temperatures above about -12°C (10°F), salt is effective for combating ice and light snow and greatly enhances the effectiveness of plowing under heavy snow conditions.

Salt use is kept to a minimum. It is spread only on main (arterial) roads and some secondary collector streets. Salting occurs at the beginning of a snowfall to establish a melting point to help keep streets clear.

City sand/salt spreader trucks, road patrol, and supervisor trucks are equipped with infrared pavement temperature sensors that provide immediate access to pavement and local air temperature information. The amount of highway salt used in de-icing roads is largely dependent upon the mass of snow or ice on the road surface and the pavement temperature. Accurate knowledge of pavement surface temperature assists in determining suitable salt application rates and reduces salt waste.

Sidewalks

How You Can Help

Frequently Asked Questions

It is also recommended that a formal process/governance structure be established for informing Member Municipalities about the closure of County Roads due to winter weather conditions. The process should consider including a lead contact for each municipality, and a designate back up contact. Once the Member Municipalities have been informed, the municipal lead and the County must determine if there are impacts to local roads due to the County road closures, and how to mitigate these.

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Closures of County roads requires the involvement of the Ontario Provincial Police, and therefore this group must be considered in the process.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are minimal financial implications to this recommendation, as staff time would be used to develop any communications material for the public. Those who are responsible at the municipal level for website and communications updates would collaborate with their Public Works team to ensure messaging has been updated.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Communications protocols will allow the public to better understand winter control operations as the users of the service and be able to better navigate winter conditions within Dufferin.
- More education around winter control services may reduce any negative feedback regarding snow and winter control operations.

### 14.3 Recommendation 25: Increase storage space

Assess opportunities for enhancing appropriate storage space for winter control equipment, while mitigating non-productive 'blade up/spreader off' travel time.

#### CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Equipment used for Winter Control is not standardized, which results in the need to carry an inventory of spare parts across the County.
- Mostly reactive and *ad hoc* collaborative support and mutual aid provided across the public works departments to share equipment winter control equipment.

#### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

There are two sets of recommendations that can enhance appropriate storage space for winter control equipment, while mitigating non-productive 'blade up/spreader off' travel time:

- Identify, for each Member Municipality and the County, where winter control equipment could be stored/pre-positioned to mitigate non-productive 'blade up/spreader off' travel time (recognizing that there may be difficulties finding appropriate space to store winter control equipment); and
- Identify opportunities for winter control vehicles to refill sand/salt from the Public Works Yards of other Member Municipalities where it would prevent non-productive travel time to refill sand/salt (one example of a shared salt dome was already identified).

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There may be an opportunity to consider sharing costs with Member municipalities who may want to share costs of using Winter Control Equipment and minimize non-productive/spreader-off travel time.

#### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Minimized non-productive 'blade up/spreader off' travel time.
- Maximized storage efficiency and productive time.
- Opportunity for cost-sharing with Member Municipalities.