



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the General Committee

From: Richard Freymond, Commissioner of Corporate and Legislative Services

Meeting Date: June 12, 2023

Subject: Service Peterborough, Report CLSFS23-031

Purpose

A report to seek Council endorsement to move forward with an integrated, centralized customer service approach for in-person and by-phone interactions at City Hall entitled 'Service Peterborough' and establish a project budget to implement the required changes.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report CLSFS23-031, dated June 12, 2023 of the Commissioner of Corporate and Legislative Services as follows:

- a) That Council endorse an integrated and centralized customer service approach for City Hall entitled 'Service Peterborough'; and
- b) That a Capital Project budget be established in the amount of \$660,000 to implement the required changes, and that the amount be funded by a transfer from the Capital Levy Reserve.

Budget and Financial Implications

The estimated cost for the project will be funded from the budget established through the approval of the recommendations in this staff Report. If approved, the Capital Levy reserve will have an uncommitted balance of \$5,005,949.

Background

The City of Peterborough is in the business of public service. There is an increasing need for a more centralized and integrated approach to in-person and by-phone service at City Hall to improve service for customers and to ensure a more efficient use of resources. Through this Report, staff are seeking endorsement to move forward with an integrated, centralized customer service approach at City Hall entitled “Service Peterborough”. This strategic priority was included as part of the Community & Wellbeing pillar of the City of Peterborough – Strategic Plan 2023-2050 approved by Council on April 24, 2023.

The initiative seeks to ensure that the City continues to meet the changing demands of its customers (the public, citizens and visitors of the City of Peterborough), the changing responsibilities of a municipality and a chance to reflect on how the City does business and what opportunities there are to improve.

This initiative is a next step and ‘builds’ upon the Plan-Build Peterborough, a one-stop shop customer service desk located in the North Wing of City Hall specific to building and development applications. Along with Plan-Build Peterborough, the City recently launched a new online applications portal to streamline the submission of applications for building permits, planning approvals and other services through the City of Peterborough website at onlineapplications.peterborough.ca.

The “one-stop shop” model for customer service is becoming the expectation for residents when interacting with government services. Through various projects, including the change to Teams Telephony and the implementation of SAP enterprise software, tools have been put in place that better support the City’s efforts to provide a consolidated, coordinated customer service approach. Physical and organizational administrative structure changes are the next step for in-person and by-phone interactions.

This project would combine City Hall customer service functions, including the Tax Office and the Clerk’s Office, to create a centralized customer service area. The concept is that of a one-stop shop so that residents, businesses, and visitors can access City services and information in a way that meets their needs and in a way that is cost-effective for the City of Peterborough and built on the already solid commitment to customer service provided by Council and staff in day-to-day relationships with the public, businesses and visitors.

The centralized customer service model will enable cross-training for front-line staff across divisions. Having the existing staff prepared to provide a wider scope of customer service provides the opportunity to offer more flexible work arrangements and opens the door for the City to consider compressed work week options that could lead to extended hours of operation at City Hall. Cross training also makes the City more resilient to staff absences and be better prepared for future health emergencies.

The specific project objectives are to:

- Improve the accessibility of services and increase customer satisfaction by offering improved access to services.
- Centralize service delivery, including the collection system for transactions requiring payment.
- Improve staff resource options for front-line positions (back-up, training) and build on an organizational culture that values, reinforces and continuously improves customer service.
- Provide an additional public washroom and improve security at City Hall, and
- Re-examine internal processes.

The City would work with its architectural firm of record to consider the most efficient way to reconfigure the existing space to create a centralized customer service area based on available space, traffic flow, access points, accessibility and other factors. An additional public washroom would be located in the present area of the Customer Service Reception Area.

The estimated cost of the project is as follows:

Line	Descriptions	Amount
1	Renovation – Clerks Service Area	\$553,000
2	New Public Washroom	\$35,000
3	Project design and Contract Management	\$60,000
4	HST Payable	11,400
5	Total Estimated Cost	\$659,400

Timelines

If Council is supportive of the recommendations, work would begin immediately and could be completed by the end of the year.

Summary

The Service Peterborough initiative responds to the changing demands of the City's customers and seeks to improve how the City does business.

Submitted by,

Richard Freymond
Commissioner of Corporate and Legislative Services

Contact Name:

Richard Freymond

Commissioner of Corporate and Legislative Services

Phone: 705-742-7777 Ext. 1863

Toll Free: 1-855-738-3755

E-Mail: rfreymond@peterborough.ca