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Town of Aurora

## Committee of the Whole Report

No. FIN25-020

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**Subject:** 2025 Technology Strategic Plan Update

**Prepared by:** Michael Mulvenna, Manager, Information Technology

**Department:** Finance

**Date:** April 8, 2025

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### Recommendation

1. That Report No. FIN25-020 be received for information.

### Executive Summary

The Technology Strategic Plan recommended several actions which support modernizing and evolving the role of IT at the Town. This final report for the 2019 Technology Strategic Plan will illustrate how the Town's IT division has adopted and actioned the five core areas.

- The Town is now providing more in-house custom-built applications that automate previously manual processes and online services for residents
- The Town is making progress on implementing new software applications in 2025
- Modernizing the existing IT infrastructure to ensure that all hardware is refreshed per life cycle requirements and always in a good supportable state
- Continuous improvement of cybersecurity initiatives and cybersecurity awareness training
- IT has developed and is tracking metrics using the Objective and Key Result (OKR) methodology
- The Town is well positioned for the next iteration of the Technology Strategic Plan

## Background

### Council adopted the Technology Strategic Plan in November 2019

In November 2019, Council adopted the Technology Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is a comprehensive document that identifies the need for transformational change for the Town. The plan provided recommendations which focused on five core areas:

1. Offering great, digital services for customers that allow them to interact with the Town using their laptop, desktop, tablet or smartphone
2. Digitizing and simplifying the Town's business processes to support process efficiency and underpin digital customer service
3. Providing mobile tools for the Town's mobile workforce
4. Providing staff with a modern workplace environment – modern and secure tools that help teams collaborate and be productive
5. Becoming a data-driven organization – an organization that uses data from its digitized processes to analyze and optimize efficiency and cost-effectiveness

One of the key recommendations in the original plan was a new organizational structure for IT that centralized the services in the Information Technology Services division which was at the time in the Corporate Services department.

The five-year plan included three distinct phases:

1. **New IT:** First, before anything else can be achieved, the Town must reset the technology management model and establish a more collaborative environment. A centralized IT organization has been established which has enabled all technology resources to contribute to a successful implementation of the Strategic Plan.
2. **Process Digitization and Mobilization:** Next, the Town must focus on digitization of its core business processes (HR, Planning, Permitting, Asset and Work Management, Finance) taking the opportunity to streamline and simplify aging paper-based processes. This phase will run from 2020 – 2024.
3. **Optimization through Data and Digital Services:** Then, building upon the digitization of processes, the Town can focus on offering new digital services and using the data from process digitization to become a data-driven organization. This phase will run from 2022 – 2024.

## Analysis

**The Town is now providing more in-house custom-built applications that automate previously manual processes and online services for residents**

Many of the Town's manual processes have now been digitized which provide staff with higher efficiency. These include:

- Tracking windrow clearing service
- Recreation shift scheduling tool
- Emergency Operations contact list update
- Health & safety inspection form
- Automated email metrics for recreation
- Automated bylaws report for OKR update
- Automated sync of York Region Datashare to our GIS network
- Emergency after hours forms from email inbox to network
- Automated road occupancy format-GIS integration (CityView to ArcGIS Online)
- Hydrant inspections application
- Automation of CCTV video map and data
- Automation of Cityview case reports for bylaws
- Automation of sewer video files for Engineering
- Emergency locates - Ontario One Call Buffer
- Automated Cityview reports (building permits, construction value locations)
- Automated fee update process in Cityview

Several new online services for residents were also implemented in the past year:

- Where's My Plow enhancements
- Coyote/fox tracking and mapping app
- Road occupancy permit

**The Town is making progress on implementing new software applications in 2025**

The Town is also beginning a transformational project to replace the current customer relationship management (CRM) system with brand new cloud-based technology. This is a new corporate-wide system that manages relationships with residents and local businesses. This system will enhance interactions with residents, help plan and track all resident complaints and inquiries, and ensure they are actioned in a reasonable timeframe.

The Town will also be embarking on a project to install a new Computerized Maintenance Management System. The new CMMS will provide a Town-wide system for maintenance of Town assets. It will provide resource and labour management, work order management, preventative maintenance, materials and inventory management, and reporting analysis and auditing.

The Town is upgrading the existing land registry system (CityView) to the newest version of the software called CityView Workspace. Workspace will provide a user-friendly web based front end to the CityView system. This will provide easier to follow workflows for staff that will enhance productivity.

A new Learning Management System module will be implemented within ADP. This will provide the creation, delivery, management, and tracking of educational courses, training programs, or learning and development programs for all staff.

**Modernizing the existing IT infrastructure to ensure that all hardware is refreshed per life cycle requirements and always in a good supportable state**

IT infrastructure should provide fast speeds, active redundancy and resiliency, and leverage newer, faster, or better technology. Since the approval of the Technology Strategic Plan, many initiatives have been actioned to improve the Town's IT infrastructure.

The Town is moving certain applications and data to a cloud infrastructure where it makes sense to do so. This provides resiliency of the data should a major event such as a fire affect our on-premise data centres and an easier way for staff to access their applications if they are working remotely.

The IT team implemented new network infrastructure for Aurora Town Square (ATS) and brought together the separate Town of Aurora and Aurora Public Library Wi-Fi networks into one seamless network for all visitors to ATS.

The Town plans to implement a secondary internet connection from a different vendor to ensure this key connectivity is always available. This will also provide load balancing for internet traffic, ensure adequate capacity to access a growing number of cloud-based applications and protect the Town should one internet provider's service be interrupted.

IT completed upgrades to the on-premise data centres to ensure that computing resources are readily available for all applications and data. The existing ethernet

network in Town Hall has also been refreshed to provide stability and faster connection speeds.

The IT Service Desk is now better able to support all devices (including laptops, desktops, mobile phones, and tablets) no matter if they are on or off the network using a new software tool. This tool will provide the technicians the ability to remotely push software updates or full application installs to all staff devices. This tool will be instrumental to the roll out of Windows 11 later this year as Windows 10 will no longer be supported as of October.

IT is also working on the replacement of their service ticketing system. A new solution will provide better functionality for the service desk technicians and more tools to be able to provide better service to Town staff.

### **Continuous improvement of cybersecurity initiatives and cybersecurity awareness training**

About two years ago, the Town had engaged with a cybersecurity vendor to do a full analysis of cybersecurity infrastructure by benchmarking existing systems and processes against several well-established global benchmarks. The output of this to provide a roadmap to a broader overall cybersecurity infrastructure.

Over the past year, the Town has added several new technologies and enhanced existing systems and processes to achieve our goals and strengthen the overall cybersecurity footprint.

The Town has provided cybersecurity awareness training for all staff on an annual basis. This year the training will be focused on phishing – how to spot this and how to avoid. IT also conducts staff-focused phishing campaigns throughout the year to keep staff aware and to educate how to mitigate any future attempts.

The IT team will also be engaging with a cybersecurity vendor this year to develop a full Ransomware Mitigation and Recovery Plan.

### **IT has developed and is tracking metrics using the Objective and Key Result (OKR) methodology**

Many metrics have been developed and are being tracked using the Town wide OKR methodology. Specifically, the IT team is tracking these metrics:

- Provide uninterrupted IT network service to staff

- Uptime goal of 99.99%
- Increase the network capacity across town
  - Tracking Network Capacity Improvement Project at Town Hall
  - Improve Wi-Fi connectivity across town
- Continuous improvement and adaptation of cyber security technology
  - Track the number of alerts
  - Track the number of threats blocked
  - Track the number of phishing emails blocked
  - Tracking to ensure security patches are implemented
- Ensure IT policy development and enhance corporate governance and reporting
  - Track the number of IT Policies that have been created or updated
  - Technology Strategic Plan
- Ensure that the technology in the council chambers is functioning properly
  - Monitor the number of technological incidents in council chambers
- Provide prompt and reliable customer service to all town staff
  - Track the number of "Trackit" tickets opened
  - Track the number of "Trackit" tickets closed
  - Annual IT customer satisfaction survey overall level
- Monitor IT capital project performance
  - Achieve 75% spend on capital projects planned spending in 2024
- Provide new/updated software applications to fulfill business needs of the Town or new/updated digital services to residents
  - Track the number of in-house custom-built applications
  - Track the number of new/updated online services for residents

### **The Town is well positioned for the next iteration of the Technology Strategic Plan**

The 2025 Capital Budget includes a project for the next iteration of the Technology Strategic Plan. The next plan will be able to re-evaluate the next steps for leveraging technology at the Town and address the changing technology landscape including more innovative business processes and strategies for leveraging artificial intelligence now that a stronger foundation has been established. The development of the plan will take place in 2025 and it will address the strategic objectives for the next five years.

### **Advisory Committee Review**

None

## Legal Considerations

None

## Financial Implications

There are no financial impacts resulting from this report. Projects to support the implementation of the actions in the Technology Strategic Plan are included in the budget as part of the 10-year capital plan.

## Communications Considerations

To inform the public, this report will be posted on the Town's website.

## Climate Change Considerations

This report does not have an impact on climate change. Many of the actions which have been completed resulted in more automated processes resulting in the reduction of paper-based processes.

## Link to Strategic Plan

The Technology Strategic Plan supports the Strategic Plan guiding principle of **progressive corporate excellence, innovation and continuous improvement**. The implementation of the recommendations also supports the **Community** pillar through **promoting adaptable and flexible services to respond to demographic shifts** as more residents expect quality online experiences with the Town.

## Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

Council provide direction

## Conclusions

Many of the Technology Strategic Plan's recommendations have been completed or are in progress. The technology landscape at the Town has evolved greatly over the past five years with the move to cloud-based solutions, automation of business processes and providing more web-based access to residents. The next iteration of plan scheduled for this year will continue to move the Town forward to optimize the use of technology.

## **Attachments**

Attachment 1 – Technology Strategic Plan Status Summary

## **Previous Reports**

CS19-035 Technology Strategic Plan, November 2019

CS21-015 Corporate Technology Strategic Plan Update, February 16, 2021

FIN24-016 Technology Strategic Plan Update, April 2, 2024

## **Pre-submission Review**

Agenda Management Team review on March 20, 2025

## **Approvals**

Approved by Rachel Wainwright-van Kessel, CPA, CMA, Director, Finance

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer