

Staff Report

Report To: Service Review Implementation Ad Hoc Committee
Report From: Tim Simmonds
Meeting Date: February 12, 2025
Report Code: CM-25-007
Subject: Project 3b1 – Formation of a Joint Municipal Services Committee at Grey County

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CM-25-007 respecting Project 3b1 – Formation of a Joint Municipal Services Committee at Grey County, the Service Review Implementation Ad Hoc Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes.

Highlights:

- Enhanced collaboration across Grey County municipalities
- Increased efficiency and cost savings
- Stronger oversight and confidence in decision making

Strategic Plan Alignment:

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

Climate and Environmental Implications:

This supports the objectives of the City's Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan by strengthening the resiliency of City infrastructure or services.

Previous Report/Authority:

[Report CM-23-012 from the City Manager Re: Service Review Implementation and Next Steps](#)

Background:

Service Review Project 3b1 requests a dedicated task force or committee at Grey County that is mandated to identify cost-sharing or restructuring opportunities within lower-tier municipalities and create a similar governance model at the municipal level to support this initiative.

Analysis:

This project is currently tracking behind schedule by approximately six months simply due to the prioritization of other City initiatives, planned and unplanned. While the project is starting later than initially anticipated, any delays can be effectively addressed moving forward as the initiative is now officially underway.

Grey County is receiving a report from their Clerk's office regarding Committees on February 13, 2025. In anticipation of this report, the attached letter (Attachment 1) from Mayor Boddy was individualized and sent to all Grey County lower-tier municipal Mayors on January 31 requesting that they join Owen Sound in supporting the formation of a Joint Municipal Services Committee at Grey County.

The core message of the letter emphasizes the following:

1. Enhanced Collaboration Across Municipalities

The Joint Municipal Services Committee will strengthen partnerships across Grey County by coordinating and steering major joint service initiatives, ensuring they are aligned with the needs and priorities of all municipalities.

2. Increased Efficiency and Cost Savings

By reducing duplication and taking a unified approach, the committee will help optimize resources, improve services, and create cost-saving opportunities that directly benefit taxpayers.

3. Stronger Oversight and Confidence in Decision-Making

With a structured process to evaluate and guide shared projects, the committee will provide greater clarity and confidence when presenting initiatives to the Committee of the Whole, ensuring decisions are well-informed and impactful.

Terms of Reference

If the County Council agrees to establish this committee, County staff would be asked to prepare a draft Terms of Reference for the County Council's review and approval. This document would provide clear guidance to ensure the committee works effectively, fairly, and in a way that benefits all municipalities involved. One of the committee's main goals would be to identify, evaluate, and recommend opportunities for municipalities to work together on shared services. These opportunities would focus on areas where working together could improve efficiency, reduce costs, or enhance services for residents. The Terms of Reference would make it clear that the committee would focus on services that are feasible to share, not required by legislative mandate to be done individually by each municipality and would benefit all involved.

A key part of the Terms of Reference would be the committee's makeup. It's expected that the committee would include one member from each lower-tier municipality, ensuring each municipality has an equal voice and that all areas of Grey County are represented. There would also likely be a representative from the County, such as the Warden or another member in an ex-officio role, to provide leadership and help keep discussions on track.

Financial Implications:

This report has no immediate financial implications.

Communication Strategy:

As this committee is being proposed as a County Committee, Staff will work with the County on appropriate messaging and communications.

Consultation:

Further consultation will occur depending on the support this initiative receives at the County.

Attachments:

Letter from Mayor Boddy to Lower Tier Mayors

Recommended by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Tim Simmonds at tsimmonds@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1210.