



Report to Council

Department: Office of the CAO

Division: Communications

Date: March 2, 2020

Prepared by: Alex Denonville, Manager, Communications

Report Number: Communications-2020-01

Subject: Launch of EssexWorks Online Report a Problem System for Citizens

Number of Pages: 3

Recommendation(s)

That "Communications Report-2020-01" and presentation titled "Launch of EssexWorks Online Report a Problem System for Citizens" prepared by "Alex Denonville, Manager, Communications" dated "March 2, 2020" be received for information.

Purpose

To inform Council and the public about the launch and implementation of the EssexWorks Online Report a Problem System.

Background and Discussion

At the May 6, 2019 Regular Meeting, Council approved a \$6,000 expenditure, utilizing funds from the March 2019 Municipal Modernization Grant for the implementation of an Online Service Request System in the Town of Essex. The grant funds were to be used by municipalities to invest in modernizing service delivery, finding efficiencies, and reducing

expenditure growth. Administration identified the improvement of the work order/service request system as a way to improve service delivery and enhance customer service.

Under the previous system, service requests were created when citizens contacted a Town of Essex staff member. Citizens could call, email, or contact the Town via social media to report problems with local infrastructure, facilities, and public spaces. From there, staff would either pass the message directly to directors or managers, who then delegate to staff, or enter a work order directly into the CityWorks system (which tracks past and current work orders). Once an issue had been addressed, the resident who submitted the problem was notified manually by the manager responsible (via phone call or email).

The new EssexWorks system utilizes an online form on the Town's website and integrates citizen service requests directly into the CityWorks system. With the new system, citizens will be able to submit information (eg. problem type and details, location, and contact information) using their home computer or smart mobile device.

Once submitted, residents will receive an automatically generated email including a Service Request ID number, which will be used to track the status of their request. Managers from the relevant department/division will also receive a confirmation email and the problem information will be added to their CityWorks dashboard.

Once the work has been completed, or a relevant update has been made, the responsible manager will update the Service Request in CityWorks, which will trigger another automatically generated email notifying the citizen of the resolution to, or plan to address, the problem.

Overall, the system will facilitate a consistent response to citizens reporting problems and ensure they are kept up-to-date on the actions undertaken. It will reduce the staff time needed to enter problems into CityWorks and contact citizens when problems are addressed. It will also allow for more consistent tracking of problems and the trends associated with them, which will give administration enhanced capacity to prepare for future work.

It is also important to note, citizens will not be limited to how they report problems. Calling or visiting Town facilities will remain an important way for staff to receive information from citizens.

Financial Impact

With the exception of the existing approved use of \$6,000 from the March 2019 Municipal Modernization Grant, the launch of the EssexWorks Online Report a Problem System will have no additional impact on the Town's finances.

Consultations

Consultations were conducted with directors, managers responsible for delegating work orders, as well as all front-line staff who currently use the CityWorks system.

Link to Strategic Priorities

- ☐ Manage, invest and plan for sustainable municipal infrastructure which meets current and future needs of the municipality and its citizens.
- ☐ Create a safe, friendly and inclusive community which encourages healthy, active living for people of all ages and abilities.
- ☒ Provide a fiscal stewardship and value for tax dollars to ensure long-term financial health to the municipality.
- ☐ Manage responsible and viable growth while preserving and enhancing the unique rural and small town character of the community.
- ☒ Improve the experiences of individuals, as both citizens and customers, in their interactions with the Town of Essex.