



REPORT

TO: Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

FROM: Susan Silver, Senior Advisor - Strategic Initiatives

DATE: January 23, 2023

REPORT NO.: ADMIN-2023-0002

SUBJECT: Service Delivery Review and Customer Service Strategy Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. ADMIN-2023-0002 dated January 23, 2023 regarding the Service Delivery Review and Customer Service Strategy Recommendations be received;

AND FURTHER THAT staff post a copy of the findings and recommendations on the town's website no later than January 31, 2023;

AND FURTHER THAT staff submit required final report documents (copy of Independent Third-Party Reviewer's report, link to report on town's website, project abstract, costs incurred, percentage of service delivery reviewed as potential cost savings) under Schedule F of the transfer payment agreement signed with the province;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to review the recommendations contained in the CSPN Reports and report back with an implementation program based on available financial and staff resources.

KEY POINTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- In January 2022, under the provincial Municipal Modernization Program (MMP), the Town was notified of a successful application for funding awarded in the amount of \$152,640 to be used towards a Customer Service Delivery Review and Modernization Strategy.
- A stipulation of funding was the use of an independent third-party reviewer to conduct a review of service delivery and modernization opportunities.

- In June 2022, CSPN (Customer Service Professionals Network) was awarded the contract as successful vendor during the town's competitive RFP process.
- The work completed by the consultant covered two main focus areas: a service delivery review and a customer service strategy.
- The project included a town-wide survey and the use of focus groups, the results of which are shared as part of CSPN's report.
- Final reporting to the province under the MMP is required no later than January 31, 2023 and a copy of the consultant's findings and recommendations must be published publicly on the town's website.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

Municipal Modernization Program Funding

In 2019, the provincial government launched the Municipal Modernization Program (MMP), a grant program for eligible municipalities to undertake service reviews or fund strategies to modernize and achieve efficiencies. To be considered for a funding award, town staff submitted a grant application which explained the proposed project and outlined key deliverables and impacts. A successful application for funding resulted in an award of \$152,640 and a by-law was enacted by Council to enter into a transfer payment agreement (TPA) with the province. Details of the funding application and resulting TPA are available in reports [ADMIN-2021-0045](#) and [ADMIN-2022-0010](#), respectively.

Scope of Review and Methodology

A request for proposal (RFP) was issued in early April 2022 and CSPN was awarded the contract in May. Additional information on the award of contract can be found in memorandum [ADMIN-2022-0010](#).

The main objectives as stated in the RFP were to:

- Identify opportunities for increased effectiveness and efficiency in **service delivery** by conducting a thorough and comprehensive review of services offered by the town;
- Evaluate and develop a **customer service strategy** with a corresponding action plan for implementation, including targets, key performance indicators, timelines and milestones, governance model and roles and responsibilities.

Additionally, expectations pertaining to scope, areas of study and deliverables were detailed in the RFP and are re-stated in the reports attached from CSPN.

A further component of the scope was to consider connections to other initiatives or strategies, culture, and future ways of working. To that end, it was important for the project and consultant team(s) to evaluate:

- Corporate Technology Plan
- Townhall Master Plan
- Impacts of COVID
- Future of Work
- Growth plans

In the context of the service delivery review and customer service strategy, the above noted areas have had or will have influences for how the town delivers services. Whether it be consideration of investment in technology systems to manage customer interactions, decisions on possible facility expansion or upgrades, accommodation and trends related to remote work, or changing population, implementation of any recommendations should take into account these connections.

In terms of how the project was undertaken and methodologies used, CSPN’s research included internal staff and council interviews with individuals and groups, customer feedback survey and stakeholder focus groups, document/data review and a municipal comparator review (see Figure 1). The resulting work product consists of two reports, attached to this staff report; *Service Delivery Review Report* and *Customer Service Strategy Report*.

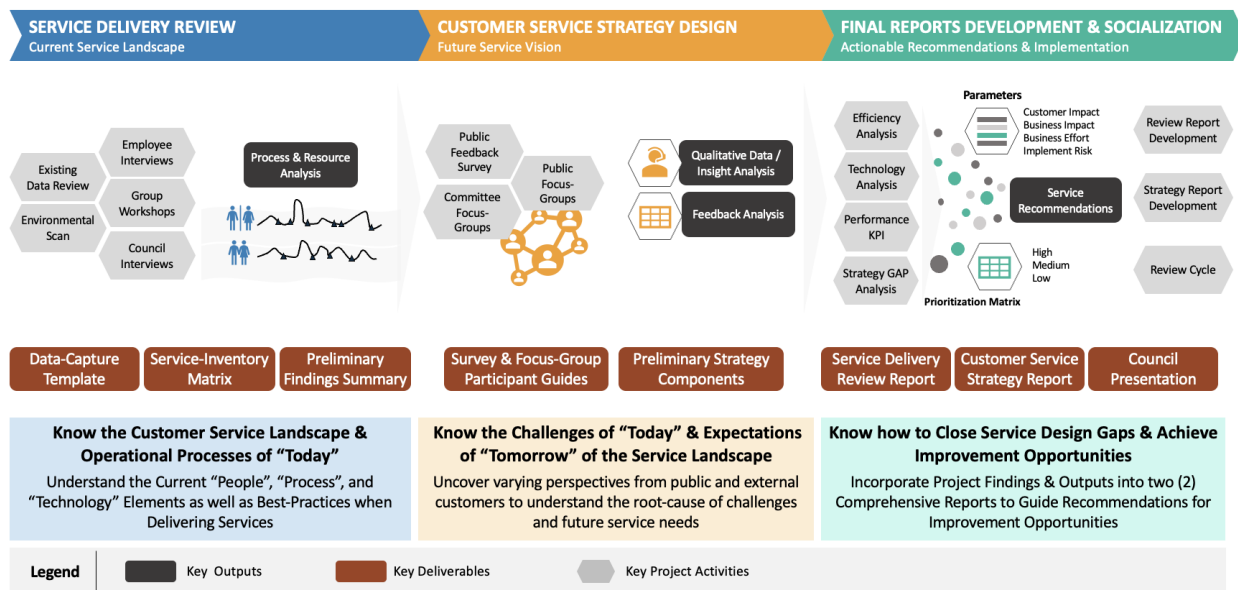


Figure 1: Project overview and methodology

These reports detail the findings and recommendations and include customer survey details, service inventory matrix, quantitative data analysis, and comprehensive recommendations list, along with suggestions for governance and implementation planning – a key next step for the organization to advance the customer service strategy. A brief summary of findings and recommendations are noted below while comprehensive information is found in the attached reports.

Findings and Recommendations

Service Delivery Review

As previously noted, the project has two distinct areas of focus, service delivery and customer service strategy. The service delivery review aligns with objectives of the municipal modernization program and is intended to provide an analysis of existing processes and practices with the aim of making recommendations which have the possibility to achieve cost-savings and efficiencies.

The attached *Service Delivery Review Report* provided by CSPN identifies 66 recommendations, which are broken down by department and overall organization. The reporting also indicates a category for each recommendation and the 66 can be summarized as follows:

Category (Type)	Number of recommendations
Streamline activities	30
Decrease task duplication	16
Increase self-service volume	8
Improve service experience	7
Mitigate future cost	5

Recommendations include an analysis of estimated hours (efficiency) and savings (cost) based on approximate volumes and general processes. The ranges provided in the report provide a starting point for staff to evaluate each recommendation and make a determination of feasibility in terms of implementing any changes or modifications. It is a key next step that staff be directed to review the recommendations contained in the CSPN Reports and report back with an implementation proposal which considers impacts and costs (financial and staff resources) to take actions.

With respect to the environmental scan and review of comparator municipalities, there is a wide range of practices to consider, and the report highlights this. Customer survey data was also collected in the form of a survey which was open to the public from July 25 to August 23, 2022. A total of 466 participants completed the survey and results indicate an overall, 61.4% satisfaction with services provided by the town. Complete details including all survey responses are available in the *Service Delivery Review Report*.

Customer Service Strategy

The funding envelope under the MMP also provided an opportunity for the town to seek recommendations to address a wider strategy for customer service. The implementation of Service Halton Hills in 2018 was the first step towards a centralized, one-stop customer service experience, which delivered a customer first approach through the creation of an inviting and welcoming environment. Service Halton Hills was

intended to be a starting point for gradual but continuous improvement in customer service and a capital project was identified to set funding aside for the development of a comprehensive Customer Service Strategy. This project also contemplated the possibility of introducing technology to support customer relationship management, commonly referred to as CRM, as a future technology project.

Given the circumstances that unfolded in 2020 with the global pandemic, this project was pushed out to 2025 and only until funding was successfully secured by staff via the municipal modernization program, was the project brought back into 2022. In this context, CSPN was asked to provide recommendations for a strategy that would take into account results of the service delivery review they were also conducting and provide for a scalable implementation plan.

The *Customer Service Strategy Report* outlines suggested phases and short/medium/long term activities that span 1-5+years. It is a key next step for staff to evaluate the recommendations contained in the report and come back with an implementation proposal and associated costs in the form of a capital project as required to move forward with proposed actions.

Next Steps

Council is being asked to receive the attached reports and direct staff to review the recommendations and report back with proposals related to implementation planning. The following will provide guidance for next steps:

- Ensure implementation plans are in-step with other initiatives
- Scale plans to ensure affordability and resource availability
- Consider change management impacts related to service delivery

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report aligns to the Town's Strategic plan recognizing the value to provide responsive, effective municipal government and strong leadership in the effective and efficient delivery of municipal services.

This report also identifies fiscal and corporate management as one of the Town's Strategic priorities.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

This report is administrative in nature and does not directly impact or address climate change and the Town's Net Zero target. Aspects of some recommendations which provide for improvements in online or virtual service delivery have the *potential, if implemented* to contribute to the Town's Net Zero target.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public Engagement has been conducted as follows: Online Survey, Focus Groups

INTERNAL CONSULTATION:

As detailed in the consultant reports attached, interviews with staff were conducted during this project to gather information. Draft reports were reviewed with all project team members and members of Senior Management Team were consulted throughout the project and to review final draft recommendations. Purchasing and finance were consulted to ensure compliance to RFP and financial procedures.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report will be funded through an existing approved budget source.

Costs associated with hiring of independent third party consultant are covered under the provincial funding award. Capital project 2300-10-2106 was included in forecast as a future project to develop a Customer Service Strategy. By applying for and successfully receiving funding in the amount of \$152,640 from the provincial government, this project was able to proceed earlier than scheduled without using funding directly from the town. Any future implementation costs are not in scope for this project.

Reviewed and approved by,

Richard Cockfield, Director of Strategic Planning

Chris Mills, Chief Administrative Officer