



100 John West Way
Aurora, Ontario
L4G 6J1
(905) 727-3123
aurora.ca

Town of Aurora
Memorandum
Corporate Services

Re: Municipal Service Delivery Review Update
To: Finance Advisory Committee (FAC)
From: Project Management Office, Corporate Services
Date: April 9, 2024

Recommendation

1. That the memorandum regarding the Town's Municipal Service Delivery Review be received for information.

Background

At the November 2023 Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) meeting, the Town's Project Management Office delivered an update on the advancement in implementing the recommendations outlined in the 2021 Municipal Service Delivery Review (SDR). The FAC received a comprehensive overview of the status of each of the 38 recommended improvement actions proposed for potential financial and productivity gains.

In response to the memorandum, the FAC expressed the need for additional clarification on three key areas:

- **Key Tangible Benefits**

The FAC requested a description of the key tangible benefits achieved by the Town of Aurora's administration following the successful implementation of the recommendations outlined in the Service Delivery Review (SDR).

- **Methodology for Calculating Financial and Productivity benefits:**

The FAC sought further clarification on the methodology employed to determine the net annual savings associated with the implementation of the recommended improvement actions. The FAC communicated that a clear understanding of the calculation methodology will assist them in making informed decisions and

accurately assessing the anticipated financial benefits of the proposed initiatives.

- **Regular Progress Updates:**

Acknowledging the significance of transparency and accountability in governance, the FAC underscored the importance of receiving regular updates on the progress of implementation. Consistent reporting on the advancement of each improvement action enables the FAC to understand performance against objectives and make necessary adjustments as needed.

In response to the FAC's queries, the Project Management Office (PMO) committed to providing detailed explanations regarding the key tangible benefits of each completed initiative and an explanation of the calculation methodology used to determine the potential financial and productivity benefits. To further assist the FAC in informed decision-making, the PMO has scheduled regular updates on the progress of the SDR throughout 2024.

Analysis

Key Tangible Benefits

The Town of Aurora's management team has completed nine service improvement recommendations and realized a series of service improvement and administrative benefits listed below.

Category: Innovative Practice

Improvement Opportunity: Accommodating Hybrid Work

Key Tangible Benefits

- **Business continuity:** Town of Aurora has improved its overall resilience to service disruptions and is able to continue to deliver services to residents in the face of unplanned events (pandemics, adverse weather events, transportation issues)
- **Environmental benefits:** Reduced commuting and office occupancy has supported lower carbon emissions and environmental impact, contributing to our sustainability goals and corporate social responsibility efforts
- **Talent access, well being and retention:** Offering hybrid work options support our talent and enable access to a broader talent pool, including remote workers who may

not be geographically located near the office. Additionally, providing flexibility has improved employee satisfaction, work life balance and mental health.

Category: Service Driven

Improvement Opportunity: Shifting Corporate Communication's Focus

- Enhanced strategic decision-making and planning as resources are redirected to more impactful initiatives.
- Improved stakeholder engagement and reputation management through focused communication efforts.
- Increased alignment of communication activities with organizational goals and objectives.

Improvement Opportunity: Digitizing Road Occupancy Permit Applications

- Reduced processing time and administrative burden associated with manual permit applications.
- Improved accuracy and transparency in permit processing, reducing errors and delays.
- Enhanced compliance monitoring and enforcement capabilities through digitized records and data analysis.

Improvement Opportunity: Transition the focus of PMO to Focus on Transformation Projects

- Improved project management capabilities and oversight, leading to more successful monitoring and evaluation of corporate project portfolio.
- Increased alignment of project activities with organizational goals and strategic priorities.
- Enhanced strategic planning and decision-making through centralized management and coordination of administrative operations and transformation initiatives.

Improvement Opportunity: Transition Access Aurora to Community Services

- Improved customer experience and satisfaction through dedicated and specialized customer service channels.
- Enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in addressing community service-related inquiries and requests.

- Increased visibility and recognition of community service offerings, leading to greater community engagement and participation.

Improvement Opportunity: Empowering Front-line Staff

- Improved customer satisfaction and service delivery through better-trained and empowered front-line staff.
- Increased efficiency and effectiveness in handling customer requests, leading to shorter response times and higher-quality service.
- Reduced escalations and complaints as front-line staff are better equipped to address issues independently.

Improvement Opportunity: Developing Council-Approved Special Events Policy

- Streamlined and standardized process for planning and organizing special events, reducing administrative burden.
- Improved coordination and communication among interested parties involved in event planning and execution.
- Enhanced compliance with regulations and policies, leading to safer and more successful events.

Improvement Opportunity: Defining HR Strategy Linked to Strategic Plan

- Improved employee engagement and performance alignment with the organization's strategic direction.
- Enhanced talent acquisition and retention strategies tailored to meet the organization's evolving needs.
- Strengthened organizational culture and employee morale through clear communication of HR initiatives and goals

Category: Leading Municipal Practices

Improvement Opportunity: Formalizing and Sustaining Pandemic Practices

- Streamlined various administrative processes, reducing paperwork and manual tasks.
- Increased agility and adaptability in responding to future crises or disruptions.

- Improved communication and collaboration among team members, fostering a more connected and cohesive workforce.

Methodology for Calculating Financial and Productivity benefits:

Expert Consultation

The methodology for calculating the financial and productivity benefits was developed by Strategy Corp, a trusted and leading municipal consulting firm. Their expertise is a significant contributing factor to our pursuit of operational excellence, and we confidently rely on their guidance to drive meaningful change within our municipality.

Explanation of Calculations

Quantifying Financial Benefits

The financial analysis within the SDR identifies potential financial benefits and cost savings opportunities for the Town of Aurora. The methodology applied conservative benchmarks based on municipal data sources, internal financial information, and expert estimations. The analysis forecasts productivity savings across three main areas:

- People and Talent
- Digitization
- Process Standardization

For instance, by enhancing people management practices, the Town could realize savings between 8 and eighteen per cent. Similarly, digitization efforts could yield a ten to twenty-five per cent reduction in costs through tech implementation and workflow automation. The review also suggests standardizing processes to eliminate duplication, potentially saving five to ten per cent. These projections are based on a detailed financial assessment, which includes one-time investments and ongoing operational expenses against the anticipated annual savings, providing a net annual savings estimate. (Appendix 1-Financial Calculation Method)

Transparency and Caution

To support transparent and effective financial stewardship, it is important to provide clarity regarding the nature of the savings projections. While these projections represent potential benefits resulting from the implementation of recommended improvement initiatives, it's

essential to recognize the inherent uncertainties in projecting savings and the fluid nature of municipal service delivery. It is recommended that the FAC approach these figures with a balanced perspective, recognizing them as valuable aspirations and not absolutes that the Town can leverage in its pursuit of prudent financial management and operational excellence.

Regular Progress Updates:

Commitment to Monitoring and Evaluation

Our commitment is to report to the FAC on a regular basis regarding the implementation of the improvement initiatives. We understand the importance of ongoing evaluation to gauge the effectiveness of these measures and adjust accordingly. By providing transparent updates, we aim to keep the FAC informed and involved in our efforts to enhance efficiency and improve our service delivery to Aurora's residents.

Conclusion

The ongoing monitoring and analysis of the SDR improvement portfolio by the PMO will continue to support a successful implementation of the SDR recommendations which will contribute to enhancing the service delivery for all of Aurora's residents.