



Report to Council

Department: Office of the CAO
Division: Office of the CAO
Date: December 2, 2019
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Report Number: Office of the CAO-2019-02
Subject: Municipal Modernization Program: Intake 1
Number of Pages: 3

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that:

1. Report Chief Administrative Officer 2019-2 entitled Municipal Modernization Program: Intake 1 be received and;
2. The submission of the Town of Essex for funding up to the \$200,000 in the Municipal Modernization Program be supported and;
3. Administration be directed to engage the professional services of a third party consultant, in accordance with the program eligibility requirements, to undertake a municipal service delivery review to address opportunities to achieve cost savings and efficiencies for the Town of Essex and opportunities for shared services with regional municipalities.

Purpose

Council resolution demonstrating support for the proposed third-party review project is desirable for the application submission of the Modernization Program.

Background and Discussion

On November 1, 2019 the Honourable Steven Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing advised that Intake 1 of the Municipal Modernization Program would be available to Municipalities. Under this program the Province is making \$125 million available through 2022-2023 to help small municipalities (under 100,000 population) to conduct new service delivery reviews.

The recently announced Municipal Modernization Program established by the Province, provides the Town an opportunity to conduct a service delivery review by an independent third party to identify opportunities for the Town of Essex to recognize savings and efficiencies. Such projects could include a review of service delivery and modernization opportunities, and a review of administrative processes to reduce costs.

The outcome from such a review would benefit the taxpayers and may assist in reducing or containing cost pressures faced by the municipality. The Expression of Interest for Intake 1 is required to be submitted by December 6, 2019. Should the Town be successful, the project must be completed by the third party no later than June 30, 2020.

Furthermore, it is acknowledged that with current trends and announcements from the Provincial Government is to reduce grants and funding (OMPF, Gas Tax, etc.) we will be forced to address levels of service and look to other solutions to remain sustainable, such as regional or shared services.

In anticipation of a second intake of this program, The Town of Amherstburg recently passed a motion to seek participation in a future shared services review from all regional municipalities. Although the Province has recently announced that there would be no forced amalgamations in light of the recent review undertaken in the GTA, they have also indicated that they would provide municipalities with resources to support local decision making that would drive efficiencies locally. Having the local municipalities be willing to consider an approach to begin reviewing these services could benefit the region as a whole.

Financial Impact

There is no financial cost associated with this program if the municipality is successful in obtaining Municipal Modernization Funding.

Consultations

Area CAO's.

Tim Ryall, Municipal Advisor, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

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.