

**Report from** Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, Administration

**Date of Report:** April 17, 2017

**Date of Meeting:** May 31, 2017

**Report Number:** CAO-B026-2017

**File:** 10.4.99

**Subject:** Shared Services in Niagara Region – CAO Update

## Recommendation

That the Budget Standing Committee receive the attached report for information purposes.

## Background

The Chair of the Budget Steering Committee requested an update on the progress of shared services between Niagara Municipalities. The area CAO's in Niagara have met with representatives from northern municipalities in York Region who refer to themselves as N6. The N6 has been working collaboratively over the last few years for ways to share services and service providers in an effort to better serve their respective communities and to lower costs and increase opportunities.

Examples of where this group has found gains is in the procurement of an internal auditor to assist municipalities as needed, the amalgamation of Fire Services in two of the municipalities and various enhancements to operation issues like refuse and staffing.

Subsequent to obtaining information from the N6 group in York Region, the Niagara area CAO's and Mayors met in December of 2016 to discuss the potential for shared services opportunities in Niagara. There was unanimous support from everyone at the meeting to explore opportunities for shared services.

## Report

On February 3, 2017 the area CAO's met in Welland and struck a sub-committee to gather information and explore opportunities for shared services. The sub-committee is led by West Lincoln CAO Chris Carter and is comprised of CAO's Holly Dowd from Niagara on the Lake, Darren Ottaway from Pelham and Mike Smith from Wainfleet.

The team created a survey to capture various areas of opportunity with the following key dates;

April 21, 2017 - Deadline for completion of survey

April 27, 2017 - Sub-Committee Meeting

May 12, 2017 - Email completed survey to Area CAO's  
May 19, 2017 - Deadline for Final Comments  
May 24, 2017 - Sub-Committee Meeting  
June 16, 2017 - Presentation to Mayor/CAO's

Following the June 16<sup>th</sup> meeting with the Mayors and CAO's it is anticipated that there will be a definitive go forward position and that the various municipalities will be able to enter in to agreements during the 2017 calendar year.

Although no decisions have been made yet, some of the areas forwarded by the City of St. Catharines include;

- Fire prevention and public education
- Animal control services
- Asset management
- Volunteer training in PRCS fields
- Forestry Storm Response
- An area directors forum for discussing arenas
- POA court officer
- Realty services
- And private tree by law enforcement

## **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this update report.

## **Relationship to Strategic Plan**

Goal 3: Develop partnerships to enhance the economic vitality of the community

## **Conclusion**

The time and the climate is ripe for an initiative of this nature to gain traction in the Niagara Region. The work on transportation files like GO and inter municipal transit have demonstrated that Niagara municipalities can and will work together to find efficiencies and mutual gains.

## **Prepared and Submitted by:**

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