

Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Phil Eagleson, Fire Chief
Meeting Date: June 13, 2024
Report Code: CR-24-065
Subject: Fire Prevention Services – Shared Service MOU with
Georgian Bluffs

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-24-065 respecting Fire Prevention Services – Shared Service MOU with Georgian Bluffs, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council direct the City Manager to execute the memorandum of understanding as outlined in the report.

Highlights:

- Owen Sound Fire Prevention Staff have the capacity to offer Fire Prevention Services to Georgian Bluffs while maintaining a high level of service within the City.
- We have been successfully delivering Fire Prevention Services to Georgian Bluffs for the past five years. Authorizing this memorandum of understanding (MOU) will allow us to recover costs for future service.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: Collaborative City.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Previous Report/Authority:

None.

Background:

Most municipalities in Ontario have some kind of shared service agreement. Partnerships help save money, improve services, and ensure consistency of service across municipal borders. Owen Sound and Georgian Bluffs have agreements for shared services regarding the Leaf and Yard Waste Site in Owen Sound and, more recently, a shared services MOU for building services.

Owen Sound Fire and Emergency Services has been providing Fire Prevention Services to Georgian Bluffs since August 2019. Fire Prevention Staff conduct annual fire inspections of commercial buildings in Georgian Bluffs. Owen Sound staff also assist with Post-Fire Investigations and Public Education activities. The attached agreement provides these services to Georgian Bluffs on a one-day-per-week basis (52 days per year).

Service Review Project's recommendation 3 is to reduce service delivery to align with municipalities of similar size and scope. Specifically, it highlights that Owen Sound should consider negotiating cost-sharing opportunities with Grey County or the Grey County municipalities. The MOU allows us to recover costs for services we have successfully provided since August 2019.

Analysis:

The Owen Sound Fire Department has a very dedicated and highly trained team of two Fire Prevention staff. These staff have spent several years attaining the certifications required for building inspections and fire investigations. Our Fire Prevention Officer (FPO) and Fire Prevention Inspector (FPI) can accommodate the additional 52 days per year in Georgian Bluffs without impacting the service levels provided in Owen Sound.

This shared services MOU aims to mitigate the City's revenue and resource risks by leveraging Owen Sound's two certified Fire Prevention staff, generating much-needed non-tax revenue for the City.

In addition to the staffing and monetary benefits, this model is especially advantageous in providing consistency in achieving compliance with the

Ontario Fire Code. Having businesses, homes, and public facilities in both municipalities inspected by the same full-time fire prevention staff benefits both communities and protects residents in both neighbouring municipalities equally. Having this shared service ensures that compliance is maintained in both municipalities.

Financial Implications:

The cost of providing fire prevention services to Georgian Bluffs has been calculated using a formula to ensure that the Owen Sound tax levy did not subsidize the proposed day rate for the service. In addition to the day rate, Georgian Bluffs provides vehicles, equipment, supplies, office space, IT support, and uniforms. The annual revenue is estimated to reflect 52 billing days per year or roughly \$46,500.

Communication Strategy:

The Township of Georgian Bluffs will continue to receive the same high level of Fire Prevention services it has been receiving. The City of Owen Sound will prepare a media advisory that highlights the municipalities' working together. Communication around the Fire Prevention Shared Services MOU will be similar to the recent communications regarding the Building Services Shared Services agreement.

Consultation:

Georgian Bluffs CAO

Georgian Bluffs Fire Chief

Owen Sound City Manager

Owen Sound Fire Prevention Office

Owen Sound Fire Prevention Inspector

Attachments:

Fire Prevention Services Shared Service Memorandum of Understanding

Recommended by:

Phil Eagleson, Fire Chief

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Phil Eagleson, Fire Chief, at peagleson@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 x2244.