Municipalities of North Simcoe Service Delivery Review

→ Final Report
Prepared for North Simcoe CAOs

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optimus sbr

Contents

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Project Overview

The Town of Midland, Town of Penetanguishene, Tay Township, and Township of Tiny (collectively "the North Simcoe Municipalities") have requested support to undertake a joint Municipal Services Review. The Service Review has considered all in-scope service areas through the lens of both the individual Municipalities as well as North Simcoe collectively. The Review included an evaluation on how the Municipalities currently provide services and resulted in recommendations to improve service delivery effectiveness and efficiency across the Municipalities and North Simcoe as a whole (including opportunities for shared resources and/or service delivery).

The service areas that form the basis of the Municipal Services Review include:
- o **Corporate Services:**
    1. Human Resources/Health & Safety;
    2. Procurement;
    3. Communication, Marketing & Tourism;
    4. Information Technology;
    5. Legal Services;
- o **Protective and Development Services:**
    6. Emergency Management;
    7. Fire & Emergency Services;
    8. Land Use Planning;
    9. Building Services;
- o **Operational Services:**
    10. Engineering Services; and,
    11. Fleet Management.

The Municipal Services Review will consider both cost savings/efficiencies as well as service levels and outcomes, including communications considerations for any service level changes.

1.2 Purpose of this Document

This document builds on previous drafts as well as feedback received through CAO working sessions and meetings with the Senior Leadership Teams of each municipality.

The report provides a summary of the service delivery and associated recommendations for each of the 11 in-scope services. The report includes the following information:

- o An overview of findings from the current state to provide context to the recommendations;
- o The proposed recommendation, including more detailed information;
- o Implementation considerations to support the successful adoption of recommendations;
- o An overview of financial implications associated with each recommendation;
- o A summary of the benefits of the recommendation; and,
- o High-level prioritization and implementation considerations for the Municipalities moving forward.

Detailed Current State Report has been provided as an Appendix.

1.3 Next Steps for the North Simcoe Municipalities

This report has been prepared for the management of the North Simcoe Municipalities. As noted below, the development of the report included a review of information provided by the Municipalities as well as input received from:

- o   The leadership/management responsible for the in-scope services
- o   Staff survey
- o   Public Townhall and Survey
- o   Councillor Survey
- o   CAO and Senior Leadership Team working sessions

The recommendations have been developed to address the review opportunities, including those presented by the stakeholders listed above.

It is important to note, that many of the recommendations represent 'incremental/continuous improvement' for service delivery. The focus has been on identifying opportunities to further leverage the "power of four" across the four North Simcoe Municipalities. To this end, the Optimus SBR team identified numerous examples of good practices already in place across the in-scope services. Many of the recommendations recognize this good work and are focused on formalizing ad hoc practices or outlining a path forward for even greater collaboration. Staff and leadership should consider these recommendations to validate many good practices already implemented and take pride in the strong foundations for good collaboration across the four municipalities.

While many of the recommendations reflect incremental improvements over wholesale changes to service delivery, they will still require careful review and consideration by Management. Management will need to work with Councils to review each recommendation and confirm a willingness to move forward. As resources across the region are scarce, this will include a need to consider each recommendation's suggested prioritization. Working together, the Municipalities should confirm those recommendations they wish to move forward. The report provides some insights on potential timelines associated with recommendations, and these should be reviewed and revised as needed based on other priorities across the Municipalities. Management should set out realistic timelines for acting on recommendations. Councils should recognize the many competing priorities across the Municipalities means that all recommendations cannot be implemented concurrently and that a multi-year approach may be taken.

As the Municipalities review and consider recommendations, it should also be highlighted that, in many cases, participation from all Municipalities is not an absolute requirement. While the recommendations emphasize a shared service lens, and in most cases, have been developed to address the needs of all Municipalities, individual Management Teams/Councils may decide not to participate. In these cases, the impact on costs and benefits should still be considered. The recommendation is still advantageous for those Municipalities willing to move forward and should execute the implementation plan. The possibility to include other municipalities at a later date should be left open.

Finally, it should be recognized that this Report has been developed in parallel to the County of Simcoe's own Service Delivery Review. As of early 2021, that review remains ongoing but includes overlap in many of the services reviewed by the North Simcoe Municipalities including: Fire

Services, Land Use Planning, and Legal Services. The outcome of that review should be considered alongside the North Simcoe Municipalities' Service Delivery Review. Additionally, that review focuses on other services, which, while out of scope for the Optimus SBR review, were frequently identified by stakeholders as a priority for future review, including library and transit services.

1.4 Summary of Key Themes from Current State Report

This Future State report contains recommendations that build on findings in the interim Current State Report prepared by the Optimus SBR team in early January 2021. The Interim Current State Report contains detailed current state descriptions on service delivery, including strengths and opportunities for improvement. The final Current State report has been included as an appendix to this Future State Recommendation Report.[1]

Below are key themes from the Current State Report, that cross the North Simcoe Municipalities and services reviewed.

Willingness to Collaborate and Consistent Commitment to Service Excellence – During consultations, stakeholders responsible for the delivery of services included in the review recognized the need to ensure that services are delivered efficiently and effectively. This included an openness to explore opportunities to collaborate with peer Municipalities to bring better outcomes or value to North Simcoe residents. Across the Municipalities, there is a willingness to put any idea on the table' for review.

Lean Staffing Levels with some Staff Wearing Multiple Hats – There was a recognition that staff, generally speaking, are very dedicated and committed to providing high-quality services that respond to residents' needs and co-workers. Staff resource constraints were consistently referenced as a limitation to service delivery across the North Simcoe Municipalities. Staff often had responsibilities that spanned multiple services/functions with many corporate services decentralized. In some cases, this has also resulted in the duplication of services across multiple departments within a Municipality without clear centralization of service expertise.

Limited Collection of Metrics or Data – Across the North Simcoe Municipalities, there is a clear opportunity to improve data collection and its use in decision making moving forward. Limited examples of KPIs or performance data were available. At this time, it is not clear that data is used to drive decision-making or promote cultures of continuous improvement across the Municipalities.

Municipalities are Independently Procuring Similar Services with Limited Coordination – Municipalities engage third-party vendors to support services delivery – both internally and to the community. In many cases, this is a more effective delivery method than maintaining costly in-house expertise for low-volume activities. However, across the North Simcoe Municipalities, there

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[1] The Current State Report has been revised to reflect feedback and comments provided by the MPT. General support was received for the key findings contained within the Current State Report. When considering current state findings across the Municipalities, it is important to note that in general the ability to compare financial data is dependent upon a detailed understanding of the municipal staffing structure, commitments and other elements which may be unique to each municipality. As such, while attempts have been made to ensure as much consistency as possible, information is presented for directional purposes and, direct comparisons should be made with caution.

is duplication in the procurement of vendors (i.e. related to legal, IT, engineering, fleet management). There is likely an opportunity to consolidate vendor contracts/arrangements to reduce procurement activities and potentially attract additional vendors and more competitive pricing to the region.

Unique Municipal Identities and some Rural-Urban Differences – Throughout the current state phase of the Service Delivery Review, it was clear that there is a desire for each Municipality to maintain its unique identity and tailor services to its specific communities. This has included some differences in service priorities that have emerged between the more urban and more rural communities (i.e., differences in geography/size and infrastructure needs, land use planning and tourism priorities, fire and emergency management coverage areas, etc.). While there are differences in priorities, and a desire to maintain independence has been identified, they are not seen as factors preventing more collaboration across the region. Instead, it will be essential to develop future state solutions that can accommodate each municipality's unique identities.

1.5 Overview of Service-Specific Recommendations

The following table contains an overview of recommendations for the Corporations, based upon the current state findings. Recommendations have been developed based on good practices observed in peer municipalities and focused on addressing specific North Simcoe opportunities. This section's recommendations are further detailed throughout the report, including implementation considerations, support from other jurisdictions, where applicable, financial implications, and a summary of benefits. Below is an overview of the 38 recommendations by service area and their associated framework focus area:

Service Area	Framework Focus Area	Proposed Recommendation
Human Resources/ Health and Safety	• Governance • Resources • Process • Technology	HR1: Shared Delivery Model for HR/H&S
		HR2: Formalize Joint H&S Training
		HR3: Standardize HR Technology
		HR4: Succession Planning
		HR5: Employee Feedback Mechanisms
Procurement	• Governance • Service Level • Resources • Process	PR1: Shared Delivery Model for Procurement
		PR2: Enhanced Group Purchasing
		PR3: New Procurement Technology
Communication, Marketing, and Tourism	• Governance • Service Levels	CT1: Investigate Collaborative Communications
		CT2: Review Structure for Communications, Culture, and Tourism Organization
		CT3: Increase Attention to Communication and Visitor KPIs
Information Technology	• Technology • Cost	IT1: Develop and IT Strategy
		IT2: Align Delivery Model for IT
		IT3: Standardize Online Service Offerings
		IT4: New IT Support Systems
Legal Services	• Resources • Cost	LS1: Shared/Delivery Model for Legal Services
		LS2: Pool Resources for Outsourced Support

Service Area	Framework Focus Area	Proposed Recommendation
Emergency Management	• Governance • Process	EM1: Consolidate Emergency Response Plan and Control Group
		EM2: Increase Collaborative Training and Response Drills
		EM3: Continue with Transition to IMS for Emergency Management for all North Simcoe Municipalities
Fire & Emergency Services	• Governance • Services Levels • Process • Costs • Resources	FES1: Enhance Data Analysis and Annual Reporting
		FES2: Identify Opportunities for Increased Coordination on Public Education Activities
		FES3: Explore Potential for Greater Collaboration of Maintenance of Specialized Fire Services Equipment
		FES4: Collaborate on Radio Enhancements
		FES5: Ensure Establishing and Regulating Bylaws Accurately Reflect the Current Needs of Municipalities
		FES6: Review Shared Fire Chief Finding Arrangement between Penetanguishene and Midland
Land Use Planning	• Resources • Cost • Technology • Process	LUP1: Explore a Strategic and Policy Planner Resource
		LUP2: Adopt KPIs and Outcome Measurements
		LUP3: Standardize Planning Approach
Building Services	• Resources • Process • Technology • Cost	BU1: Share Experiences with Technology
		BU2: Review of Services Agreement and Resource Augmentation Opportunities
		BU3: Review of User Fees to Match Services Provided
		BU4: Reinforce Legal and Safety Messages to the Public
Engineering Services	• Resources • Costs • Service Levels	ES1: Develop a Common Vendor of Record/List of Pre-qualified Vendors for Engineering Services
		ES2: Enhance/Implement New Technology to Support Engineering Services
Fleet Management	• Service Levels • Costs • Resources • Governance	FM1: Develop a North Simcoe Fleet Management Resourcing Strategy
		FM2: Implement a Formal Process for Reviewing Fleet Needs Across each North Simcoe Municipality
		FM3: Implement and Fully Utilize Fleet Management Information System

2.0   Introduction and Project Overview

2.1   Introduction

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The Municipal Services Review will consider both cost savings/efficiencies as well as service levels and outcomes, including communications considerations for any service level changes.

2.2   Project Mission & Success

2.2.1   Project Mission

The Project Mission defines why the North Simcoe Municipalities have engaged Optimus SBR. For this engagement, the Mission is defined as:

- o To conduct a review of in-scope services provided by the four Municipalities of North Simcoe. Develop recommendations based on opportunities to advance and modernize service delivery in ways that make it easier for residents and businesses to access services; allow for more efficient and effective operations, and reduce/better control expenditure growth in the long term.

2.2.2 Project Success

Project success outlines what the four North Simcoe Municipalities will have after this engagement, ensuring that our engagement approach and activities will support these goals. For this engagement, project success has been defined as:

- o A clear understanding of current in-scope services and service delivery methods;
- o Agreement and buy-in on realistic and actionable recommendations to improve the allocation of service responsibilities; address duplication or overlap of activities; reduce operating costs; increase effective and responsive decision making, and promote long-term sustainability of municipal services; and,
- o Buy-in amongst key stakeholders that recommendations will result in enhanced public value through reduced operational costs and modernized service delivery.

2.2.3 Project Governance Structure

For this engagement, the Optimus SBR team is working closely with the CAO's (or their designated alternative) (the "Municipal Project Team" or MPT) of each Municipality to present ideas, discuss the scope, and determine the next steps. All deliverables were first provided to the Municipal Project Team. Deliverables (including draft formats) were provided to all CAOs at the same time. Review and discussion on deliverables may have occurred individually with CAOs/municipal staff to ensure factual accuracy associated with the delivery of services in their Municipality. Reviews and discussions on future state recommendations were prioritized during group discussions for transparency and facilitated collaborative recommendation development. CAOs engaged their staff for input and Council for review and sign-off of deliverables, as needed and with the Optimus SBR team's support.

The MPT operates on a commitment to achieving the Project Mission and Success in a mutually beneficial way. While there is no formal leader of the MPT (i.e., no single decision-maker with the ability to make decisions beyond their Municipality), the CAOs are committed to this cooperative and transparent service improvement approach. Ultimately, any given in-service recommendations may apply to all or only a subset of the Municipalities. It will be the responsibility of each Municipality (i.e., Council) to review recommendations and decide whether to proceed.

2.3 Project Scope

The Project Scope outlines the activities and deliverables that are in scope for the Optimus SBR team.

In scope for this engagement are the following activities:

- o Discovery interviews;
- o Data and Document Review;
- o Prioritizing and confirming in-scope services review areas of focus;
- o North Simcoe Municipality stakeholder engagement;
- o Supporting public engagement in a meaningful manner way;
- o Development of a Current State Report that focuses on in-scope services and identifies strengths and opportunities for improvements;

o Summary of relevant service delivery insights from comparable Municipalities;
o Development of recommendations to support the future state operations of these services, including implementation planning; and,
o Development of a Final Report and presentation

To ensure that project resources and efforts are focused and used efficiently, the following items have been mutually agreed to as being out of scope:

o Detailed financial analysis and/or modelling;
o Detailed implementation planning;
o Implementation of recommendations; and,
o Broader change management activities.

Eleven services were included in this Service Delivery Review, which were proposed by the MPT. During Project Discovery, the 11 services were reviewed with each CAO and confirmed for inclusion in the review. Project Discovery outcomes were summarized in the *North Simcoe Municipalities Service Delivery Review – In-Scope Services List.*

The services included in this review are:
o **Corporate Services:**
1. Human Resources/Health & Safety;
2. Procurement;
3. Communication, Marketing & Tourism;
4. Information Technology;
5. Legal Services;
o **Protective and Development Services:**
6. Emergency Management;
7. Fire & Emergency Services;
8. Land Use Planning;
9. Building Services;
o **Operational Services:**
10. Engineering Services; and,
11. Fleet Management.

Appendix A contains additional information on the In-Scope Services.

2.4 Project Approach

The graphic below describes the project approach used during the engagement.

Figure 1: Project Approach

Through this approach, the MPT developed a thorough understanding of the in-scope services' current state and realistic and actionable recommendations moving forward.

2.5 Project Deliverables

Throughout the engagement, the Project Team developed several interim deliverables, as well as a Final Report (this document). Each deliverable was developed in draft form and reviewed with the MPT before incorporating edits and finalizing the content. The table below outlines each deliverable of the engagement and provides a brief description to ensure a common understanding of their content. The item highlighted in orange below is the specific deliverable submitted at this time.

Table 1: Project Deliverables

DELIVERABLE	DESCRIPTION
Project Plan	Sets key dates for deliverables, communications, and project milestones, while also detailing accountabilities of both Optimus SBR and MPT project resources
Final (Prioritized) In-Scope Service List	Validated list of in-scope services to move forward with as part of the Current State Assessment
Research and Stakeholder Engagement Plan	Foundational document that outlines our approach and methodology for stakeholder engagement activities during the current and future state activities – this document will outline the method by which we intend to engage individuals for each stream of the engagement. It will outline comparators that will be reviewed and specific information to be researched
Service Level Review Findings (Interim Report)	Current State Summary including methodologies, data and documents reviewed, stakeholder engagement activities, jurisdictional scan and benchmarking, and Service Profiles (including Next Steps). The report will outline the existing strengths, challenges, issues, and areas of opportunity related to the service areas in scope for this review
Final Report (Future State Report)	A Final Report that outlines all engagement activities/outputs, key recommendations, and high-level implementation considerations

2.6 Project Timeline

The MPT identified this engagement as an important initiative for the Municipalities of North Simcoe. However, they also recognized numerous additional initiatives and time pressures on municipal staff (including but not limited to potential COVID-19 response activities/impacts anticipated for Fall/Winter 2020-21). Consequently, the Service Delivery Review was finalized in February 2021, to align with Provincial requirements.

Project timelines included the following milestone dates.

- Project Plan and Data/Document Request – September 3, 2020
- Draft List of Service Priorities – September 30, 2020
- Research and Stakeholder Engagement Plan – October 14, 2020
- Service Level Review Findings (Interim Report) – January 7, 2021
- Final Report
  - Draft 1 – February 4, 2021
  - Draft 2 – February 18, 2021
  - Final – February 26, 2021 - (This Document).

3.0   Service Delivery Review Framework

Optimus SBR is employing a Service Delivery Review Framework to review services effectively and efficiently and consistently. This section will define the term "service" for this review and will provide an overview of our Service Delivery Review Framework.

3.1   Optimus SBR's Service Delivery Review Framework

To guide this review, Optimus SBR brings a Service Delivery Review Framework (SDRF) with which in-scope services will be reviewed (modifications to the Framework can be made as needed). The below graphic outlines each of the Framework's major components, which will guided our review as appropriate.

Each component of the Framework looks at a unique part of services to help identify where common challenges might occur:

- o **Governance:** Governance (where appropriate) and, more generally organizational structure, roles, responsibilities, and accountability are clear for effective decision making, operations, and minimizing duplication.

- o **Service Levels**: Service level expectations are clearly articulated and/or documented and are appropriate. This will also involve investigating whether the service is meeting its

target outcome(s) in terms of timelines, quality, or effectiveness for other municipal partners, businesses, or residents.

o **Resources**: Required resources are in place to carry out roles and responsibilities at the expected service levels. This can include human resources (e.g., in terms of competencies, expertise, or staffing levels) as well as other (e.g., financial) types of resources, and whether there are existing or potential capacity constraints.

o **Process**: Processes are well designed and defined, effective and efficient. This will also include identifying areas where processes do not exist or need updating as well as understanding what tools are currently leveraged and how they are used.

o **Technology**: Appropriate technology is in place to enable processes and service delivery more broadly.

o **Cost**: Services are provided cost-effectively relative to the services being provided and the benefits realized.

3.2 Overview of Overarching Recommendations

3.2.1 Data and KPI's

The majority of recommendations have been developed to address opportunities associated with each of the 11 in-scope services. However, a common theme across each of the Municipalities, and services, was a potential opportunity to use data better to track service levels and support a culture and framework of continuous improvement and innovation.

Across the in-scope services, stakeholders identified limitations in the collection, review, and analysis of data and information due to technology limitations and staff capacity constraints. The Municipalities' current state has not enabled the development of a culture that embraces the use of data, or rigor in processes to use data in decision making. Note, this should not be considered a criticism against staff as many staff and leadership members made comments expressing a desire to move in this direction.

As noted throughout the report, there is minimal excess staff capacity throughout the North Simcoe Municipalities. As such, there is little desire, or realistic ability, to develop and implement Key Performance Indicators and Metrics for each service and maintain on an ongoing basis for the sole purpose of "simply reporting outcomes" in a piecemeal manner.

While not an immediate recommendation, the North Simcoe Municipalities should consider the eventual development of more robust Reporting Frameworks to drive continuous improvement activities and culture. While this is an impactful and beneficial investment, a Reporting Framework would involve significant implementation efforts. It should be considered after other, quick win and high impact recommendations have been implemented.

Specifically, a Reporting Framework should emphasis:

- Efforts to improve data collection and reporting should focus on implementing a structure and guidance to bring together KPIs, data collection standards, and regular reporting requirements into a Reporting Framework.
- Ability to provide the executive teams of each Municipality with increased visibility, understanding, and oversight into services' performance and support better planning and resource management.
- Use of quantitative data and metrics and qualitative input from staff related to stakeholder feedback, including journaling and staff interviews/focus groups.

To set the foundation for quality reporting and the improvement of service provision/operations, the Reporting Framework needs clear standards and expectations to measure performance and improvement. This can be done by developing and implementing service standards and performance indicators as part of the program management.

Key functions of the Quality Reporting Framework include:

1. Data Gathering;
2. Sampling;
3. Analysis; and,
4. Reporting.

A robust Reporting Framework would go beyond only summarizing metrics and outcomes to support continuous improvement and decision-making associated with service delivery.

1 - Data Gathering Process
- Effort should be made to centralize and streamline the data collection process.

2 - Sampling Process
- Conducting Sampling on activities (i.e. staff focus group on resident outcomes) within specific services will provide Management with a greater understanding of "hard to measure outcomes".

3 - Analysis Process
- Analyzing data will need to occur against established KPIs to be confirmed by municipal leadership

4 - Reporting Process
- The reporting process will need to consider how information is assessed and distributed to required recipients. KPIs will require the establishment of targets and performance thresholds.

3.2.2 Delivery Models for Shared Services

Similar to the overarching recommendation above, another common theme of the recommendations identified in this report is the opportunity for the Municipalities of North Simcoe to deliver common services collectively under a shared service delivery model. As a core focus of this review, potential opportunities for shared services have been identified across many of the 11 in-scope services reviewed, such as HR/Health and Safety, Procurement, IT, and Legal.

Any shared service delivery model's basic premise is to consolidate any existing business operations similar or identical that are being conducted across multiple groups into one integrated group or function. The intended benefit of this consolidation is to:

1. Make the most of limited resources;
2. Improve the efficiency of existing operations through more streamlined internal processes; and,
3. Increase the service levels provided to constituents.

However, while the basis of each shared service recommendation is similar, how a shared service delivery model is structured and governed can be bespoke and attuned to the needs and requirements of those participating Municipalities. The table below highlights these different potential approaches to the delivery of services under a shared model:

Participation	• **All four**, **or a subset** of the Municipalities of North Simcoe, could participate in any given opportunity for shared service delivery – the model is not dependant on consensus from all groups.

Structure	• Shared service delivery models can be structured in different ways:
	  o They can be structured around an **insourced** delivery model, where full-time internal resources are consolidated and/or acquired between Municipalities into one central group; or
	  o Conversely, they can be structured around an **outsourced** delivery model, where the services are procured and delivered by a third-party vendor.
	• The 'who does what' aspect of the shared model is flexible and can be adapted to meet the participants' specific needs. However, under either

	structure, the shared service/function is paid for in a collaborative fashion between the participating Municipalities.

Governance	• Shared service delivery models can also be governed in different ways:
	   ○ Governance responsibilities could be **'centralized'** where one participating Municipality is the central 'owner' of the shared function, and they take on greater levels of responsibility for oversight and monitoring; or,
	   ○ Conversely, governance responsibilities could be **'shared'** where there is joint 'ownership' across all participating Municipalities, and responsibilities for oversight and monitoring are more equitability distributed.
	• However, under any type of governance model, ensuring clear protocols for decision making, issue escalation, risk management, and performance tracking are critical for long-term success. These elements should be clearly articulated in any shared service agreement.
	   ○ The shared service agreement/MOU should include references to the costing arrangement between the participating Municipalities and the prioritization and sequencing of work across the group. This would be specific to the same services included in the shared agreement but should clearly articulate associated service level outcomes.
	   ○ Finally, all share service agreements/MOUs should be reviewed with a regular cadence to ensure adequate resourcing and distribution of costs and benefits.

As depicted above, there are many possibilities for structuring and governing shared service delivery models, and no one way is objectively better than another. In the future, as the Municipalities of North Simcoe explore the opportunities for shared service delivery identified in this report, this flexibility must be kept top of mind. Doing so will help ensure that the Municipalities of North Simcoe develop optimal shared service solutions that derive the benefits such models promise and ensure the sustainability of the arrangement for the long term.

3.2.3 Formalized North Simcoe Working Groups

Broadly speaking, the four Municipalities of North Simcoe all face similar challenges concerning addressing and adopting new directives, policies, and legislation from other government levels (e.g., the province), which impact the delivery of services in each Municipality. Historically, addressing some of these changes and new requirements has been done in collaboration between the four Municipalities. However, overall, this work has been happening in a more informal and ad hoc manner. As such, there is an opportunity to formalize how the Municipalities of North Simcoe collaborate and work together to deal with such impacts and requirements as they occur.

To deal with these changes and requirements in a more formal manner, service-specific North Simcoe 'working groups' could be established. These working groups would contain appropriate representation from across the region for the service areas that are most guided/impacted by ministry directives, policies, and rules. These service-specific working groups could be established for IT, Procurement, HR, Legal, Land Use Planning and/or Building Services. These working groups should have a mandate to look for shared services or grouped service opportunities and focus on

the collective evaluation of new legislation, directives, policies, or other requirements to understand impacts at the regional and local levels.

These formal working groups offer various benefits to the Municipalities of North Simcoe and appropriate staff members. This includes helping break down silos, making it easier to share information, best practices, and lessons learned while potentially reducing the duplication of activities or approaches in implementing changes to meet new requirements. Further, the working groups could also allow for increased collaboration, reduced costs, and greater consistency in seeking and contracting for outsourced expertise to help with changing requirements and the resulting implications.

Given that this type of collaboration is already ongoing, formalizing these working groups would be a quick win for the Municipalities. Doing so would only require identifying appropriate resources/participants from each Municipality, establishing a regular meeting cadence, and developing standard agendas and topics for discussion.

Service Specific Recommendations

Section 1 – Corporate Services

In-Scope Services Reviewed in this Section:

1. Human Resources/Health & Safety

2. Procurement

3. Communications, Marketing & Tourism

4. Information Technology

5. Legal Services

4.0 Service Specific Recommendations

4.1 Human Resources (HR)/Health and Safety (H&S)

4.1.1 Summary of Current State Findings

Service Description

- HR is tasked with managing a wide variety of responsibilities, including compensation, benefits, recruitment, dismissals, keeping up to date with any laws that may affect the Municipality and its employees, such as organizational health and safety.

Objectives of the Review

- Identify shared service delivery models to improve service outcomes including Health and Safety;
- Identify opportunities to mitigate costs through shared services; and,
- Explore opportunities to formalize knowledge sharing/ best practices.

Framework Focus Areas

- Governance, Resources, Process and Technology

Strengths

- **Current Resources** – current HR/H&S resources across the Municipalities of North Simcoe are knowledgeable and are generally successful in managing the function.
- **Policies and Procedures** – broadly, all required HR and H&S policies exist and are documented across the four Municipalities of North Simcoe.
- **Cross-Municipality Relationships** – the Municipalities of North Simcoe, and others in the region, have strong informal working relationships on matters of HR and H&S.
- **Health & Safety Training** – all the Municipalities offer training and upskilling opportunities to staff, either through in-house programs or outsourced third-party specialists.

Preliminary Opportunities and Associated Gaps (if applicable)

- **Recommendation HR1:** Create a centralized HR/H&S function between the Townships of Tay and Tiny.
  - **Gaps Addressed:** Resource Constraints and Reactive Resource Roles
- **Recommendation HR2:** Formalize North Simcoe H&S training, combining existing resources and programs available today.
  - **Gap Addressed:** Duplication of some H&S training offerings, limited documentation of informal sharing activities.
- **Recommendation HR3:** Standardize HR Technology
  - **Gap Addressed:** Limited use of technology and over-reliance on paper-based processes, spread sheets and disparate systems.
- **Recommendation HR4:** Succession Planning
  - **Gap Addressed:** 'Critical role' risks, lack of formal succession planning and cross-training documentation/processes.
- **Recommendation HR5:** Employee Feedback Mechanisms
  - **Gap Addressed:** No formal mechanisms for staff to provide input or feedback, limited formal understanding strengths and opportunities for improvement.

4.1.2 Recommendation HR1: Shared Delivery Model for HR/H&S

Development of a centralized HR/H&S function between the Townships of Tay and Tiny.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- It was widely recognized by staff across the Municipalities that resourcing for the HR/H&S function, or lack thereof, was a significant challenge. Today, HR/H&S staff are primarily tasked with managing more reactive and transactional-based activities or issues, but do not have the requisite time to stay ahead of such day-to-day activities. For example, while required documentation and HR policies all generally exist today, various groups recognized that many of these existing policies are outdated and require updates, which have not been addressed due to capacity limitations. Further, current capacity limitations also contribute to HR/H&S staff rarely having the time or mandate to expand their scope and take on 'other' initiatives that may be more proactive or strategic, such as improving workflows, efficiencies, employee experience or performance measurement/tracking.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The Townships of Tay and Tiny should explore the potential of creating a centralized HR/H&S function, shared between both Townships. The shared function would have a universal mandate to serve both Municipalities equally, in correspondence with the relative needs and contributions of each.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is low, not because of high complexity, but due to the staff time required to plan and coordinate the implementation of this recommendation. However, no external support or incremental technology would be required to implement this recommendation.
- **Note:** Given that the Townships of Tay and Tiny have each recently hired, or gained council approval to hire, an HR Specialist for their respective Municipalities, it is recommended that this potential solution is explored in the longer term, after the two Townships onboard and optimize these new dedicated resources. Other recommendations, with higher ease of implementation, should be explored in the more immediate term.

Supporting Findings from Other Jurisdictions

- An example of a successfully shared delivery model for HR/H&S exists within the Municipalities of North Simcoe, between the Town of Penetanguishene and Township of Georgian Bay. Currently, the Town and the Township have a formal agreement to share HR/H&S staff, including one Director and one HR Coordinator, equally between the two Municipalities. These staff split days between Municipalities.
- Stakeholder interviews revealed that this current agreement and split week operating structure has been successful in meeting the needs of both Municipalities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- There are some financial costs associated with this recommendation, as it would require time from existing staff to understand requirements, define future state processes and coordinate work efforts. There may also be a cost of incremental staff resources (if required), split between the Townships of Tay and Tiny, to increase the overall capacity of the shared HR/H&S team.

- However, this recommendation is anticipated to deliver some incremental financial benefits for the Townships, as the total cost of delivering HR/H&S services can be reduced through streamlined processes and an overall decrease in staff time.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A well-structured and integrated shared delivery model between the Townships of Tay and Tiny could:
  - Increase the efficiency of which these staff operate and complete day-to-day activities;
  - Enhance the total capacity of HR/H&S staff to allow for a greater focus on more proactive/strategic activities, leading to improved service levels; and,
  - Further, the shared model and additional capacity can promote greater levels of compliance with mandatory HR and H&S requirements, reducing risk for the Municipalities.

4.1.3 Recommendation HR2: Formalize Joint H&S Training

Establish a formal North Simcoe H&S training program, combining existing resources and programs available today.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- A variety of H&S training is delivered across the Municipalities of North Simcoe today, a large of amount of which is already shared between the Municipalities on an informal basis.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- While overall expenditure to deliver H&S training across the Municipalities of North Simcoe is relatively modest today, costs could be further reduced by combining existing resources across the Municipalities to establish a formal H&S training program. This program would bring all separate internal training programs offered today (MOL, WHIMIS etc.) across the four Municipalities together under one more coordinated and comprehensive program, removing duplicate training offerings.
- The program could operate under a centralized delivery model where there is one central owner, or as a true shared service model where there is joint 'ownership' across all Municipalities.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is high, as only a moderate amount of staff time would be required to plan and coordinate the implementation of this recommendation. Further, no external support or incremental technology would be required to implement this recommendation. In addition, the formalization of joint H&S training across the four Municipalities of North Simcoe could act as the structure under which additional staff development opportunities (beyond H&S) could be explored collaboratively in the future (e.g., leadership training, cross-training roles etc.)
- Given that a variety of H&S training delivered across the Municipalities today is already being shared on an informal basis, and the relative ease of implementation, this recommendation should be pursued immediately and rolled out as soon as possible.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- There are some financial costs associated with this recommendation, as it would require time from existing municipal staff to document all current state activities, define future requirements, and build out the formal program (including structures/governance, funding model, supporting processes, staff roles and accountabilities etc.) and develop a formalized agreement.
- However, this recommendation is anticipated to deliver some incremental financial benefits for the Municipalities of North Simcoe, as the current cost of delivering H&S training can be further reduced, as outlined below.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A well-structured and comprehensive shared H&S training program between the Municipalities of North Simcoe could:
  - Reduce the cost of delivering H&S training, though increased operating efficiency. Greater efficiencies could be realized through the removal of duplicate training offerings and greater sharing of resources; and,
  - Promote a more coordinated and consistent approach to delivering H&S training and pool existing expertise and best practices, leading to improved service levels.

4.1.4 Recommendation HR3: Standardize HR Technology

Sourcing and implementation of a common HR technology solution across North Simcoe.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Discussions with staff across the Municipalities revealed that the use of modern technologies to support the HR function was limited today. Generally, management and tracking of HR related activities are over-reliant on paper-based processes and spread sheets, and where systems do exist today, they are disparate and non-uniform across each Municipality.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The Municipalities of North Simcoe should explore the potential of pooling collective resources to obtain a common HR software solution. This common solution and the sensitive data within, would be deployed and operated independently across each Municipality.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is moderate. A moderate amount of staff time would be required to plan and coordinate the implementation of this recommendation.
- This recommendation does not require immediate pursuit and should be contemplated at a time when the collective Municipalities of North Simcoe have the requisite resource capacity to explore the opportunity in a comprehensive manner.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Implementation of new HR software or technology would require time from staff to understand requirements, coordinate procurement and implementation efforts, update existing workflows and some training time. This staff time would represent a cost to the Municipalities.
- Further, implementation of new HR technology would also include the incremental cost of acquiring the technology and the ongoing licensing costs to use it. This cost will be highly dependent on the type and scope of the software or technology acquired, and the potential discount received from vendors as part of a group purchase. Finally, some external support from the vendor may be required to help implement the new technical solutions, the cost of which will again be highly dependent on the pricing structure proposed by a given vendor.
- However, this recommendation is anticipated to deliver some financial benefits for the Municipalities that can help to offset costs, as current staff time, and the cost of that time, can be reduced and repurposed in the future due to streamlined operations/processes.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A common and standard technology solution between the Municipalities of North Simcoe to help better manage, track and coordinate HR activities could:
  - Reduce the cost of procuring technology, through economies of scale from group purchasing;
  - Enhanced the ability for the Municipalities to share knowledge and best practices amongst each other with one common technology solution;
  - Support the avoidance of future labour costs for HR, as the technology could generate operating efficiencies; and,
  - More effective management of the HR function through better tracking and insights. As a result, the technology could support increased levels of compliance with mandatory requirements and reduced risk of non-compliance.

4.1.5 Recommendation HR4: Succession Planning

Develop a common process for succession planning, focusing on supervisor/manager level staff resources.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- There is a limited amount of formal succession planning and/or cross-training documentation/ processes that exist across the Municipalities of North Simcoe, even though many Municipal staff are critical to the operations of each Municipality. Many current staff members wear many 'hats' and perform a wide variety of responsibilities within their roles due to lean operational structures. These current structures increase the level of risk, aka. 'critical role' risk, to the Municipalities if one or multiple of those critical staff members are no longer able to perform their job duties.
- In addition, the Municipalities cited significant challenges in recruiting in large annual volumes or recruiting specific roles and or competencies, further emphasizing the critical role risk' mentioned above.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The Municipalities of North Simcoe should explore the development of a common process for succession planning and emergency resource sharing. This process should look to formalize how the Municipalities of North Simcoe can work together and help each other if critical staff roles ever become vacant through the course of normal or abnormal business operations. Planning can be done at the individual Municipal level and where more critical areas are identified, a formal shared process can be established.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is moderate, as some staff time would be required to plan and coordinate the implementation of this recommendation. Resources from all four Municipalities would be required to conduct succession planning activities, ensure the proper documentation exists across critical roles, and then come together and define the structures and logistical aspects of a formal succession planning agreement. However, no external support or incremental technology would be required to implement this recommendation.
- Given the potential risks associate with not pursuing this recommendation, it should be pursued as soon as possible. Particularly due to the impact of COVID-19 on business operations and the enhanced focus on business continuity management.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- There are some financial costs associated with this recommendation, as it would require time from existing municipal staff to understand requirements, define future state processes and coordinate work efforts.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A well-structured and comprehensive process for succession planning and emergency resource sharing between the Municipalities of North Simcoe could:
  - Help mitigate the 'critical role' risk and recruiting challenges experienced;
  - Prevent lost productivity if critical staff roles ever become vacant through the course of normal or abnormal business operations; and,
  - Improve business continuity management and support a consistent approach to service delivery across each Municipality.

4.1.6 Recommendation HR5: Employee Feedback Mechanisms

Development of a formal 'pulse survey' across the Municipalities of North Simcoe that is issued across each organization on an annual basis.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Across the Municipalities of North Simcoe, there are limited opportunities for Municipal staff to provide input or feedback to the organizations or for the Municipalities to understand current areas of strength and opportunities for improvement in a more formal manner.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The Municipalities of North Simcoe, collectively or individually, should establish a formal 'pulse survey' that is issued across each organization on an annual basis.
- This mechanism would provide current staff with an opportunity to share their thoughts and feedback while concurrently allowing each Municipality to uncover insights into the 'pulse' of the organization in a more formal manner.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is high and represents an opportunity for a quick win across the Municipalities. While some staff time would be required to develop and implement this recommendation, the Town of Penetanguishene is already in the process of developing an annual staff survey, which could be shared and modified to meet the needs of the other three Municipalities in North Simcoe.
- Given the relative ease of implementation, this recommendation should be explored and rolled out as soon as possible and is not anticipated to require a significant amount of time.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- There are no material financial costs associated with this recommendation, as this would only require a limited amount of time from existing municipal staff to develop the annual 'pulse survey'.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A well-structured and consistently deployed annual 'pulse survey' across the individual Municipalities of North Simcoe could:
  - Help improve staff engagement and productivity;
  - Provide greater insights into the 'pulse' of each organization(s); and,
  - Enhance each Municipalities understanding of current strengths & areas for improvement.

4.2 Procurement

4.2.1 Summary of Current State Findings

Service Description
• The procurement function focuses on managing and optimizing the processes and policies that support the acquisition of required goods or services for the Municipality. An effective procurement service can translate into substantial organizational cost savings and efficiencies while helping to ensure fiscally responsible and equitable purchasing decisions.

Objectives of the Review
• Modernize procurement practices through a clear understanding of all options available;   • Explore new/additional options for procurement of services and products (e.g., shared Vendor of Record);   • Identify opportunities for potential cost savings through innovative/improved procurement processes; and,   • Identify opportunities for increased effectiveness through pooling resources.

Framework Focus Areas
• Governance, Service Level, Resources and Processes

Strengths
• **Policies and Procedures** – each Municipality has recently updated its procurement policy documents and related procedures within the last five years.   • **Adoption of Online Technologies** – most Municipalities have recently adopted some more modern technologies to enable the procurement function.   • **Templates and Procedures** – some Municipalities have recently developed and implemented new standardized templates and processes for procurement activities.   • **Current Resources** – current procurement resources across the Municipalities of North Simcoe are knowledgeable and do a good job of managing the function today.

Preliminary Opportunities and Associated Gaps (if applicable)

• **Recommendation PR1:** Shared Delivery Model for Procurement
    o **Gap Addressed:** Limited centralized oversight of the function, missed opportunities to pool resources/ reduce costs and infrequent strategic purchasing.
 • **Recommendation PR2:** Enhanced Group Purchasing
    o **Gap Addressed:** Missed opportunities to pool resources, increase buying power and reduce procurement costs.
 • **Recommendation PR3:** New Procurement Technology
    o **Gap Addressed:** Over-reliance on manual processes to track activities and purchase orders, limiting future forecasting or planning activities

4.2.2 Recommendation PR1: Shared Delivery Model for Procurement

Development of a centralized procurement function across the Municipalities of North Simcoe.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Apart from the Town of Midland, the three other Municipalities of North Simcoe operate the procurement function in a decentralized manner today. This structure results in each individual department taking the lead on running procurements for their specific needs, with limited levels of centralized oversight and varying levels of expertise and compliance.
- The current decentralized structures across the other Municipalities of North Simcoe result in missed opportunities for the Municipalities to pool collective resources and buying power, purchase goods and services strategically, and reduce the costs of those goods and services procured.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The Municipalities of North Simcoe should explore the potential benefits of creating a shared procurement function between the four Municipalities, with a universal mandate to serve all participating Municipalities equally, in correspondence with the relative needs and contributions of each.
- This type of shared delivery model for procurement services could not only allow for the Municipalities of North Simcoe to standardize the service at a transactional level (i.e., standardizing the purchase of common goods/services) but also enable a more proactive approach and enhance the strategic value of the function by expanding both the number and capability of dedicated procurement resources in the region (i.e., alignment of procurement policies, standardization of future forecasting approaches and more strategic purchasing with other coalitions).

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is low, as this recommendation would be highly complex and require significant time from existing staff to plan and execute. However, external support or incremental technology would not necessarily be required to implement this recommendation.
- From a timing perspective, given that the development of a shared delivery model would serve as the guide to all future procurement-related decisions across the region of North Simcoe, this recommendation should be explored and tested for feasibility as soon as possible, ideally in short to medium term.
- *Note:* As per section 3.2.2, there is flexibility in the structure (e.g., in-house vs. outsourced) and governance (e.g., centralized vs. joint) of this potential shared service. Where possible, the Municipalities of North Simcoe should also explore shared solutions with the County prior to focusing on North Simcoe exclusive solutions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- There are some financial costs associated with this recommendation, as it would require significant time from existing staff (and cost of this time) to understand and align requirements, define future state processes, coordinate work efforts and governance, formalize a shared agreement, and conduct some change management activities. Further, seeing as only one dedicated procurement resource exists today, the Municipalities would be required to recruit, hire, and train incremental staff resources to increase the capacity of the shared function.

- However, this recommendation is anticipated to deliver various financial benefits for the collective Municipalities of North Simcoe. Going forward, an estimated 75% of staff time spent on procurement across other departments will be avoided and can be repurposed on more core responsibilities. Further, enhanced economies of scale and greater collaboration in purchasing across the region will generate cost savings on the future procurement of goods and services. While these savings are difficult to approximate, an estimate of 5-10% is generally seen as conservative in other public sector organizations who collaborate on procurements. These savings on the cost of procurement will help to offset or cover incremental investments made into the centralized model.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A well-structured and integrated shared delivery model for procurement could:
    - Improve the efficiency of which staff operate and complete day-to-day activities, removing many duplicate activities that occur across Municipalities;
    - Increase the total capacity of staff within the procurement area and beyond to allow for a greater focus on more proactive/strategic activities, leading to improved service levels;
    - Centralized oversight and a coordinated approach across Municipalities, leading to improved processes and greater levels of compliance with procurement policies and by-laws, reducing risk for the Municipalities; and,
    - Facilitate greater collaboration and group purchasing amongst the four Municipalities and with other consortiums, leading to greater economies of scale, cost optimization and future savings on the purchase of goods and services.

4.2.3 Recommendation PR2: Enhanced Group Purchasing

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Shared procurement activities between the four Municipalities, or as part of a larger consortium, do occur today. However, they are relatively informal and infrequent, resulting in missed opportunities to increase buying power and realize savings on the procurement of goods and services.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Develop a formal and structured approach to collaborating on group purchasing opportunities, either as the collective Municipalities of North Simcoe, as part of the Georgian Bay Purchasing Group, with the County of Simcoe, or beyond (such as province-wide procurement opportunities).
- *Note:* This recommendation could be pursued independently or under the umbrella of a shared service model for procurement services.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is high and represents an opportunity for a quicker win across the Municipalities. Some staff time would be required to develop and implement this recommendation, such as aligning /standardizing requirements on common goods and services. However, significant effort should not be required to formalize current collaboration and create a more structured approach to group purchasing for the future.
- From a timing perspective, this recommendation should be explored and rolled out as soon as possible, given the relative ease of implementation. This recommendation can be pursued prior to the potential establishment of a shared delivery model for North Simcoe and is not anticipated to require a significant amount of time.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- There are minor financial costs associated with this recommendation, as it would only require time from existing municipal staff to understand requirements, define future state processes and coordinate work efforts on an ongoing basis.
- However, like the recommendation above, this recommendation is anticipated to deliver financial benefits for the collective Municipalities of North Simcoe. Enhanced economies of scale and greater collaboration in purchasing across the region will generate cost savings on the future procurement of goods and services. While these savings are difficult to approximate, an estimate of 5-10% on group purchases is generally seen as conservative in other public sector organizations who collaborate on procurements. In addition, there is potential for greater savings to be realized by participating in procurement opportunities with larger consortia such as the Georgian Bay Purchasing Group, the County of Simcoe, or the Province of Ontario.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A structured approach and better-defined process to group purchasing amongst the four Municipalities of North Simcoe could:
  - o Improve the efficiency of procurement operations, removing some duplicate procurement activities that occur across Municipalities; and,

o   Facilitate greater collaboration and group purchasing amongst the four Municipalities, leading to greater economies of scale, improved cost optimization and future savings on the purchase of goods and services.

4.2.4   Recommendation PR3: New Procurement Technology

Sourcing and implementation of new procurement technology solutions that can help streamline processes for each Municipality.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- While current processes and tools are well understood, the Municipalities of North Simcoe are over-reliant on manual processes to track procurement activities and purchase orders (PO's), limiting potential future forecasting or planning activities. As a result, there is an opportunity to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the procurement processes for each Municipality by adopting more modern technologies.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The Municipalities of North Simcoe should explore new technology solutions that can help streamline procurement processes for a centralized service or for each Municipality to help reduce time, and enable greater access to data. These procurement technology solutions could include, but are not limited to, the enhanced integration or additional capability of existing ERP platforms, net new Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI) tool or a digitized purchase order system.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is moderate, as some staff time would be required to plan and coordinate the implementation of this recommendation. Resources from all four Municipalities, either working in collaboration or independently, would be required to assess current needs and requirements, develop, and issue a formal RFP, work to implement new solutions/systems and re-imaging current state workflows.
- This recommendation does not require immediate pursuit and should only be contemplated at a time when requisite resource capacity exists and the future state delivery model for procurement services is fully understood and aligned.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- There are some financial costs associated with this recommendation. Implementation of new procurement software or technology would require time from staff to understand needs/requirements, coordinate procurement and implementation efforts individually or across municipalities, update existing workflows and some training time. This staff time would represent a cost to the Municipalities.
- Further, new technical solution(s) for procurement would also include the incremental cost of acquiring the technology and the ongoing license costs to use it. This cost will be highly dependent on the type and scope of the technical solution(s) acquired and the potential discount received from vendors. Finally, some external support from the vendor may be required to help implement the new solution(s).
- However, this recommendation is anticipated to deliver some financial benefits for the Municipalities of North Simcoe, as current staff time can be reduced and repurposed because of streamlined processes.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A common and standard technology solution between the Municipalities of North Simcoe to help better manage, track and coordinate procurement activities could:
  - Support the avoidance of future procurement, labour costs, as the technology could help to streamline processes and reduce time spent on tactical activities, ultimately generating operating efficiencies;
  - Support more effective management of the procurement function and greater service levels through enhanced vendor management, greater real-time visibility/reporting and enhanced service level insights; and,
  - Enable centralized information storage, retrieval, and long-term retention, improving data access and reducing the risk of business losses that exist with decentralized systems.

4.3 Communication, Marketing, & Tourism

4.3.1 Summary of Current State Findings

Service Description
• Communication, Marketing, & Tourism includes communication from the Municipality related to news or current events; as well as the promotion and support for tourist or cultural events within the community
Objective of the Review
• Improve clarity on goals of Marketing and Tourism activities in North Simcoe;   • Establish Service Level objectives; and,   • Create an inventory of marketing activities that staff, Council, and residents want for the future
Framework Focus Areas
• Governance and Service Levels
Strengths
• **Communications Focused** – all four Municipalities have dedicated resources to actively communicate with residents through various engagement platforms and technologies, including social media.   • **Collaboration approach using the Heart of Georgian Bay** – each of the four Municipalities utilizes the shared web site and visitor engagement facilities provided by the Economic Development Corporation of North Simcoe (EDCNS) under the umbrella marketing of the Heart of Georgian Bay   • **Collaboration in the Cultural Alliance** – the four Municipalities plus the Beausoleil First Nation have collaborated to form the Cultural Alliance to celebrate, foster, promote, and leverage cultural resources in the Heart of Georgian Bay.   • **Commitment to the Economic Development Corporation of North Simcoe** – Active Council and municipality representation at the Director and Committee levels has ensured that the EDCNS provides the appropriate balance of marketing outreach to residents (existing, potential, and seasonal), industry, and tourism to meet the diverse needs of the four North Simcoe municipalities.   • **Visitor Activities and Events** – where tourism is more heavily promoted by the Municipalities of Midland and Penetanguishene, there is a high level of tourist attractions and visitor events. Events and attractions include the Best Butter Tart Festival, Centennial Museum, Cruise Ship dockings, and Ste. Marie Among the Hurons (close by Midland, but in Tay Township). The Wye Marsh, Tiny Township Farm Crawl and the public beaches provide visitors with activities in the more resident and seasonal resident populations in the Townships of Tiny and Tay.

Preliminary Opportunities and Associated Gaps (if applicable)

- **Recommendation CT1:** Investigate Collaborative Communications
  - o **Gap Addressed:** Duplicated effort across Municipalities.
  - o **Gap Addressed:** Inconsistency of Communications.
- **Recommendation CT2:** Review Organization Structure for Communications, Culture and Tourism
  - o **Gap Addressed:** Desire to ensure role clarity and direction.
- **Recommendation CT3:** Increase attention to communication and visitor KPIs
  - o **Gap Addressed:** Data required to support staffing positions.
  - o **Gap Addressed:** Lack of consistency in metrics across municipalities.

4.3.2 Recommendation CT1: Investigate Collaborative Communications

Capitalize on the experiences in building the current collaborative efforts that the Municipalities have successfully used for the Heart of Georgian Bay and Cultural Alliance programs for Communications platforms and outreach methods.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Similar and common notices and communications across North Simcoe are echoed from each Municipality's site. While each Municipality has a Communications resource, it was suggested that such a facility would allow broad communications across the region such that residents, seasonal residents and visitors would benefit from seeing the breadth of activities in the area. This would also reduce staff time and costs by having a central technical platform that residents could access to see all notices of interest to the North Simcoe community. This would also reduce the potential for inconsistent messaging between the different Municipalities.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- With the Heart of Georgian Bay website's success for common and consistent messaging for Visitor related information, a common site for all general communication would provide the benefit of minimizing the levels of activities involved in posting communications to multiple sites. While each Municipality would continue to provide their high priority and Municipality-specific communications on their own website, a link to the common site would provide for a share of the day-to-day communications requirements.
- The steps involved in the process would include:
  - o **Confirm the requirement:** confirm the need by reviewing the number of communications that would be of interest to residents and visitors from all municipalities and compare to those that would be candidates for the common platform.
  - o **Calculate the costs:** estimate the staff time involved in the creating, approving, and posting of the common communications.
  - o **Estimate the benefits:** review benefits of an increased outreach across all four municipalities.
  - o **Determine the technology platform or website:** it is expected that current technology used within the Municipalities can be utilized, however, there may be some additional costs for technology that is unique to any of the Municipalities.
  - o **Determine the process and governance for updating the common site:** municipalities to meet and agree on the process for updating the common site and how they access

the site by Municipalities will be governed. Posting of communications could be a shared or rotational responsibility among the Municipalities. This would also include discussion and agreement on the criteria of a North Simcoe "common" communication, approval to post requirements, and the recommended methods to link for each Municipality's sites.

- o **Present recommendation to proceed / not proceed:** based on the cost justification and agreement (or disagreement) on process and governance for the common site, a recommendation on this common site is prepared for presentation to each Municipality's senior leadership teams and/or council as required.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is moderate, as there is a limited but high level of staff time required to confirm the costs/benefits of the implementation of the common site. Resources from all four Municipalities would be required to work together to understand requirements, identify the technical platform, and define the communications processes and governance activities involved in this recommendation. However, there should be no external support and minimal incremental technology required to implement this recommendation.
- This recommendation should be explored within the 2021 fiscal year, despite the moderate amount of time this exploration will require. If the recommendation is determined to be feasible and advantageous for the Municipalities, it should be pursued and implemented as soon as possible.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The financial implications for this recommendation would be ultimately determined during the initial steps noted above concerning the costs and benefits review. It is expected that the recommendation would not proceed unless the ongoing savings to apply to the initial costs of the start-up of this common platform can provide reasonable benefits to all Municipalities.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A common, well-structured, and designed communications platform, that consistently provides information needs to the North Simcoe communities enhances the regional focus, and could reduce the duplicative costs of communications.

4.3.3 Recommendation CT2: Review Structure for Communications, Culture and Tourism Organization

Based on the growing importance of communications to all municipal activities and the expected boost in tourism-related traffic in the Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene, a review of best practice organization structures is warranted to ensure these activities are supported, measured and managed within each municipality's ability.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Within the North Simcoe municipalities, it was noted that each municipality has different organizational structures and reporting alignment for these services. It was also noted that there had been adjustment and movement of staff between departments in recent years resulting in a desire to ensure role clarity and direction by affected staff.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Review other jurisdictions' organizational structures and placement of the communications and tourism departments. This is not meant to be an exhaustive study, but by referring to other communities, both larger and of similar size to the North Simcoe municipalities, examples of the Communications role and the Culture and Tourism departments can be identified. Further discussion with those organizations can seek to understand their experiences, lessons learned, and how these can apply to each of the Municipalities here.

Communications

- The Communications role has shifted from a legislative and procedural issuing of formal documents and by-laws to frequent, open, and digital engagement with residents, businesses, and visitors. While posting of legal notices and decisions remains a key requirement, ongoing engagement with the community is a necessary component of municipal communications. Providing public information in the event of an emergency is also key.
- By looking at larger municipalities, North Simcoe can see the breadth of responsibilities that are possible within the communications function. These would include Corporate Communications, Design Services, Digital Communications, Media Relations, and Departmental communications such as Infrastructure/Public Works and Community & Social Services. These organizations generally have the Communications Department Lead (whether it be Officer, Director or Manager) reporting directly to the Chief Administration Officer of the Municipality.
- Smaller municipalities generally have communications aligned directly to the Chief Administration Officer or through the Corporate Service function which can also have supporting Information Technology and Customer Service staffing.

Culture and Tourism

- While reviewing the role of Culture and Tourism during the pandemic crisis of Covid-19 did not provide a typical representation of the service, the Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene have emphasized the activities with staffing, local and regional initiatives, and marketing both independently and under the guidance of the EDNS through the Heart of Georgian Bay. The Townships of Tiny and Tay do not have specific Tourism roles in their organization and therefore rely on the Heart of Georgian Bay for their interests.
- As the North Simcoe municipalities utilize the EDNS for their promotion and engagement of the tourism economic development, this service in the Midland and Penetanguishene is primarily one of Event and Facility (i.e., Museum) based services. These services are generally found aligning under the Community Services leadership, often combining the facility,

recreation, and client services resources. This does allow a more stable environment from both a staffing and funding perspective.

- In cases where events and festivals are an acknowledged priority for the community, the coordination of these activities can directly report to the Chief Administration Officer. This situation would be a transitory condition until the level of activity becomes more stable and the position(s) can be moved within the municipal organization.

Supporting Findings from Other Jurisdictions

- There are further comments and discussions with examples and references to other organizational structures of municipalities in Ontario shown in Appendix section 6.1.5 Jurisdictional Review indicating the alignments noted above.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is high, as there is a limited level of staff time required to review other municipal models and reach out to their respective staff, as necessary. Resources from the four Municipalities could act independently or team together for increased collaboration on staffing placement decisions. There should be no external support and no incremental technology required to implement this recommendation.
- This recommendation should be explored within the 2021 fiscal year, with the relatively short amount of time this study will require.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The financial implications for this recommendation are low, as the review can be conducted by internal staff with the result to determine appropriate placement within the organization for service staff.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Through the jurisdictional review of the services, the management and staff of the Municipalities will have solid support to the organizational placement of staff, improved staff engagement in performing the study, and improved visibility of the Communications, Culture and Tourism functions.

4.3.4 Recommendation CT3: Increase Attention to Communication and Visitor KPIs.

While statistics as to communication and visitor activity were noted, consistency of measurement results from the Communications and Tourism areas across the Municipalities would greatly assist in recognizing requirements across the North Simcoe communities.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Information collected regarding Communications and Tourism services differs in the municipalities. Data to support KPIs is not available and does not allow the review of resources and activities' effectiveness.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- This recommendation aligns with the overarching recommendation to facilitate improved data collection and reporting and enhance KPIs and metrics to support evidence-informed decision-making across the municipalities. The following provides suggested metrics that can be collected to support the active measurement and management of the Communications and Tourism services.

Communications

- Performance measures can analyze trends over time and provide benchmarks for pilot communication projects designed to help engage your community. Most municipality communications teams have a good handle on workload measures, such as a number of public notices or press releases issued, and many have embraced efficiency measures around cycle time and cost, but few are measuring the impact of that effort.
- Reach and Penetration:
  o A resident survey that asks how many people use the offline channels (newsletters, visitor guides, etc.),
  o Online video views (website, YouTube analytics, etc.),
  o RSS subscribers (social media),
  o Social media/notices visit (website),
  o Traffic source (location of visitors/viewers),
  o Raw author contribution to blogs (posts per month, characters per post, videos, photos),
  o Document downloads from the website or hosted locations,
  o Unique website visitors,
  o Duration of website visits,
  o Website bounce rate,
  o Incoming links,
  o Website transaction volume, and
  o Call center contact volumes.
- Level of Engagement:
  o Attendance at events, forums, and meetings,
  o Participation on boards and committees,
  o Reader engagement on social media posts (percent read),
  o Conversion or click through rates on calls-to-action,
  o Bounce rates for outbound emails,
  o Growth rate of opt-in email list,
  o Email forwarding,
  o Participation in online polls and voluntary surveys,

- o Brand impact of content (surveys),
- o Citations or shared web resources that the municipality has produced, and
- o Participant surveys to find out how residents and visitors have heard about the opportunity (lead sourcing).
- Experience and Opinion:
  - o Satisfaction with communications (Resident survey),
  - o User ratings and comments for content on social media sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube),
  - o Social media mentions,
  - o Number of fans/subscribers/followers, and
  - o Sentiment analysis on other sites, such as blogs and newspapers.
- Media Tracking:
  - o Number of stories, both in general and on specific topics,
  - o Number of stories generated by Municipal staff efforts,
  - o Key messages included in outside stories (content analysis),
  - o Tone of stories, and
  - o Value of coverage.

Culture & Tourism – Event Tracking
- Social Media Activity:
  - o Mentions and comments by unique hashtags
  - o Increase in followers
  - o Number of shares, mentions, likes and views
- Event Attendance:
  - o Registrations (if possible)
  - o Estimates, Spot Counts
- Participant Surveys:
  - o Trips and nights to region/municipality
  - o Repeat visitors
  - o Length of stay
  - o Accommodation
  - o Origin of Visitors
  - o Reason for Visit
  - o Satisfaction with Event
  - o Most memorable facets of Event
  - o Areas for improvement
- Sponsor and Local Business Feedback:
  - o Activity and Traffic
  - o Impact on Sales
  - o Satisfaction with Event
  - o Areas for Improvement
- Monetary Returns:
  - o Event targets and outcome
  - o Measure returns based on participant, sponsor, and community
- Press and Media Coverage:
  - o Number of pre- and post-event coverage
  - o Website, print, radio, and television

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is high to medium, as there is a range of metrics that can be collected and reported on a regular basis. All metrics from both areas do not need to be implemented immediately, assembled based on data availability. If this recommendation is acted upon as part of the overarching recommendations, there would be synergies of the data collection effort that could be shared across the other services.
- The Communications data collection would be a better initial candidate for data collection, based on the number of metrics available and the options of data collection offered via the technologies involved. Tourism data collection will be impacted by the state of the pandemic situation during 2021. There should be no external support, however there could be some incremental technology required to implement this recommendation.
- This recommendation should be explored within the 2021 fiscal year, with a focus on communications data collection.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The financial implications for this recommendation are medium, as the data requested for collection will have varying levels of availability and, in the case of survey information, cost for collection. However, as the cost can be managed based on the availability of the data, initial implementation on many of the metrics can have a relatively low impact on the cost of staff time.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- This will provide improved monitoring and management of Communications and Culture & Tourism activities by providing consistent reporting that can be compared against the targets of the municipalities. This will also provide additional input into areas requiring additional support and substantiate staffing and budget support going forward.

4.4 Information Technology

4.4.1 Summary of Current State Findings

Service Description
• Information technology (IT) is critical for enabling efficient, effective, and secure Municipal operations. The IT function increasingly plays a critical role in effective service delivery both internally for Municipal staff, and externally for residents of the community.

Objectives of the Review
• Commonalities exist in applications, services, and security; and,   • Specialized services require high level of expertise best provided across the municipalities

Framework Focus Areas
• Technology and Cost

Strengths
• **Current Maintenance and Support** – positive feedback regarding internal IT staff being knowledgeable and providing strong levels of maintenance and support service today with limited capacity and supporting technology.   • **Outsourced Service Satisfaction** – generally, there is a solid level of satisfaction from the Municipalities of North Simcoe with the current service levels received from outsourced third-party IT support.   • **Strategic Outsourcing** – broadly the Municipalities of North Simcoe are using third-party support logically today, focused on gain access to expensive infrastructure and greater levels of expertise that is currently unachievable in the current environment.

Preliminary Opportunities and Associated Gaps (if applicable)

• **Recommendation IT1:** Align Delivery Model for IT
  o **Gap Addressed:** Different IT service delivery models employed by the Municipalities result in little to no collaboration, sharing of resources or best practices.
 • **Recommendation IT2:** Standardize Online Service Offerings
  o **Gap Addressed:** While some progress has been made in moving some services online, online service offerings across the Municipalities of North Simcoe are very limited.
 • **Recommendation IT3:** New IT Support Systems
  o **Gap Addressed:** Limited back-end IT technology solutions in place to support efficiency, effectiveness and reduce burden on existing staff.
 • **Recommendation IT4:** Develop an IT Strategy
  o **Gap Addressed:** Lack of a formalized strategies surrounding IT, digital or customer experience to guide decision making.

4.4.2 Recommendation IT1: Develop an IT Strategy

Develop and deploy a comprehensive IT strategy to guide more effective decision making, planning, and alignment with internal IT needs and digital service offerings.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Currently, there is a lack of a formalized strategies surrounding IT, digital or customer experiences across the Municipalities of North Simcoe. This lack of overarching strategy and direction means that there has been no emphasis on coordinating decision-making and investments being made collectively across the region, individual Municipalities, and their respective individual departments.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The Municipalities of North Simcoe should develop and deploy a comprehensive IT strategy to support and guide effective decision making, planning, and alignment with internal IT needs and digital service offerings. Such strategies could be developed collectively or individually and implemented as part of a shared delivery model or as a standalone initiative for each Municipality.
- The development of a comprehensive IT strategy should include examining issues such as the role of client and other stakeholder channels, security, information management (including data storage) and the life cycle of both hardware and software assets. Further, an IT strategy should also discern the best option for servicing these needs in the future, whether that should be using more outsourced resources, in-house resources, or a combination of both.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is low- moderate, as significant staff time and work efforts would be required to develop the IT strategy. Further, the development and implementation of a region-wide IT strategy could increase the level of complexity and time required, given the different perspectives, capabilities, and requirements of each organization.
- Given that the development of an IT Strategy would serve as the guide to all future IT-related decisions and could uncover and define what is possible and effective in the future state, this recommendation should be pursued before any other IT initiatives are examined.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- This recommendation would require a moderate level of financial commitment from the Municipalities of North Simcoe, as it would require significant time from municipal staff to coordinate work efforts, fully understand the current state of IT services, determine future IT needs/requirements across internal and external stakeholders, and define future state processes. Further, the Municipalities would likely require some support from a qualified third-party vendor/consultant to support the IT strategy development.
- However, the development of an IT strategy could lead to a variety of positive financial benefits for the Municipalities of North Simcoe, outlined in the section below, which could offset the recommendation's upfront cost.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A well-structured and comprehensive formal IT Strategy, at the regional level or the individual Municipality level, could:

- o Improve the understanding of the current state and potential future state options for the delivery of IT services individually or across Municipalities;
- o Support more cost-effective decision making and planning around future IT investments and more efficient delivery of services for staff and residents;
- o Enhance alignment between internal and external IT needs, including digital service offerings for residents, leading to improved service levels;
- o Support a more coordinated approach that serves to increase the guidance and coordination of work performed by IT teams; and,
- o Promote a more coordinated and consistent approach to how tools and technologies are assessed, procured, and integrated to better enable the more effective and efficient delivery of services for residents or for staff within the Municipalities.

4.4.3 Recommendation IT2: Align Delivery Model for IT
Establish a centralized IT function shared between the four Municipalities of North Simcoe.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Today, different IT service delivery models are employed by the Municipalities of North Simcoe, resulting in little to no collaboration, sharing of resources or best practices across the Municipalities today when it comes to IT, limiting learnings and efficiencies for all.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The Municipalities of North Simcoe should explore the potential benefits of creating a centralized IT function between the four Municipalities of North Simcoe, with a universal mandate to serve all participating Municipalities equally, in correspondence with the relative needs and contributions of each.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is low, as the implementation of this recommendation would be highly complex and require significant time from existing staff to plan and execute. However, no external support or incremental technology would be required to implement this recommendation.
- From a timing perspective, this recommendation should not be pursued until a comprehensive IT strategy is developed (either at the regional or individual Municipal level), as this overarching strategy will serve as a guide for all future IT-related decisions, including the delivery model for IT services.
- *Note:* As per section 3.2.2, there is flexibility in the structure (e.g., in-house vs. outsourced) and governance (e.g., centralized vs. joint) of this potential shared service. Where possible, the Municipalities of North Simcoe should also explore shared solutions with the County prior to focusing on North Simcoe exclusive solutions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- There are some potentially significant financial costs associated with this recommendation, as it would require significant time from existing staff (and cost of this time) to understand and align requirements, define future state processes, design, and align on an effective shared model, coordinate work efforts and governance, formalize a shared agreement, and conduct some change management activities. The Municipalities may be required to recruit, hire, and train some incremental staff resources to increase the capacity of the shared function is an in-house delivery model is preferred versus an outsourced model. Finally, as part of moving to a common model for the delivery of IT services, the Municipalities would be required to standardize IT specifications, technologies, and systems, which may require the acquisition of new incremental technologies.
- However, this recommendation is anticipated to deliver various financial benefits for the Municipalities of North Simcoe. Under an in-house model, enhanced economies of scale and greater collaboration and coordination of IT purchasing across the region could generate cost savings on the future procurement of IT technologies/systems. Conversely, if an outsourced model is preferred, enhanced economies of scale will reduce the current rates paid for outsourced support today, approximately 5-10%. These savings can help to offset or cover incremental investments made into the shared delivery model.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A well-structured and comprehensive shared delivery model for IT services between the Municipalities of North Simcoe could:
    - Reduce cost of delivering IT services, though increased operating efficiency. Greater efficiencies could be realized, at the transactional level, through the removal of duplicate activities and technologies, and enhanced buying power with outsourced vendor(s);
    - Promote a more coordinated and consistent approach to delivering IT services, and pool existing expertise and best practices, leading to improved service levels for internal and external stakeholders;
    - Increase the alignment, standardization, and simplification of the IT function, including tools, technologies, and processes; and,
    - Enhanced strategic value of the IT function, expanding what is possible with greater levels of IT resource capacity and capability available across the region of North Simcoe.

4.4.4   Recommendation IT3: Standardize Online Service Offerings

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- At a fundamental level, all the Municipalities of North Simcoe provide the same public-facing services to constituents. However, broadly across the region, online services are limited, and there is a disparity in the number of services available online across the Municipalities.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The Municipalities of North Simcoe should explore the opportunity to partner, as part of a shared delivery model, or as individuals, and standardize specifications, requirements and share expertise to bring more municipal services online.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is low, not due to common procurement, but rather due to the high degree of complexity associated with all, or a subset of the four Municipalities coming together, creating a shared model for the shared delivery of online services, including the need to standardize specifications across the Municipalities, including IT infrastructure and internal processes.
- From a timing perspective, this recommendation should not be pursued until an IT strategy has been contemplated and the future state delivery model for IT services is fully aligned, as these activities will ultimately serve as a guide for all future IT-related decision making and potential for collaboration across the Municipalities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- This recommendation would require a high degree of financial commitment from the Municipalities of North Simcoe, as it would require significant time from municipal staff to coordinate work efforts, align and standardize specifications and technologies, and to create supporting processes and workflows for the shared delivery of online services. Further, as part of the requirement to standardize IT specifications, technologies, and systems, the acquisition of new incremental technologies may be required. Finally, the Municipalities may require some support from a qualified third-party vendor to support the implementation and optimization of new technology solutions.
- While significant financial commitment will be required to implement this recommendation, collaborating to bring more services online could lead to a variety of positive financial benefits for the Municipalities of North Simcoe. By standardizing specifications, requirements and sharing expertise through a collaborative process, the cost to bring municipal services online will be reduced compared to what would be incurred if these solutions were implemented independently. Further, collaboration would allow for services to be brought online in a more expedient manner, helping to reduce staff time, and the cost of this time, in providing services at physical locations.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Effective collaboration and standardization across the Municipalities of North Simcoe to bring more municipal services online could:
  - Support more efficient operations through shared knowledge and greater access to staff resources from other Municipalities;
  - Reduce the cost of implementing online service solutions by reducing duplicate activities and standardizing/consolidating technology across the Municipalities; and,
  - Support the timelier deployment of online service solutions for residents.

4.4.5 Recommendation IT4: New IT Support Systems

Explore and adequately vet new technology solutions that can support existing IT resources.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- A variety of technologies are used to support internal IT activities today, which are well understood by staff and are satisfactory for IT service delivery as it exists today. However, these current back-end tools and solutions are limited in terms of functionality, and do little to support enhanced efficiency, effectiveness or reduce the burden on already constrained staff.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The Municipalities of North Simcoe, either collectively or individually, should explore and adequately vet new back-end technology solutions/tools (such as an IT ticketing solution) that can support in-house IT teams in delivering service more effectively and efficiently.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is moderate, as a moderate amount of staff time would be required to plan and coordinate the implementation of this recommendation. Some additional complexity may be encountered if the recommendation is pursued collaboratively versus working within the bespoke operating structures and workflows of each individual Municipality.
- This recommendation should not be pursued until an IT strategy has been contemplated and the future state delivery model for IT services across the Municipalities is fully aligned, as these activities will ultimately serve as a guide for all future IT-related decision making, including the need for enhanced technology solutions to support back-end operations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Implementation of new software or technology would require time from existing staff to understand requirements, conduct a needs assessment, coordinate procurement, select new technology, implement that technology, train staff and update workflows post-implementation. This staff time would represent a cost to the Municipalities, collectively or individually.
- Further, the implementation of new supporting IT technology would also include the incremental cost of acquisition and ongoing license costs. This cost will be highly dependent on the type and scope of the software or technology acquired and the potential discount received from vendors as part of a group purchase. Finally, some external support from the vendor may be required to help implement the new solution(s), the cost of which will again be highly dependent on the pricing structure proposed by a given vendor.
- However, this recommendation is anticipated to deliver some financial benefits for the Municipalities of North Simcoe, as current staff time can be reduced and repurposed because of streamlined processes.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Sourcing and implementation of the right back end/support solutions that are well-vetted and comprehensive could:
  - Enable the Municipalities and their respective IT teams to streamline the IT issue resolution process;
  - Reduce the total staff time spent resolving internal and external maintenance and support queries through the ability to sole queries more quickly and efficiently; and,
  - Enable greater data tracking and reporting insights.

4.5 Legal Services

4.5.1 Summary of Current State Findings

Service Description
• Legal Services is a wide-ranging service function with the mandate of overseeing all legal matters of the Municipality and being actively involved in any activities that require legal opinion or guidance. Functions such as corporate governance, legal or strategic advice, procurement or contractual disputes, and land use planning or local by-law may fall under the umbrella of legal services.

Objectives of the Review
• Identify opportunities for increased effectiveness through pooling resources, including the potential use of more in-house legal resources

Framework Focus Areas
• Resources and Cost

Strengths
• **Current Resources** – for the Town of Midland, current in-house legal services resources are highly knowledgeable, capable, and confident in the ability to successfully manage the service. • **Service Satisfaction –** there is generally a high level of satisfaction across the Municipalities of North Simcoe with the current service levels received from outsourced third-party legal firms.

Preliminary Opportunities and Associated Gaps (if applicable)

• **Recommendation LS1:** Shared Delivery Model for Legal Services
  o **Gap Addressed:**
• **Recommendation LS2:** Pool Resources for Outsourced Legal Support
  o **Gap Addressed:** No common legal service providers utilized, resulting in smaller agreements with multiple vendors, lesser utilization, and sub-optimal pricing.

4.5.2 Recommendation LS1: Shared Delivery Model for Legal Services

Establish a shared model for the delivery of legal services between the Municipalities of North Simcoe through a joint legal service agreement.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Today, no there is no universal legal service provider used to handle common/standardized legal affairs across the Municipalities of North Simcoe. Three of the four Municipalities do not have any in-house legal resources, and where they do exist (Town of Midland), there is a significant lack of staff capacity to meet the demand for this service. As a result, outsourced legal services are utilized across the Municipalities of North Simcoe, translating into significant financial expenditure on such services, despite sharing many common and 'routine' legal functions.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The Municipalities of North Simcoe should collaborate and explore the potential of creating a shared legal services function to service common/standardized legal affairs, such as:
  - General legal opinions and interpretations (e.g., Municipal Act, MFFIPPA, Conflict of Interest, Municipal Elections etc.);
  - Real estate services (e.g., site plan/subdivision agreements, Planning Act appeals); and,
  - Human Resources and Occupational H&S.
- This shared model would have a universal mandate to serve all participating Municipalities equally, in correspondence with the relative needs and contributions of each. It is noted, however, that there are bespoke affairs or requirements for legal services across the individual Municipalities where each would want to conduct activities outside of the scope of the shared model/agreement.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is low, as a high level of staff time would be required to plan and coordinate the implementation of this recommendation. Resources from all four Municipalities would be required to come together and understand requirements, define the scope of legal service that could be offered under a shared service agreement, and develop new supporting processes and governance structures. However, no external support or incremental technology costs are anticipated to implement this recommendation. A subset of the Municipalities may also decide to move forward with this recommendation without full consensus – i.e. it may be decided that the three municipalities without any inhouse legal support move forward with this recommendation. Such a decision should not prevent the adoption of this recommendation, or for the future participation of all municipalities.
- *Note:* As per section 3.2.2, there is flexibility in the structure (e.g., in-house vs. outsourced) and governance (e.g., centralized vs. joint) of this potential shared service. In addition, given that the County of Simcoe is in the infancy stages of its service review, which includes legal services, this recommendation should be explored further after that body of work is complete and the recommendations are known. As a result of that review, there may be an opportunity for a joint legal services agreement with the County.

Supporting Findings from Other Jurisdictions

- Jurisdictional research revealed an example of a shared delivery model for legal services that exists within the District Municipality of Muskoka. To help create synergies and mitigate legal costs, a joint legal services agreement opportunity was presented to all Muskoka area

municipalities. Given the potential cost savings and opportunity to create workload balance in high demand areas, the Town of Huntsville along with the Township of Muskoka Lakes agreed to participate in discussions regarding the joint service opportunity with the district. See Appendix section 6.1.4 for more details.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- There are some financial implications for this recommendation, as it would require time from existing municipal staff (and the cost of this time) to execute the activities listed above.
- However, this recommendation is anticipated to deliver financial benefits for the collective Municipalities of North Simcoe. Enhanced buying/negotiating power for outsourced legal services will generate cost savings on the future procurement of such services. While these savings are difficult to approximate, an estimate of 5-10% is generally seen as conservative in other public sector organizations who collaborate on similar types of procurements.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A well-structured and consolidated agreement for outsourced legal services, which covers the most common legal affairs between the Municipalities of North Simcoe, could reduce the cost of legal services through enhanced buying/negotiating power and more optimal pricing.

4.5.3 Recommendation LS2: Pool Resources for Outsourced Support

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- A variety of different service providers are used across the Municipalities of North Simcoe to provide outsourced support for legal affairs, often differing based on specific activities and functions. Today, no common service providers are used to handle common/standardized legal affairs across the Municipalities, resulting in smaller agreements with multiple vendors, lesser utilization, and sub-optimal pricing.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- If a formal shared service model for legal services is not advantageous, the Municipalities of North Simcoe should collaborate and pool their collective resources in contracting with outsourced legal service providers for common/standardized legal affairs, such as:
  - General legal opinions and interpretations (e.g., Municipal Act, MFFIPPA, Conflict of Interest, Municipal Elections etc.);
  - Real estate services (e.g., site plan/subdivision agreements, Planning Act appeals); and,
  - Human Resources and Occupational H&S.
- Doing so would allow the Municipalities to become a larger client, deserving of more attention and with more negotiating power. It is noted, however, that there are bespoke affairs or requirements for legal services across the individual Municipalities where each would want to contract with a separate legal service provider.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is moderate, as a high level of staff time would be required to plan and coordinate the implementation. Resources from all four Municipalities would be required to come together and understand requirements, define common legal affairs that could be captured under a shared agreement with one provider, develop and issue a joint RFP, develop new supporting processes and governance structures (including 'guard rails') and coordinate ongoing work efforts. However, no external support or incremental technology would be required to implement this recommendation.
- Given that the County of Simcoe is in the infancy stages of its service review, which includes legal services, this recommendation should be explored further after that body of work is complete and the recommendations are known. As a result of that review, there may be an opportunity for a joint legal services agreement with the County.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- There are some financial implications for this recommendation, as it would require time from existing municipal staff (and the cost of this time) to execute the activities listed above.
- However, this recommendation is anticipated to deliver financial benefits for the collective Municipalities of North Simcoe. Enhanced buying/negotiating power for outsourced legal services will generate cost savings on the future procurement of such services. While these savings are difficult to approximate, an estimate of 5-10% is generally seen as conservative in other public sector organizations who collaborate on similar types of procurements.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A well-structured and consolidated agreement for outsourced legal services, which covers the most common legal affairs between the Municipalities of North Simcoe, could reduce the cost of legal services through enhanced buying/negotiating power and more optimal pricing on legal fees.

Service Specific Recommendations

Section 2 – Protective and Development Services

In-Scope Services Reviewed in this Section:

6. Emergency Management

7. Fire & Emergency Services

8. Land Use Planning

9. Building Services

4.6 Emergency Management

4.6.1 Summary of Current State Findings

Service Description
Emergency Management involves the planning and coordination of responses to emergency situations that may arise within a municipality; including the development of an Emergency Response Plan.
Objective of the Review
• Identify opportunities to improve coordination of Emergency Management across municipalities • Identify opportunities for resource/role sharing
Framework Focus Areas
• Governance and Process
Strengths
• **Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities** – Each municipality has clearly identified Community Emergency Management Coordinator and Emergency Management Program Committee/Community Control Group. Roles and responsibilities are well defined and were described as being understood by stakeholders involved in Emergency Management. Stakeholders commented that each municipality follows underlying provincial legislation. • **Established Emergency Response Plans** – Each municipality has developed and approved Emergency Response Plans. • **Well Resourced EOCs** – Emergency Operation Centres and designated alternate sites have been created by each Municipality and were described as well resourced (tools, technology, etc.)
Preliminary Opportunities and Associated Gaps (if applicable)

• **Recommendation EM1:** Consolidate Emergency Response Plan and Control Group
    o **Gap Addressed:** Duplicated roles across the Municipalities and limited prioritization against other competing day-to-day requirements.
    o **Gap Addressed:** Small staff complements limit emergency management depth.
    o **Gap Addressed:** Emergency Management culture does not appear to have advanced beyond provincial requirements.
• **Recommendation EM2:** Increased Collaborative Training and Response Drills
    o **Gap Addressed:** Limited joint training across the region.
• **Recommendation EM3:** Support/Continue Transition to IMPS for Emergency Management for all North Simcoe Municipalities
    o **Gap Addressed:** Transition to IMS not completed across Municipalities.

4.6.2 Recommendation EM1: Consolidate Emergency Response Plan and Control Group

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Currently, each Municipality individually provides Emergency Management services, including Emergency Response Plan, Emergency Management Program Committee/Community Control Group, training and exercises, reporting, etc. Emergency Management is not a primary or even significant focus of any individual stakeholder. The relatively small staff size of each Municipality also makes it difficult to develop/staff multiple teams to respond to a sustained emergency.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Establish a shared service agreement to establish a North Simcoe CEMC position with responsibilities for supporting each North Simcoe Municipality. The municipalities would also identify primary coordinators and alternative coordinators. The North Simcoe CEMC would be responsible for assisting member municipal coordinators to provide services and allocate resources during an emergency.
- In non-emergency situations, day-to-day responsibilities of the North Simcoe CEMC should include:
  - o Coordinating training (including joint training)
  - o Compiling and consolidating emergency response plans into a joint document
  - o Coordinating regular meetings with municipal coordinators and County CEMC
  - o Providing support to municipal Emergency Management Program Committees/Community Control Groups.
  - o Supporting a joint approach to conducting, developing, and reporting on Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment requirements (community risk profiles), recognizing the similarities across the communities.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Establishment of a North Simcoe CEMC will require the development of a shared services agreement outlining the position's roles and responsibilities. Policies and procedures would also need to be updated to ensure consistency with the agreement.
- A cost-sharing agreement would be developed and agreed upon by participating North Simcoe Municipalities. Costs could be shared equally, or specific criteria which may include population, service usage (i.e., training time, risk profiles), etc.
- Consideration should be given to increased collaboration with the County as an alternative approach to a common North Simcoe specific CEMC.
- As with other recommendations, the North Simcoe Municipalities may move forward with this recommendation in subsets – i.e. it may be decided that there is a preference for the two urban Municipalities to move forward with a shared CEMC.

Supporting Findings from Other Jurisdictions

- Perth County and four-member municipalities have developed a shared service agreement for Emergency Management where the County CEMC is responsible for: coordinating training; compiling municipal emergency plans into one document; coordinating annual meetings with municipal CEMCs; acting as the administrator for the Municipal 511 system; developing community risk profiles.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- A North Simcoe CEMC would represent an additional staff cost for the Municipalities. However, this cost would be well less than what anyone municipality would be responsible for individually for a dedicated emergency management resource.
- A North Simcoe CEMC shared service agreement, and Governance Model will require council review and support
- Some costs to develop the shared service agreement would be anticipated staff time and legal review.
- Recruitment costs for a North Simcoe CEMC should also be anticipated.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- A shared North Simcoe CEMC would ensure a dedicated focus on Emergency Management Services for the North Simcoe Municipalities. Staff currently tasked with this responsibility provide this service as an 'add-on' to other responsibilities. Most frequently as an add-on to Fire and Emergency Services. This would allow these stakeholders also to dedicate more time to other core responsibilities.
- It is anticipated that a shared North Simcoe CEMC will support the increased alignment and coordination of Emergency Response Plans across the Region. While there is good collaboration occurring to date, such a position would formalize these activities.
- Efficiencies are anticipated concerning training activities with a share of North Simcoe CEMC able to lead these activities to ensure regular training occurs. The training is high calibre and involves joint municipal participation when appropriate. One individual leading training activities across the region would reduce duplication in this activity across the region as it is currently arranged by multiple personnel across the Municipalities.

4.6.3 Recommendation EM2: Increase Collaborative Training and Response Drills

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Currently, training and exercises generally do not involve multiple municipalities. The joint training was cited as an 'infrequent occurrence' by Emergency Management stakeholders. Given the potential for an emergency to impact multiple municipalities and/or the limited resources of any one municipality in responding to an emergency, increased collaboration in planning and response represents an efficient use of scarce resources. Such collaborative planning and response would benefit from shared training and response drills.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Increase the formal collaborative training and joint response drills for emergency management across the North Simcoe municipalities. This should involve, at a minimum, an annual meeting among CEMCs, and other stakeholders, as needed, to identify potential training topics and scenarios. An annual training schedule should be developed for joint training opportunities across the municipalities. Training outcomes should be summarized and documented, with good practices shared across the groups.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Implementation of a collaborative training approach for Emergency Management would require existing staff to develop a training schedule, provide/oversee training, and monitor adherence. Responsibility for managing/administering training could rotate among municipalities to distribute leadership efforts.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Financial implications are primarily driven by existing staff time. External support to facilitate training/scenario exercises may be required. However, there may be an opportunity to increase the sharing of this cost among municipalities if it is provided to multiple municipalities in a joint session.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Increasing and formalizing an approach to collaborative training and response drills will support the improved coordination and familiarity with neighbouring Municipalities; role clarity and sharing of best practices, and potentially increased cost-sharing associated with any external training support.

4.6.4 Recommendation EM3: Continue with Transition to IMS for Emergency Management for all North Simcoe Municipalities

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Midland and Penetanguishene have not yet completed planned transitions to emergency response plans based on IMS. As stakeholders in both municipalities have recognized, IMS represents good practice in Emergency Management and would improve alignment with practices in the rural municipalities of North Simcoe.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The planned transition to IMS should be continued as a priority item for Midland and Penetanguishene.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Implementation of IMS is estimated to require a medium level of effort. There appears to be strong buy-in for the transition to date as it has already been identified as an objective for the municipalities. Staff capacity will be the limiting factor as personnel may be occupied with increased responsibilities associated with COVID-19 responses/precautions. A workplan should be established outlining a realistic timeline and path to IMS implementation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Establishing an IMS approach to Emergency Management is not anticipated to require significant financial investment unless external resources are required to supplement staff time.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- An IMS approach to Emergency Management would bring the two urban Municipalities in alignment with good practices for Emergency Management. The implementation of an IMS approach would also improve consistency with the rural North Simcoe municipalities with respect to Emergency Management. This would help facilitate increased collaboration and potentially resource sharing across the Region.

4.7 Fire & Emergency Services

4.7.1 Summary of Current State Findings

Service Description
• Fire and Emergency Services includes services to protect life and property from fire and other hazards through emergency responses, public education, and enforcement activities.
Objective of the Review
• Identify opportunities for cost-savings from shared procurement; • Consider additional opportunities for shared training; and, • Explore opportunities for shared resources and/or staff
Framework Focus Areas
• Governance; Service Levels; Process; Costs; Resources;
Strengths
• **Strong Collaboration and Existing Working Group** - The municipalities have established quarterly meetings of the Fire Chiefs, which includes regular agenda items focused on items/activities such as procurement planning, recruitment, and training requirements. • **Well Resourced Departments –** Consultations with stakeholders indicated that overall, the Fire Departments of North Simcoe are well-resourced with respect to facilities, equipment, and vehicles. Capital plans have been established to consider future needs. • **Existing Shared Services –** The Municipalities of Midland and Penetanguishene have established a shared Fire Chief Position (0.5 FTE for each municipality) as the Chief of each independent fire department.
Preliminary Opportunities and Associated Gaps (if applicable)

• **Recommendation FES1:** Enhance Data Analysis and Annual Reporting
   o **Gap Addressed:** Annual reports not regularly produced (E&R requirement);
   o **Gap Addressed:** Limited ability for evidence-based assessment of services or decision making.
• **Recommendation FES2:** Identify Opportunities for Increased Coordination on Public Education Activities
   o **Gap Addressed:** Potential for duplication in activities and/or potential for inconsistent messaging or focus for businesses or institutions that cross municipal boundaries. Good practices may not always be shared.
• **Recommendation FES3:** Explore Potential for Greater Collaboration on the Maintenance of Specialized Fire Services Equipment
   o **Gap Addressed:** Fire Departments have similar servicing requirements, but maintenance activities are not coordinated.
• **Recommendation FES4:** Collaborate on Radio Enhancements
   o **Gap Addressed:** Opportunity to capitalize on enhanced backup capabilities not currently being fulfilled.
• **Recommendation FES5:** Ensure Establishing and Regulating Bylaws accurately reflect the Current Needs of Municipalities
   o **Gap Addressed**: E&R Bylaws may not accurately reflect the services and current operations of each North Simcoe Fire Department
• **Recommendation FES6:** Review Shared Fire Chief Funding Arrangement between Penetanguishene and Midland

4.7.2 Recommendation FES1: Enhance Data Analysis and Annual Reporting

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Currently, there is limited collection and reporting on performance data. Staff capacity to support this function is limited. Annual Reporting is identified as a requirement in Establishing and Regulating Bylaws but does not appear to be occurring across any of the North Simcoe Fire Departments.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- To improve operations through the informed decision-making and to increase the transparency of the Fire Departments' operations, it is recommended that a formal process for annual reporting be established. This should include:
  - o Establish clear requirements for reporting (KPIs, metrics and frequency, etc.) and establish processes to ensure the collection of information for review and analysis.
  - o Develop a report outline for key performance indicators and metrics that could be shared as a common template for the North Simcoe Fire Departments.
  - o A shared Annual Report outline should also be created and shared to support the development of an annual report for each Fire Department.
  - o Once reporting requirements are confirmed and work effortfully understood, consider a shared resource requirement to support data collection and analysis.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- The enhancement of reporting and development of annual reports is considered to be medium ease of implementation. This will require the identification of metrics to track moving forward. The metrics should be linked to the overall goals of the department. For example, the goals could include:
  - o Providing a timely response for fire services through a trained, skilled, and efficient team;
  - o Reducing injury, loss of life or property damage;
  - o Providing public education programs and other prevention services to ensure public safety; and,
  - o Confirm to government acts, regulations, and municipal by-laws and policies.
- Stakeholders noted that existing software would support an increased focus on data collection and reporting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Enhanced understanding of department performance and outcomes is not anticipated to require any new investment in tools or technology. Costs are primarily staff time (Fire Department Leadership).
- As noted above, the municipalities should develop common templates to streamline the implementation of annual reporting (i.e., reduce duplication in work effort setting up report templates, etc.).
- Regular reporting should then be reaffirmed as a responsibility of Fire Department leadership (i.e., no new cost)
- If an additional staff resource is determined to be required to enable data collection and reporting, that would represent an additional cost. If this is the case, consideration should be given to making this a share position across multiple North Simcoe municipalities.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS
- Enhanced understanding of department performance and outcomes
- Support decision making (root cause analysis; cost analysis; etc.)
- More fully leverage existing technology/software in-place

4.7.3 Recommendation FES2: Identify Opportunities for Increased Coordination on Public Education Activities

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES
- Public awareness and education activities occur in each municipality but may not always be coordinated across the North Simcoe Fire Departments. As a result, this may result in some potential for duplication in activities and/or potential for inconsistent messaging or focus for businesses or institutions that cross municipal boundaries. Furthermore, the good practices implemented by the different Fire Departments may not always be shared.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION
- As part of regular North Simcoe Fire Chief meetings, develop and review annual public education activities action plan. Where possible, develop, share, and use consistent messaging and focus for awareness and education initiatives (i.e., common areas of focus for the year/quarter).

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS
- Increasing collaboration of Public Education Activities is seen as a Medium-High ease of implementation. Public education activities already occur, as do regular fire chief meetings so it is not anticipated that significantly new structure or processes would need to be put in place.
- Public education activities currently occur within each municipality, and it is anticipated that staff time required for collaborative review and alignment would be a minimal addition. Furthermore, if shared messaging, materials, etc. an be developed, this may present an opportunity to reduce overall time spent on preparing public education and information activities (i.e. reduced duplication across the region), while also ensure more focused and aligned messaging.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
- No significant increase in financial investment is anticipated to support the alignment and coordination of public education activities.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS
- Common messaging and focus across North Simcoe for residents and businesses with respect to communication from the Region's Fire Departments
- Increased ability for fire departments to share communication materials, approaches, etc.
- Potential to reduce duplication in the development of communication materials, etc. across Fire Department Staff

4.7.4 Recommendation FES3: Explore Potential for Greater Collaboration on Maintenance of Specialized Fire Services Equipment

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Some Fire Department equipment/vehicles require that maintenance be done by specialized technicians external to the municipalities. Fire Departments have similar servicing requirements, but volume is not fully captured and activities are not coordinated.
- Currently, each municipality engages external vendors for maintenance on specialized fire services equipment/vehicles. External utilization of vendors varies across the Municipalities with Tiny commenting that most maintenance is done in-house.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Review and consider a collaborative approach to planning for and obtaining specialized fire service maintenance.
    - At a minimum, this should include increased collaboration in the contracting of third-party vendors performing specialized maintenance activities to negotiate improved service rates and costs.
    - As the Municipalities consider recommendations related to Fleet Management, and the potential for greater shared mechanic resources and facilities, the ability to service fire service equipment should be considered. The collective North Simcoe group of Fire Departments may have the volume of work to recruit specialized mechanic resources more competitively.
- Note that this is closely aligned to Recommendation Fleet Management #2, emphasizing an increased North Simcoe wide approach to Fleet Management.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Collaborating on the maintenance of specialized fire service equipment is estimated at medium ease of implementation. The volume of external spend not readily available for this review would need to be reviewed to identify spend and comparable rates paid to external parties for the municipalities. A VOR / service agreement could then be developed through a competitive process with the service provider benefiting from increased work volume.
- Establishing a shared, in-house mechanic resource would require additional implementation effort to determine the allocation of time and cost, prioritization of service requests, and worksite location.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Expected cost savings from coordinated maintained activities associated with a common vendor.
- If brought in-house – additional skilled resources would be required, and additional facility investments to accommodate equipment would need to be quantified.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- The collaborative purchasing of maintenance services for specialized fire service equipment is intended to primarily result in reduced costs associated with increased volume for external providers.

4.7.5 Recommendation FES4: Collaborate on Radio Enhancements

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Currently, Fire Departments are not sharing a digital radio platform. Stakeholders felt that this represents a missed opportunity to enhance the backup capabilities of Fire Department Communications.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Consider collaboratively moving services towards a digital platform and linking all through the existing four tower sites, with the resulting enhanced redundancy and security that this provides.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- It is understood that a transition to digital radio communication is still in progress for some of the North Simcoe Fire Departments. Consequently, ease of implementation is considered to be medium-low as this transition continues.
- As digital radio communication capabilities are brought online, planning should look to consider the linking of infrastructure, frequencies, etc.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Financial implications associated with increased collaboration on digital radio enhancements are still to be determined at this time.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Increased collaboration on digital radio enhancements is primarily designed to improve the communication abilities/redundancies of Fire Departments in support of high calibre service delivery. It is anticipated that this would include:
  - Increased backup/ redundancy for each Fire Department
  - Increased frequency availability during large scale emergencies
  - Potential reduction in 'dead-spot' coverage

4.7.6 Recommendation FES5: Ensure Establishing and Regulating Bylaws Accurately Reflect the Current Needs of Municipalities

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Not all of the Establishing and Regulating bylaws for the North Simcoe Fire Departments currently identify the department's specific services, nor are they aligned to current reporting practices. While this does not imply a concern with respect to the quality of service provided to date, it is important to note that Establishing and Regulating Bylaws are a common method for indicating the type and level of fire protection services provided by a Municipality.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Review existing Establishing and Regulating Bylaws to ensure alignment between services and activities documented and current practice. Any misalignment should be addressed through changes to the Establishing and Regulating Bylaws (i.e., updated to reflect Fire Department Services) or Fire Department practices.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Updating of the Establishing and Regulating Bylaws will require staff time and council support (specifically if changes to the bylaws are required).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- With the exception of staff costs, no significant costs are anticipated to review and update Establishing and Regulating Bylaws.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Alignment with good practice for Ontario Fire Departments
- Improved transparency for the community as a result of clearly defined services and Fire Department requirements

4.7.7 Recommendation FES6: Review Shared Fire Chief Funding Arrangement between Penetanguishene and Midland

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- The Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene have a Shared Services Agreement for the Fire Chief position. The cost of this shared position is fixed, and currently, it is not known with certainty that the workload distribution matches the funding arrangement.
- As this shared service is viewed as valuable and beneficial to both Municipalities, there is a desire to ensure its long-term sustainability.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The actual level of effort/workload distribution of the Fire Chief with respect to supporting the two Fire Departments should be reviewed in detail and compared against the funding contributions from both municipalities.
- If required, the funding arrangement and/or workload should be revised to maximize alignment
- As this Services Agreement has proven to be a good example of collaboration between North Simcoe municipalities, the intent of this recommendation is to ensure there is a solid basis for the continued collaboration on Fire Services across the two municipalities.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is medium, as it would involve primarily staff time to complete.
- This recommendation should be explored within the 2021 fiscal year.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Unless completed by an external party (not a requirement), there are not required financial costs associated with conducting this review.
- Depending on the outcome of the review, there may be a requirement to revise the funding arrangement between the municipalities.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- This recommendation would provide clarity regarding the alignment between effort/workload distribution and funding between the two municipalities. It is intended to ensure the continued collaboration on Fire Services.

Consideration for a North Simcoe Fire Department

The four North Simcoe Municipalities operate their own Fire Departments. During the review, the question regarding potential consolidation of the fire departments into a single North Simcoe department (or subsets of) was considered.

At this time, there does not appear to be evidence to support the consolidation of Fire Departments. Instead, efforts to improve the efficiency/cost-effectiveness of the departments are better applied to the opportunities outlined above – particularly around shared procurement; collaborative vehicle maintenance; and greater collaboration for public education activities.

Two factors have led to this finding:

Firstly, no evidence was presented to identify concerns or issues with respect to the service quality of the North Simcoe Fire Departments. As noted elsewhere, KPIs and service standards should be established / better tracked to provide evidence regarding outcomes. However, in the absence of this information, and stakeholder feedback suggesting positive service performance, there is limited justification to recommend a consolidated North Simcoe Fire Department on the grounds of service level improvements.

Secondly, it is not clear that there would be significant cost savings through a consolidated Fire Department. As noted in the Current State summary:

- Two of the fire departments are primarily urban, each with a single Fire Hall
- Two of the fire departments are primarily rural, service large geographies with four and five Fire Halls
- Three of the departments are staffed with volunteer/on-call ("volunteer") firefighters
- One department uses a hybrid model of full-time and volunteer firefighters

The volunteer firefighter model, particularly for the rural municipalities where staff-levels are twice that of the urban municipalities, is a requirement to ensure the sustainability of the services. Any change to this staffing model would result in costs that would be difficult to support. Using 2018 Financial Information Return (FIR) data, the most recent year for which all municipalities have reported, an approximate cost per household for fire services is listed below.

Fire Services Cost per Household - North Simcoe				
	Midland	**Penetanguishene**	**Tay**	**Tiny**
Fire Services Expenses	$2,500,000	$950,068	$1,195,790	$1,387,291
Total Households	7,375	3,679	5,430	9,712
Cost per Household	$339	$258	$220	$143
Source: 2018 Financial Information Returns. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.				

Any change to the volunteer composition of the rural fire departments would result in significant cost increases.[2] A consolidated department with varying full-time and volunteer composition across each Fire Hall would likely result in varying service level standards across the consolidated department. If Fire Service assets remain constant, cost savings/efficiencies are limited beyond those opportunities discussed above, which do not require consolidation.

Without changes to the volume of fire department resources, it is not clear that there would be significant cost savings associated with consolidated fire service. Specifically, this would likely require a reduction in the number of fire stations/equipment, and potentially firefighters to achieve savings. However, no evidence was identified to assess the impact of such an action. As such, it is beyond the scope of this report to suggest any recommendation that may result in a reduction of frontline service. Further study/collection of data would be required to understand if any of the North Simcoe Fire Halls could be closed, with areas served by other halls and the subsequent impact on service levels.

Any change to the volunteer composition of the rural fire departments would result in significant cost increases. A consolidated department with varying full-time and volunteer composition across each Fire Hall would likely result in varying service level standards across the consolidated department.

Suppose Management/Council of the North Simcoe municipalities wishes to consider the consolidation of Fire Services. In that case, it is strongly advised that additional study be conducted to collect and analyze the current service levels across the region, and identify the impact of consolidation options on service delivery. At this time, our recommendation is to focus efforts to improve efficiency/cost-effectiveness on opportunities related to:

- Joint tenders and procurement of fire services equipment and vehicles
- Additional collaboration in the maintenance of fire service equipment, both through in-house and external vendors
- Increased collaboration on public education and firefighter training activities, with the potential to share roles in the future

These recommendations are intended to build on the already well-established collaboration and working relationships across the Departments. Activities including, but not limited to, regular Fire Chief meetings and joint recruitment activities should also continue.

An additional consideration to a consolidated North Simcoe Fire Department may be given through the County of Simcoe's review of Fire Services in Simcoe County. The County's review (which, as of the time of this Final Report, was still in the process of procuring a vendor to conduct the review) will focus on a more comprehensive collection and review of the data required above and may result in detailed analysis on potential opportunities. That review is intended to be complete in September 2021.

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[2] For directional purposes - one 2012 study found that volunteer fire departs are about 55% as costly as full-time fire departments. Found, Adam. (2012). Economies of Scale in Fire and Police Services in Ontario. *University of Toronto: Munk School of Global Affairs.*

4.8 Land Use Planning

4.8.1 Summary of Current State Findings

Service Description
• Local government planning establishes land use patterns through growth strategies and Official Plans. The Land Use Planning service coordinates growth and decides where services are placed and provides a framework for municipal zoning bylaws. Staff are responsible for advising the public, Council and the Committee of Adjustment on planning related matters.
Objective of the Review
• Identify opportunities for sharing of specialist staff resources
Framework Focus Areas
• Resources, Cost, Technology, and Process
Strengths
• **Official Plans and Zoning By-Laws updated** – three of four Municipalities have recently updated their Official Plans, with Tay Township following in 2021. Zoning By-Law updates to the align to the Official Plans are following directly. With these in place, it ensures that each is current with recent legislation changes and prepared as much as possible for future updates.   • **Collaborative approach taken by North Simcoe planners** – Planning representatives from each of the four Municipalities meet every 4-6 weeks to review current issues noted in their municipalities and possible resolution to upcoming provincial legislation.   • **Municipal Councils respect the planning function** – in general the municipal planning staff appeared to be well supported by the four municipal councils. However, there is a consistent message that Councils did not support a full cost recovery model to encourage development, which can challenge planning staff to support the process in an effective manner.   • **Townships work closely with applicants –** as the townships deal with few commercial applications, their concentration is on more residential and private building matters. They have developed a good reputation with local residents by attending technical meetings in person with the applicants to assist in processing applications as promptly as possible.
Preliminary Opportunities and Associated Gaps (if applicable)

• **Recommendation LA1:** Explore strategic and policy planner resource
    ○ **Gap Addressed:** short staffing of planning function common in smaller municipalities.
    ○ **Gap Addressed:** there is a tight talent pool of experienced planning resources
    ○ **Gap Addressed:** focus is on planner staffing as opposed to having the time and resources for developing and policy.
 • **Recommendation LA2:** Adoption of KPI's and outcome measurements
    ○ **Gap Addressed:** timelines and work effort of different types of applications not tracked.
 • **Recommendation LA3:** Standardize planning approach
    ○ **Gap Addressed:** different planning processes and approaches in each municipality.

4.8.2 Recommendation LUP1: Explore Strategic and Policy Planner Resource

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- The small size of the North Simcoe Municipalities necessitates the focus on the limited planner staffing available, as opposed to having the time and resources for developing and policy planning. A tight talent pool for experienced planners also impacts the Municipalities efforts in recruiting and retention.
- Additionally, it was noted that with the staff shortfall for Planners in Midland and Penetanguishene, that the level of ad-hoc requests for planning services directly impacts the service that can be provided for more strategic and policy issues.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Perform a cost-benefit analysis on whether a third-party service or a recruited resource can service all or part of the North Simcoe municipalities. Attention to longer-term strategic and policy issues of planning is needed. The Municipalities of North Simcoe should also explore shared solutions with the County, which could provide another option for resourcing.
- It is anticipated that this resource could be either a full-time senior planning resource that would be available to each of the four Municipalities, or an external resource that would be dedicated to North Simcoe and available for consultations or projects on a pay per usage basis.
- Should a dedicated staff position be the preferred route, then utilizing the model established in the Shared Services Agreements (for Building and Fire Services) between Midland and Penetanguishene could be utilized as a basis for cost and services sharing between municipalities.

Supporting Findings from Other Jurisdictions

- There are further comments and discussions with references to other municipalities in Ontario that use shared Planning resources across a County or group of municipalities. These are shown in Appendix section 6.1.5 Jurisdictional Review.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is high to medium, with the provision for staff time to develop the initial cost justification, the job description, and qualifications. The terms of the Services Agreement amongst the municipalities would be the final staffing requirement and will necessitate agreement among the municipalities as to how priorities, allocation of the resources, and procurement are to be determined. This could lower the ease of implementation of this recommendation. There is also no external support required, and no incremental technology required to implement this recommendation.
- This recommendation should be explored within the 2021 fiscal year, to assist in further staffing and process adjustments noted as other recommendations in this section.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The financial implications for this recommendation are high, as this recommendation proposes an additional senior resource for the Planning department, plus the staff time required to confirm the cost benefit of the staff, hire, or contract the resource, and prepare the Services Agreement for the North Simcoe municipalities. As this is expected to be a shared resource, the cost will be apportioned to each group, as determined in the agreement.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- This will provide consistent insight and senior experience to the Planning Departments of North Simcoe to ensure that the longer-term outlook for Land Use Planning is accommodated. This cost justification will also provide additional input into the planning function to determine required support and substantiate potential staffing and budget support going forward.

4.8.3 Recommendation LUP2: Adopted KPI's and Outcome Measurements

Formal tracking and adoption of Key Performance Indicators across the municipalities with respect to the planning processes are not maintained.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- There are many processes covered by the Planning staff besides large applications. Currently, there are no KPI's maintained that sets out the quantity and quality of staff efforts in supporting these processes. Most planning processes require council intervention or approvals, and these can be time-consuming in the shepherding reports through various committee/council meetings.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- This recommendation aligns with the overarching recommendation to facilitate improved data collection and reporting and enhance KPIs and metrics to support evidence-informed decision making across the municipalities. The following provides suggested metrics that can be collected to support the active measurement and management of the Land Use Planning section.
- These measures would allow tracking of:
  - Timeliness of application processing and report preparation
    - Average time to submit comments to applicant from intake date
    - Average wait time to plan check re-submittals
    - Average time to respond to resubmittals
  - Customer satisfaction
  - Completion of initiatives
  - Number of actions implemented in response to National Heritage Policy
  - Number of Official Plan Amendments (pre-Official Plan approval)
  - Number of Official Plan Amendments (post-Official Plan approval)
  - Average number of Strategic Planning Projects underway at any one time.
- In addition to the metrics noted above, outcome-based measures on the activities provided by the planning function in moving an application from initiation to completion, including the requisite Council and public meetings required, can help identify areas of the planning process where time and efficiencies can be gained.
- Indicators and measures of the quality of the applications and the impact on the process should also be included.
- To assist in the collection of this information, it is recommended that the municipal Planning departments develop a consistent process for tracking the volume of applications, and inquiries related to planning applications. Utilization of on-line applications or a common Excel tracker and can be used internally. This could also be applicable for planning inquiries to allow for staff to track inquiries and produce reporting. Tracking would allow the Division to develop a baseline understanding of the number, and type of inquiries, and over time can show trending information inform staffing levels.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is high, as there is a limited level of increased staff time expected for all four municipalities to capture these statistics. There is also no external support required, and no incremental technology required to implement this recommendation.

- This recommendation should be explored within the 2021 fiscal year, to assist in further staffing and process adjustments noted as other recommendations in this section.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The financial implications for this recommendation are low, with limited additional staff time for application tracking and monthly data consolidation.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- This will provide improved monitoring and management of the Land Use Planning departments by providing consistent reporting that can be compared against the targets of the municipalities. This will also provide additional input into areas requiring additional support and substantiate staffing and budget support going forward.

4.8.4 Recommendation LUP3: Standardize Planning Approach

The ability to share planning resources across the North Simcoe municipalities is hindered by differences in planning procedures and municipal by-laws.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Within the North Simcoe municipalities, it is difficult for planning resources to readily support others with different planning processes and approaches in each municipality.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- While the Planning Act specifies the timelines that municipalities are required to adhere to for addressing all types of development approvals, it is within the municipalities' domain however to determine the processes and tools that are in place to facilitate approvals. It is further recommended that the Municipalities streamline and make consistent current processes for responding to development approvals, and enhance the tools used to facilitate the municipal application process.
- Where possible, the Land Use Planning processes should be reviewed over all four municipalities, or an even broader perspective to include the entire County, to determine if there is a more standardized approach should be implemented. This could facilitate the ability for resource sharing (one similar process to learn and implement) as well as streamlining communication to residents and developers alike (one process vs. four processes, or more if considering the entire Simcoe County)
- To support a similar application, experience the following areas can be reviewed for consistency between the municipalities:
  - **Website Content:** To encourage better quality applications and approvals, and to enhance the applicants experience in determining and gathering requirements for approvals, it is recommended that information regarding the planning process be available, relevant, and accessible. This should include access to the latest Official Plan and all contact information regarding the planning process. Ensure that messaging and contact information is featured to demonstrate that discussions with staff (in the form of a pre-consultation meeting) before applying is encouraged to ensure that the applicant has gathered all the requirements necessary and understood the timelines associated with the process.
  - **Pre-consultation Meeting:** A pre-consultation meeting with key Planning personnel and the applicant at the start of the approval process can reduce delays caused by incomplete or low-quality applications and ensure a more coordinated approval

process. Pre-consultation meetings can include a site visit with all parties involved in the process (such as building inspectors, conservation authority, etc.) or through the use of an information package that is provided to the applicant. Pre-consultation meetings can help to determine where proposals are more complex versus straightforward to set expectations around timelines for approval.

o **Checklist & FAQ:** Each of the municipalities posts a planning checklist and are made available online for the most common planning approval requests. These should be reviewed by the Municipalities to determine where they can be made more common to one another. Consistent messaging should also be applied to the Frequently Answered Questions (FAQ) or Guides within the Planning sections of the web sites.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is medium, with an increased staffing requirement to review current processes and determine areas where standardization can be implemented. There is also a possibility that external support may be required to assist in staffing availability and time to complete this recommendation. There is no incremental technology required to implement this recommendation.
- This recommendation should be explored within the 2021 fiscal year, as there is expectation of continued growth for the area requiring higher levels of staffing.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The financial implications for this recommendation are medium, with staff time and the possible inclusion of external resources being the cost drivers.
- There are financial implications to this process, as staff time would be required. It is recommended that the already occurring Planner meetings in the North Simcoe groups be leveraged to discuss and coordinate the content required. It would be a most efficient use of staff time if there was a sub-committee, or lead municipality that took ownership of different aspects of the content development which could then be shared.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Consistent and streamlined municipal application process that enhances the applicant experience so residents and developers can better navigate the development approval process.

4.9 Building Services

4.9.1 Summary of Current State Findings

Service Description
• Building Services liaises with members of the public regularly, as well as the municipal Planning departments on any build or renovations that occur within the municipality. Prior to starting building work, the Building Services is consulted regarding permits and inspections required. Building permits entail approval from the municipality for any plans to construct, renovate, demolish, or change the use of a building.

Objective of the Review
• Identify opportunities for a more coordinated approach to streamline resources and processes; and, • Identify opportunities for technology improvements

Framework Focus Areas
• Resource, Process, Technology and Costs

Strengths
• **Current Resources** – municipalities are generally successfully in managing the inspection function according to provincial standards with minimal aids from technology. • **Collaboration of resources between Midland and Penetanguishene** – there has been a long-standing services agreement for Building Inspection services. • **Septic System Inspections –** all properties in Tiny Township have septic system inspections completed every six years. • **Collaboration of Inspectors across Simcoe County –** Regular meetings with Building Inspectors from the whole of Simcoe County are used to update each other on the application of the latest technologies and collaborate on finding solutions to individual issues from the municipalities. • **Focused on providing good customer service** – as well as meeting provincial standards for inspection timelines, all municipalities work at building good working relationship with residents and builders.

Preliminary Opportunities and Associated Gaps (if applicable)

• **Recommendation BU1:** Share experiences with technology
    o **Gap Addressed:** Limited resources.
    o **Gap Addressed:** Building Services is currently a manual operation.
• **Recommendation BU2:** Review of existing Services Agreement and the potential for resource augmentation
    o **Gap Addressed:** Resourcing limitations due to peaks and valleys of building services requirements across the municipalities.
• **Recommendation BU3:** Review User Fees to Match Services Provided
    o **Gap Addressed:** Customer Expectations of Department services vary widely.
    o **Gap Addressed:** Fixed Fee model is not sustainable.
• **Recommendation BU4:** Reinforce the Legal and Safety Messages to the Public
    o **Gap Addressed:** Residents building without permits.

4.9.2 Recommendation BU1: Share Experiences with Technology

As new inspection and billing software is planned for Penetanguishene in early 2021, the North Simcoe municipalities should openly share their experiences and lessons learned in the implementation process. Whether the same system is deployed in the other municipalities, or the experiences with tablet devices that Tay Township is considering, not collaborating, and discussing with the other municipalities is a lost opportunity.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Within the North Simcoe Municipalities, there are technology improvements in Building permit applications, payment, and inspections that can improve efficiencies to assist in easing staff complement limitations in the Building services area.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- With the planned installation of a new Building permit application, payment, and inspection tracking software for the Town of Penetanguishene, similar software and processes may be implemented in the other Municipalities in the future. A provision for planned and structured information sessions involving this installation at Penetanguishene will provide valuable advice for each group, concerning technology, procurement, process, and resources.
- Planning short 30-minute regularly scheduled (i.e., monthly) meetings with the North Simcoe municipalities would allow for review of project progress and review of an issues and actions log that can be shared amongst the group. This is not to be a status update on any one Municipality's project but is for information exchange and sharing to assist each other with technology concerning Building Services. While 30-minute sessions should be expected on a monthly basis, there will always be situations where additional discussion would be warranted for the group, or part of the group to break out.
- As technology implementations proceed, the group can determine ongoing requirements for the sessions, however, it would be expected that collaboration could continue indefinitely.
- There is also the opportunity to include these sessions as part of the regular County-wide Building Inspector meetings, however this recommendation was identified to ensure regular and open discussion, which is more comfortably accomplished in a smaller group.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is high, as there is limited staff time expected for all four municipalities. There is also no external support required, and no incremental technology required to implement this recommendation.
- This recommendation should be explored within the 2021 fiscal year, as the initial implementation of the Building Services application for Penetanguishene expected to be the initial focus.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The financial implications for this recommendation are low, with limited staff time for monthly information sharing sessions the cost driver. However, it is expected that the experiences shared dealing with various technology areas concerning Building Services will help offset the small staff time investment.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- This will provide improved input to the technology improvements expected in the Building Services departments and will enable the municipalities to have a common forum for review, assessment and resolution of issues concerning the new technologies.

4.9.3 Recommendation BU2: Review of Services Agreement and Resource Augmentation Opportunities

The allocation of resources and costs between Midland and Penetanguishene is fixed at a set rate. This sharing mechanism should be reviewed to ensure that both parties are receiving and funding the services as fairly as possible. To accommodate the peaks and valleys of Building Services requirements across the municipalities, additional resource augmentation opportunities should be examined.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- The Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene have a Shared Services Agreement for Building Inspections. Demand for Building Services fluctuates, and the Current Services Agreement strictly allocates cost of staff based on resource rather than services provided. Therefore, there is concern that over a longer term, the disparities between service levels required and staffing costs will need to be addressed.
- Requirements for Building Services rises and falls based on planned building activity, seasonality, and other factors such as impact that the pandemic has placed on the community recently.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The actual level of effort/workload distribution with respect to supporting the two Building Services departments should be reviewed in detail and compared against the funding contributions from both municipalities.
- If required, the funding arrangement, and/or workload should be revised to maximize alignment.
- In addition, opportunities to augment staffing with part-time and/or contracted resources should be examined, either as part of the Agreement or for possible inclusion in addressing staffing requirements by any of the North Simcoe municipalities. The source of this staffing can range from recruiting retirees for part-time hours to arrangements with contracting firms based on an annual expectation of hours at a specified rate.
- As this Services Agreement has proven to be a good example of collaboration between North Simcoe municipalities, the intent of this recommendation is to provide a solid basis for other possible resource sharing arrangements for the communities going forward.

Supporting Findings from Other Jurisdictions

- There are further comments and discussion with references to other municipalities in Ontario that use shared Building Inspection resources across a County or group of municipalities. These are shown in Appendix section 6.1.5 Jurisdictional Review.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is medium, as there is dedicated staff time expected for the two Town municipalities and any of the others that wish to be involved. Additional external legal support would also be required, and no incremental technology required to implement this recommendation.
- This recommendation should be explored within the 2021 fiscal year, as the increasing number of small renovations during the Covid-19 pandemic has pushed the staff to its limits, and the new building season is approaching.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The financial implications for this recommendation are medium, with staff time determining the changes required with the agreement and the legal assistance in the contract preparation. Over the longer term, either of the municipalities could be affected by increased staffing costs. However, this will be in response to increased workload.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- This will ensure that backlogs are addressed, and work efforts accommodated in the short term and provide a long-term solution for an improved working arrangement between the Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene. The Services Agreement and other resource augmentation strategies can also act as a basis for other future services agreements among the North Simcoe municipalities.

4.9.4 Recommendation BU3: Review User Fees to Match Services Provided

Current user fees for building permits are calculated based on the area of the project without regard for the number of consultations and assistance provided to the resident or contractor. Fees are already under pressure to cover costs and should be reviewed to match the services provided to the community.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Customer expectations for services can be challenging with the Building Services teams dealing with all types of residents, seasonal residents, and contractors. Some have fully detailed and completed applications and some with designs written on a napkin. All expect building services to assist them in the process.
- The current fixed fee structure is based on the building area for the renovation or build involved and is not sustainable based on the range of services that may be required. There are no additional fees established for Building Services to provide design or consultative assistance to complete the application on behalf of the resident.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- A review of the Building Permit fee structure and services should be undertaken to determine how best to align what the communities expect from the permit fees to what the municipalities can provide. There are a number of options available for review:
  - **Overall Permit Fee Increase –** increases to all fees to accommodate the additional design and consultative services provided;
  - **Tiered Permit Fee Structure –** a tiered permit fee structure based on the initial design presented and the expected additional design and consultative services to be provided by the municipality;
  - **Per Use Consultative Fees –** additional user fees based on services provided on a per hour or per-consultation model;
  - **The Tiny Township Approach** – one consultation included in the fee, then no additional services provided until the plans are acceptable to the municipality; and,
  - **Status Quo –** fees remain unchanged but with additional focus on communicating municipality requirements for project design standards.
- This will also require analysis of historical data to determine the time spent and costs associated with assisting residents with their designs. It is not expected that precise information on these activities will be readily available, with most of the circumstances

where additional guidance was required will be anecdotal at best. If recovering this data is deemed not to be accurate enough, or the time required will be extensive, a decision may be to begin more formal tracking of applications now with an emphasis on the extra time, visits, and handholding required on the problem applications. After a six-month data collection exercise has been completed, then addressing the changes to the fee structure can be more confidently addressed.

- An increase in building permits fee may not achieve full cost recovery. However, it will reduce expenditures related to this service. Overall, this will be a decision for the Council to determine what the level of permit fees are to cover the costs of the service and how much the public is funding from the tax base.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is medium, as there will be staff time required to perform historical data collection on the permits, perform the analysis and review for the possible fee models, and then garner support with Council to proceed with the selected option. It is not expected that external support will be required, and while no incremental technology is required to implement this recommendation, the expected implementation of building services software will provide more insight into these activities.

- This recommendation should be started within the 2021 fiscal year to at least begin data collection on Building permit applications. The actual review and analysis of options can proceed based on what the data collection efforts yield.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The financial implications for this recommendation are medium, with staff time for data collection and the analysis and review of the possible model the cost driver. However, the resulting changes in fee structure for building permits are expected to offset current costs in line with Council direction on public versus service funding of Building Services.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- This will better align costs of providing the Building Services to the value delivered to residents, visiting residents and contractors. It is expected that any increased fees will support staffing levels to meet user expectations.

4.9.5 Recommendation BU4: Reinforce Legal and Safety Messages to the Public

Residential renovations are increasingly underway across the Municipalities, and with these are the risk that some members of the public choose not to follow the legal and safety requirements contained in the building bylaws of the municipalities.

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- With the increasing number of small renovations occurring, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic situation, it was noted that there are more residents and seasonal residents attempting to build without permits and inspections. This is a health and safety issue for the community and presents problematic and confrontational issues for Building Inspectors and increasing the burden on enforcement.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- The North Simcoe municipalities now have Communication staff in all municipalities. To further reinforce the legal and safety messaging regarding the requirements for Building Permits, use these resources to emphasize the Building Inspection process and requirements to build to the Code.
- This messaging could be included as part of introducing the new technologies in Building permit application, payments, and inspection system that is expected to be deployed in the near future. In addition, educational articles or videos to assist in the resident's preparation of the Building Application can also improve customer satisfaction and reduce the municipality's time required to provide the service.
- It was also suggested that Building Services could provide educational sessions for residents and seasonal residents concerning the processes involved in the building permit requirements. These were held in neighbouring communities in the past, outside of traditional office hours, to provide a consistent message to the public of the health and safety issues and the community requirement for the building permit process.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Overall, the ease of implementation for this recommendation is high, as there is limited staff time expected for all four municipalities. There is also no external support required and no incremental technology required to implement this recommendation.
- This recommendation should be explored within the 2021 fiscal year, as there is an increasing number of smaller renovations occurring during the Covid-19 pandemic.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The financial implications for this recommendation are low, with staff time for determining the content of the campaign messaging and then delivering the communication to the community. However, should a municipality decide to hold educational sessions for the public, additional staff time will be required to build course content, publicize the event(s), and then, outside of normal business hours, provide the training to interested residents, seasonal residents, and contractors.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- This recommendation is expected to decrease the number of illegal builds in the community and therefore increase the health and safety of the public. The decrease in illegal renovations, will also lessen the burden for enforcement.

Service Specific Recommendations

Section 3 – Operational Services

In-Scope Services Reviewed in this Section:

10. Engineering Services

11. Fleet Management

4.10 Engineering Services

4.10.1 Summary of Current State Findings

Service Description
• Engineering Services is responsible for many capital works projects and overseeing municipal assets such as roads, water, wastewater, stormwater drainage and management, where applicable. Engineering Services is also responsible for the review of development applications as they are presented to the municipalities.

Objective of the Review
• Potential opportunity to rationalize use of third-party services; and, • Potential opportunity to increase contract value/project size to attract additional vendors for third-party services.

Framework Focus Areas
• Resources, Costs and Service Levels

Strengths
• **Ability to Manage Heavy Workloads** – Across the North Simcoe Municipalities, there are limited resources involved in Engineering Services. Stakeholders noted staff capacity constraints but have implemented processes and the use of third-party resources to complete engineering services.

Preliminary Opportunities and Associated Gaps (if applicable)

• **Recommendation ES1:** Develop common Vendor of Record/List of Pre-Qualified Vendors for Engineering Services
   o **Gap Addressed:** Duplicated procurement of external vendors.
• **Recommendation ES2:** Enhance/Implement new Technology to Support Engineering Services
   o **Gap Addressed:** Limited tracking of performance metrics.
   o **Gap Addressed:** Emphasis on Paper-Based Processes.
   o **Gap Addressed:** Access to, and functionality of, tools.

4.10.2 Recommendation ES1: Develop Common Vendor of Record/List of Pre-Qualified Vendors for Engineering Services

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Each municipality currently develops and maintains its own roster of external engineering vendors. This results in a duplication of procurement activities to secure vendors, as well as limited attempts to achieve better vendor rates or responses through larger (joint) contracts.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- A common vendor of record/list of pre-qualified vendors should be established for the North Simcoe municipalities. This should address major, reoccurring services that the municipalities regularly procure for.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Developing a common vendor of record/list of pre-qualified vendors is estimated at medium-high ease of implementation. This would require municipal staff to identify services to include on the Vendor of Record. Existing pre-qualified vendor lists should be used as the framework for identifying services to be included.
- Developing a vendor of record/list of pre-qualified vendors will require procurement support to develop the request.
- Once established, utilization of the vendor or record should be monitored.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Staff time will be required to develop and implement the initial vendor of record for engineering services across North Simcoe.
- It is anticipated that over time, municipalities will experience savings on external vendor costs because of the larger purchasing power of the group.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- As noted above, it is anticipated that over time, Municipalities will experience savings on external vendor costs and a reduction in the amount of time staff spent on procurement related to engineering services.
- A common vendor of record may attract new firms as a result of a streamlined engagement process and access to potential projects across a larger number of municipalities.
- Tracking utilization against the vendor of record will provide common and consistent information on the volume of work associated with specific services and expertise. The North Simcoe municipalities would be able to use this information to monitor trends in spending, including identifying potential services for which it may be more cost-effective to bring in-house.

4.10.3 Recommendation ES2: Enhance/Implement New Technology to Support Engineering Services

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Currently, the North Simcoe Municipalities use different tools and technology to support engineering services. These each has its own varying capabilities and functionalities.
- As the Municipalities continue to grow, it is anticipated that there will be an increased need for dedicated tools and technology – for example, specific asset management technology.
- The different tools used by the North Simcoe Municipalities prevent easy sharing of good practices or troubleshooting by users in each municipality as each is familiar with a different set of tools.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Moving forward, future state activities should explore the benefits of greater collaboration on implementing technology solutions related to Engineering Services – e.g., Asset Management where not all municipalities have a dedicated Asset Management system

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Aligning tools and technology is considered to be low ease of implementation. The needs of the municipalities will vary based on size, complexity, growth, and specific engineering needs. Tools that are required by one municipality may not be cost-effective for another.
- As the Municipalities continue to grow and consider replacements or enhancements to engineering systems, consultations should occur with the other North Simcoe municipalities to identify the abilities of a system already used in the region to meet the Municipality's needs.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Currently, it is recommended that the focus of considering new technology for engineering services emphasize potential alignment with other North Simcoe municipalities as needs are identified. As such, financial implications at this time are not considered to be significant and primarily driven by staff time.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Dedicated asset management systems provide a more robust tool to scale up as municipalities grow.
- Aligning the use of an asset management tool would provide some benefits regarding the potential to share practices and potentially resources to manage systems as a longer-term enhancement.

4.11 Fleet Management

4.11.1 Summary of Current State Findings

Service Description
• Fleet Management involves the scheduling and overseeing of vehicle maintenance and other costs, lifecycle planning and procurement, and utilization analysis.
Objective of the Review
• Quantify potential opportunities for joint fleet planning/procurement • Identify potential efficiencies through shared service provision or technology resources
Framework Focus Areas
• Service Levels; Costs; Resources; Governance
Strengths
• **Fleet Management Planning** – Across the North Simcoe municipalities, stakeholders noted that requirements to track and plan for the fleet assets and their replacements are achieved. • **Growing Understanding of the Value of Fleet Management** – Stakeholders were consistent in identifying Fleet Management as an important function for enhancement. While stakeholders were felt that current systems/processes generally meet the needs of each Municipality, there was a clear sense that improvements could be made, and that investment will be required to support future growth.
Preliminary Opportunities and Associated Gaps (if applicable)

• **Recommendation FM1:** Develop a North Simcoe Fleet Management Resourcing Strategy
    o **Gap Addressed:** Recruitment and retention of mechanic resources.
    o **Gap Addressed:** Overlapping activities to manage fleet requirements.
• **Recommendation FM2:** Implement a formal process for reviewing fleet needs across each North Simcoe Municipality
    o **Gap Addressed:** Limited collaboration/planning to support group-buying for fleet needs and standardization.
• **Recommendation FM3:** Implement and Utilize Fleet Management Information System
    o **Gap Addressed:** Data and KPIs not fully collected or analyzed to support decision making.

4.11.2 Recommendation FM1: Develop a North Simcoe Fleet Management Resourcing Strategy

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Across the North Simcoe Municipalities, Fleet Management responsibilities associated with reviewing needs, ensuring maintenance is completed, and other activities (insurance, licensing, accident reports, driver training, etc.) generally fall to each department for which the vehicle is located. This results in duplication of fleet management activities within Municipalities, and across the region.
- Mechanic resources have also been identified as a difficult position to fill within municipalities due to recent and historical recruitment and retention challenges for skilled labour in the region. The North Simcoe Municipalities compete against each other to staff mechanics in their shop facilities. Furthermore, each Municipality is investing in maintaining its own shop facility, with some requiring investment to modernize.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Develop a resourcing strategy to support the consolidation and centralization of fleet activities. This should consider two primary components:
  - o Fleet Management – Manager/Supervisor
  - o Mechanics and Shop Facilities
- A shared Fleet Manager would support the management of each municipality's fleet needs (and could further leverage a shared Fleet Management System as described below). This could include a centralized asset oversight function, with a focus on rationalizing life cycle costs and specification/policy development and potentially CVOR related issues around training and reporting. This position could support all or a subset of the North Simcoe Municipalities. It should also be noted that this function could be outsourced to a third-party vendor that could assume responsibility for fleet management.
- The rationalization of Mechanic and Shop facilities should be explored as a central component of a Fleet Management resourcing strategy. This would detail arrangements for the sharing of mechanic and shop resources.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- The development of a North Simcoe Fleet Management Resourcing Strategy will require staff time to consider, analyze, and draft. This should include:
  - o A detailed assessment of time spent across each municipality on Fleet Management activities
  - o Summary of anticipated/planned investments required, if any, in shop facilities over the next 5-10 years.
  - o Collection, review, and analysis of mechanic and shop utilization across each of the North Simcoe Municipalities – both the specific use of internal shop resources and external shop resources.
  - o Identification of current capacity across the North Simcoe Region and required capacity (i.e. current in-house utilization in addition to external utilization of activities that could be performed in-house).
  - o Identification of staffing levels required across the North Simcoe Region, and agreement for distribution of resources with shared service agreement (costs, servicing priorities, standards, etc.)

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The development of a resourcing strategy would require staff time to complete. If done with external support, it would be estimated at $30,000-$40,000.
- Shared mechanics and specifically shop resources would reduce the total spend on these facilities across the North Simcoe Region as duplicated and excess facilities may be reduced.
- It is not believed that workload of any one municipality would warrant a full-time resource for Fleet Management leadership, however a shared service arrangement would allow a dedicated position to be established while sharing costs across the participating municipalities.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Improved ability for municipal staff and leadership to focus on dedicated tasks rather than split across functions.
- More efficient use of costly staff resources by reduced reliance on mechanic resources to conduct non-core tasks such as parts ordering, scheduling, or transporting vehicles
- Consolidating Fleet Management Services could support the achievement of:
  - The ability to use mechanic resources to more efficiently across the North Simcoe region (prevent competition between the municipalities, streamline recruitment and retention efforts, etc.)
  - Potential to support the consolidation of supplies and equipment
  - Elimination of the reliance on outdated facilities currently used

4.11.3 Recommendation FM2: Implement a Formal Process for Reviewing Fleet Needs Across Each North Simcoe Municipality

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Beyond ad hoc day-to-day requests, there is currently limited formal coordination in procurement, equipment sharing, maintenance/repairs, use of tools or technology, etc. Despite overlapping requirements and similarities in fleet needs, few benefits are ever realized with respect to collaborative purchasing or sharing of vehicles and inventory.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Implement formal fleet management processes to enable the municipalities to increase collaboration and coordination of fleet management activities including:
  - o Purchases and rentals;
  - o Sharing and utilization of costly equipment;
  - o Rationalization and alignment of fleet specifications and pooled inventory etc.
- This could be implemented as a component (activity) of a shared Fleet Management/Manager position or within the existing structure of Fleet Management services across the North Simcoe Municipalities.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Establishing a formal process for reviewing fleet needs is considered a medium-low ease of implementation. Aspects such as regular (i.e., twice-annual) review of procurement need specific to fleet needs and participation in group buying should be considered and implemented with relative ease where there is already alignment in specifications and need.
- More comprehensive bulk purchasing may require some alignment in fleet/equipment specifications necessitating additional planning and decision-making on procurement requirements.
- Input from stakeholders, including the public and Associations, identified a desire for the municipalities to act on climate change activities – including investments in Electric Vehicle fleets. This should be considered as a potential priority for joint procurement activities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- There are no significant increased financial costs associated with implementing formal processes for reviewing fleet needs across the North Simcoe Municipalities. Individual municipalities currently review their own requirements on a regular basis. A process of bringing together these reviews and identifying common needs is not anticipated to require significant effort – particularly once established as standard practice.
  - o Group purchases could be coordinated by a 'lead municipality' on a rotating basis to distribute workload across the municipalities.
- It is anticipated that there would be cost savings associated with group purchases.
- Sharing of equipment/rentals would reduce total spending across the North Simcoe Region (would require planning and coordination with end-user groups)
- Increasing standardization of fleet vehicles and equipment could enable a streamlined process for inventory management, including a reduction in costs associated with each municipality maintaining their own unique inventory needs.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Formalization and recognition of ad hoc sharing and collaboration that already occurs in the North Simcoe Region
- Increased participation in bulk-purchases, shared rentals, etc., to secure more competitive per-unit prices and reduce time spent on procurement (i.e., reduction of duplicated procurement activities across the North Simcoe Region).
- Streamlined inventory management processes and costs
- Establishes as a path to greater collaboration and sharing with respect to Fleet Management and planning. By beginning with the identification of common purchases, the municipalities can begin to take steps towards more formalized long-term planning on costly fleet requirements.

4.11.4 Recommendation FM3: Implement and Fully Utilize Fleet Management Information System

CURRENT STATE CHALLENGES

- Currently, municipalities do not formally collect or report on fleet management activities. Consequently, there is a gap across the region with respect to the limited ability to support evidence-based decision-making regarding fleet decisions, including those related to the utilization, costs, repairs, and replacement, etc.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

- Implement system and processes to ensure the timely and accurate collection of fleet information. This would be used to inform decisions related to repair vs replacement of vehicles based on the cost of ownership; tracking utilization of vehicles for a potential to consolidate (within or across municipalities); tracking of warranty process and quantifying warranty recoveries; fuel management; etc.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Implementing a Fleet Management System is estimated to be medium-low ease of implementation as a result of the requirements for system selection, identification of KPI data elements required; development of internal processes for data collection and system input; creation of reports and review processes/policies, etc. Given resource constraints across the North Simcoe Municipalities, it is not clear that internal resources would have the capacity to deliver on this initiative and would require external support to develop the processes and frameworks to accompany a Fleet Management System.
- Following this initial step, the Municipalities would then begin a process for system selection and implementation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- As noted above, there may be a requirement to engage external support to identify the specific needs of a fleet management system, identify data elements, and identify data collection processes that will need to be aligned to future system needs. Costs associated with this would be correlated to the number of municipalities that participate in the engagement.
- Additional IT Procurement costs for fleet software itself would be required. These costs may vary depending on the specific needs and options confirmed by the municipalities. Generally, this would be proportioned on a per-vehicle cost, with any flat fees (i.e., hosting for cloud-based tools) also proportioned using a per vehicle formula. Participating municipalities would benefit from the ability to share initial implementation and set up costs associated with the Fleet Management Information System.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- Monitor trends and support the identification of cost increases and potential replacement needs or sharing of equipment within or across municipalities (i.e., fluctuations in seasonal usage).
- Ability to leverage technology to identify/remind users of upcoming vehicle maintenance requirements and scheduling, consolidated warranty information. Support the tracking of inventory requirements for work.

5.0 Financial Implications, Prioritization, and Considerations

5.1 Summary of Costs and Implications

The table below provides a summary view of _directional cost estimates_ for a subset of the proposed recommendations listed above. It is important to note that costs have only been estimated for recommendations where there is a reasonable level of certainty around actual requirements, and/or where an appropriate level of data and information is currently available. For some of the recommendations, it may be most efficient/effective to implement using existing staff resources, and these recommendations have been identified below. However, this assumes requisite staff capacity/availability to implement.

In the table below, the 'Estimated Cost' column contains three unique labels:

Label	Description
"—"	• Applied to recommendations where costs **could not be reasonably estimated**, due to the level of data and information is currently available, or uncertainty around actual requirements.
"N/A"	• Applied to recommendations where **only internal effort is required**, and no incremental external costs are expected from pursuing the recommendation
"$"	• Applied to recommendations where costs **have been estimated**, as there is a reasonable level of certainty around actual requirements, and/or an appropriate level of data and information is currently available.

Given the limited resources and capacity across the region, these recommendations will need to be sequenced appropriately, considering the estimated costs, benefits (below) and exiting staff capacity constraints. Where it is reasonable or likely that external support would be required to implement a recommendation, the directional cost has been estimated.

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Estimated Cost	Notes
Human Resources/ Health and Safety	HR1	Shared Delivery Model for HR/H&S	—	
	HR2	Formalize Joint H&S Training	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	HR3	Standardize HR Technology	—	
	HR4	Succession Planning	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	HR5	Employee Feedback Mechanisms	$15,000 - $25,000 initial $10,000- $15,000 annual	Range based on use of external resources to conduct survey. Initial one-time costs involve setup of survey, defining questions, and processes.

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Estimated Cost	Notes
				Ongoing costs assumes annual administration, analysis, and reporting.
Procurement	PR1	Shared Delivery Model for Procurement	—	
	PR2	Enhanced Group Purchasing	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	PR3	New Procurement Technology	—	
Comms., Marketing, and Tourism	CT1	Investigate Collaborative Communications	—	
	CT2	Review Structure for Communications, Culture, and Tourism Organization	$10,000 - $20,000	Range based on use of external resources to conduct review. Could be done in-house, with minimal non-staff costs, if capacity allows.
	CT3	Increase Attention to Communication and Visitor KPIs	—	
Information Technology	IT1	Develop an IT Strategy	$30,000 - $40,000 per Municipality $85,000-$100,000 if done collectively	Assumed IT Strategy is conducted by a 3rd party.
	IT2	Align Delivery Model for IT	—	
	IT3	Standardize Online Service Offerings	—	
	IT4	New IT Support Systems	—	
Legal Services	LS1	Shared/Delivery Model for Legal Services	—	
	LS2	Pool Resources for Outsourced Support	—	

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Estimated Cost	Notes
Emergency Management	EM1	Consolidate Emergency Response Plan and Control Group	$30,000 - $50,000 in one-time costs to establish position $80,000-$100,000+ in salary and benefits to fund position	Range for one-time costs based on use of external resources to support the development of the role, description, responsibilities, and review/align processes. Ongoing costs are associated with the new position.
	EM2	Increase Collaborative Training and Response Drills	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	EM3	Continue with Transition to IMS for Emergency Management for all North Simcoe Municipalities	—	
Fire & Emergency Services	FES1	Enhance Data Analysis and Annual Reporting	N/A	Annual Reporting recommended to be done with existing resources. Enhanced data analytics should be considered in collaboration with other data collection and reporting considerations.
	FES2	Identify Opportunities for Increased Coordination on Public Education Activities	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	FES3	Explore Potential for Greater Collaboration of Maintenance of Specialized Fire Services Equipment	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	FES4	Collaborate on Radio Enhancements	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	FES5	Ensure Establishing and Regulating Bylaws Accurately Reflect the Current Needs of Municipalities	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	FES6	Review Shared Fire Chief Funding Arrangement between Penetanguishene and Midland	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
Land Use Planning	LUP1	Explore a Strategic and Policy Planner Resource	$20,000 – 30,0000 in	Range for one-time costs based on use of

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Estimated Cost	Notes
			one-time costs to establish position, process, etc. $100,000+ in salary and benefits to fund position	external resources to support the development of the role description, responsibilities, sharing agreement, and review/align processes. Ongoing costs are associated with the new position.
	LUP2	Adopt KPIs and Outcome Measurements	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	LUP3	Standardize Planning Approach	$50,000 - $80,000	Range based on use of external resources to conduct review and recommend standardizes processes.
Building Services	BU1	Share Experiences with Technology	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources
	BU2	Review of Services Agreement and Resource Augmentation Opportunities	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	BU3	Review of User Fees to Match Services Provided	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	BU4	Reinforce Legal and Safety Messages to the Public	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
Engineering Services	ES1	Develop a Common Vendor of Record/List of Pre-qualified Vendors for Engineering Services	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.
	ES2	Enhance/Implement New Technology to Support Engineering Services	—	
Fleet Management	FM1	Develop a North Simcoe Fleet Management Resourcing Strategy	$30,000-$40,000	Range based on use of external resources to conduct review. Resourcing implications from strategy would be additional, if required.
	FM2	Implement a Formal Process for Reviewing Fleet Needs Across each North Simcoe Municipality	N/A	Recommended to be done with existing resources.

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Estimated Cost	Notes
	FM3	Implement and Fully Utilize Fleet Management Information System	NA	To be determined based on future direction of Shared Fleet Management Services; dependent on participating municipalities.

5.2 Summary of Benefits and Implications

The table below provides a summary view of *directional benefits estimates* for a subset of the proposed recommendations listed above. 'Benefits' in this context include both potential cost savings and cost avoidances. Cost savings are defined as tangible removal or reduction in costs (e.g., procuring a technology at a lower cost). Comparatively, cost avoidances are defined as costs that can be avoided and reallocated but not removed (e.g., reducing staff time by 10% by removing a specific activity or responsibility). Some of the recommendations below will include cost savings, cost avoidance or both. It is important to note that cost savings or cost avoidances have only been estimated for recommendations where a reasonable level of certainty exists around the potential savings/avoidance from an activity, and/or where an appropriate level of data and information is currently available. All estimated benefits below are *conservative in nature* and will may be larger once more enhanced due diligence is completed.

In the table below, the 'Estimated Benefits' column contains two unique labels:

Label	Description
"—"	• Applied to recommendations where benefits **could not be reasonably estimated**, due to the level of data and information is currently available or uncertainty around actual requirements.
"$"	• Applied to recommendations where benefits **have been estimated**, as there is a reasonable level of certainty around actual requirements, and/or an appropriate level of data and information is currently available.

Given the limited resources and capacity across the region, these recommendations will need to be sequenced appropriately, considering the estimated costs (above), benefits and exiting staff capacity constraints.

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Estimated Benefit	Notes
Human Resources/ Health and Safety	HR1	Shared Delivery Model for HR/H&S	—	
	HR2	Formalize Joint H&S Training	$5,000 over 3 Years	Estimated based on current 3-year total spend on **Corporate H&S only**, *not* including spend from Tiny Township. Estimates 10% price reductions on collaborative training. Estimates are **extremely conservative** and do not capture all H&S training that occurs and could be done in collaboration.
	HR3	Standardize HR Technology	—	
	HR4	Succession Planning	—	

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Estimated Benefit	Notes
	HR5	Employee Feedback Mechanisms	—	
Procurement	PR1	Shared Delivery Model for Procurement	**Cost Savings:** $1.1 – $2.2M over 3 years **Cost Avoidance:** N/A	Estimated based on current 3-year total spend on tenders, *not* **including spend from the Town of Midland**. Assumes 45% of all tenders are able to be purchased in collaboration under a shared model – assuming that shared procurements today do not represent a significant percentage of total procurement. Estimates 5-10% price reductions on collaborative purchases, in line with other public sector organizations who collaborate on procurements.
	PR2	Enhanced Group Purchasing	**Cost Savings:** $620,000 – $1.3M over 3 years	**Mutually exclusive from savings in PR1** – can do one or the other. Estimated based on current 3-year total spend on tenders, *not* **including spend from the Town of Midland**. Assumes 25% of all tenders are able to be purchased in collaboration via a working group. Estimates 5-10% price reductions on collaborative purchases, in line with other public sector organizations who collaborate on procurements.
	PR3	New Procurement Technology	—	
Comms., Marketing, and Tourism	CT1	Investigate Collaborative Communications	—	
	CT2	Review Structure for Communications, Culture, and Tourism Organization	—	

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Estimated Benefit	Notes
	CT3	Increase Attention to Communication and Visitor KPIs	—	
Information Technology	IT1	Develop an IT Strategy	—	
	IT2	Align Delivery Model for IT	**Cost Savings:** $85,400 – $170,800 over 3 years on IT Procurement (excluding MSA's) **Cost Savings:** 5-10% pricing reduction in future MSA's	Estimated based on current 3-year total spend on IT procurement. Cost savings on IT Procurement are not incremental & are captured in overall procurement savings (above). Pricing reduction in MSA's only applicable if outsourced support is maintained or increased as part of the new delivery model.
	IT3	Standardize Online Service Offerings	—	
	IT4	New IT Support Systems	—	
Legal Services	LS1	Shared/Delivery Model for Legal Services	**Cost Savings:** $27,700 – $55,400 over 3 years	Estimated based on current 3-year total spend on outsourced legal services, *not* **including spend from the Town of Midland.** Assumes 60% of all legal services are 'routine/common' and could be purchased in collaboration under a shared model. Estimates 5-10% price reductions on a collaborative purchase.
	LS2	Pool Resources for Outsourced Support	**Cost Savings:** $23,100 – $46,200 over 3 years	**Mutually exclusive from savings in LS1** – can do one or the other. Estimated based on current 3-year total spend on outsourced legal services, *not* **including spend from the Town of Midland.**

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Estimated Benefit	Notes
				Assumes 50% of all legal services are 'routine/common' and could be purchased in collaboration via a working group. Estimates 5-10% price reductions on a collaborative purchase.
Emergency Management	EM1	Consolidate Emergency Response Plan and Control Group	—	
	EM2	Increase Collaborative Training and Response Drills	—	
	EM3	Continue with Transition to IMS for Emergency Management for all North Simcoe Municipalities	—	
Fire & Emergency Services	FES1	Enhance Data Analysis and Annual Reporting	—	
	FES2	Identify Opportunities for Increased Coordination on Public Education Activities	—	
	FES3	Explore Potential for Greater Collaboration of Maintenance of Specialized Fire Services Equipment	—	
	FES4	Collaborate on Radio Enhancements	—	
	FES5	Ensure Establishing and Regulating Bylaws Accurately Reflect the Current Needs of Municipalities	—	
	FES6	Review Shared Fire Chief Funding Arrangement between Penetanguishene and Midland	—	
Land Use Planning	LUP1	Explore a Strategic and Policy Planner Resource	—	
	LUP2	Adopt KPIs and Outcome Measurements	—	
	LUP3	Standardize Planning Approach	—	
Building Services	BU1	Share Experiences with Technology	—	
	BU2	Review of Services Agreement and Resource Augmentation Opportunities	—	

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Estimated Benefit	Notes
	BU3	Review of User Fees to Match Services Provided	—	
	BU4	Reinforce Legal and Safety Messages to the Public	—	
Engineering Services	ES1	Develop a Common Vendor of Record/List of Pre-qualified Vendors for Engineering Services	**Cost Savings:** $28,000–$60,000 over 3 years	Estimated based on current 3-year total spend on outsourced engineering services, *not* **including spend from the Town of Midland.** Assumes/targets 25% of all engineering services could be purchased in collaboration via a working group. Estimates 5-10% price reductions on a collaborative purchase. *recent focus to in-source some engineering services by municipalities may reduce the total external vendor services, and savings.
	ES2	Enhance/Implement New Technology to Support Engineering Services	—	
Fleet Management	FM1	Develop a North Simcoe Fleet Management Resourcing Strategy	—	
	FM2	Implement a Formal Process for Reviewing Fleet Needs Across each North Simcoe Municipality	**Cost Savings:** $67,000–$135,000 over 3 years	Estimated based on current 3-year total spend on fleet procurements, *not* **including spend from the Town of Midland.** Assumes/targets 25% of all fleet procurements could be purchased in collaboration via a working group. Estimates 5-10% price reductions on a collaborative purchase.

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Estimated Benefit	Notes
	FM3	Implement and Fully Utilize Fleet Management Information System	—	

5.3 Prioritization Overview

While each recommendation above provides critical information to support the North Simcoe Municipalities as they consider implementation of these into operations, a clear understanding of how to prioritize recommendations and having a structured implementation plan will be critical. When developing implementation plans, leading practices will focus on identifying quick wins and longer-term, strategic opportunities. We have used the lenses of Ease of Implementation and Expected Benefits to prioritize recommendations.

The table below consolidates all of the recommendations from this report and provides the following information:

- Service Area;
- Unique Recommendation Identifier;
- Recommendation Title;
- Ease of Implementation Summary (Quick Hit Score); and,
- Expected Benefits Summary.

To better understand each category and its various scoring options, the following definitions have been provided:

SCORING DESIGNATORS		HIGHLY FAVORABLE, POSITIVE (H)	MEDIUM (M)	SOMEWHAT FAVORABLE (L)
Rating Criteria		2	1	0
Ease of Implementation	1. Ease to Address	Easy to address, relatively small process/procedural adjustments.	Moderate. Changes will require a small group of stakeholders.	Difficult. Changes will require organization-wide changes, and will impact external stakeholders Considerable planning required.
	2. Expected Timeline	Fast turnaround, can likely be completed within a single quarter.	Middle-range length of time, 2 - 4 quarters.	Longer-range recommendation, 1 year or more to complete.
	3. Implementation Cost/Investment	Low direct costs, can be handled in-house without need for third parties.	Moderate direct costs, potential opportunity/need to outsource.	High cost, high likelihood third party support will be required.
Expected Benefit	4. Improved Staff Efficiency	Staff time required to complete activities will be noticeably reduced.	Staff time to complete activities will be moderately reduced.	Staff time to complete activities will not be impacted.
	5. Improved Resident Experience	Residents will experience greater outcomes and improved value for money.	Residents may not notice changes to service experience, however there will be improved value for money.	Residents will not experience any improvements in service delivery and will not experience improved value for money.
	6. Expected Cost Savings	Recommendations are expected to drive substantial cost savings for the Municipalities.	Recommendations are expected to drive moderate, yet tangible cost savings for the Municipalities.	Recommendations will not result in any cost savings for the Municipalities.

It should be noted that the implementation of recommendations will be dependent on capacity from management and front-line staff. In some cases, upfront investment in additional staff and infrastructure will be required to implement recommendations, which will lead to long-term cost savings or service enhancements.

The table below summarizes ease of implementation and expected benefits for each recommendation based on the table above. The Priority column provides direction for implementation timing and sequencing. In general, the priority assessments reflect the following:

- o **Quick Win** – High Benefits, with relative ease of implementation. Effort to implement should begin as soon as possible.
- o **Strategic** – High benefits are expected, but implementation will be difficult. Consideration for implementation should begin soon, but will require detailed planning and may require a long implementation timeline.
- o **Long-Term** – While benefits are expected, they are less significant than other recommendations. Implementation will also be difficult. These recommendations should be considered at a later date, with initial effort focused on Quick-Wins and planning for Strategic recommendations.
- o **Lower Priority** – While these recommendations may not be difficult to implement, benefit is not anticipated to be as high, or immediate, as other recommendations. There are limited resources in the region. Unless Management feels implementation of these recommendations can be done without negatively impacting other activities (i.e. if it is possible to build on existing initiatives, etc.), implementation efforts should be prioritized on Quick-Wins and planning for Strategic recommendations first.

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Ease of Implementation	Expected Benefits	Priority
Human Resources/ Health and Safety	HR1	Shared Delivery Model for HR/H&S	Medium	Medium	Strategic
	HR2	Formalize Joint H&S Training	Medium	Medium	Strategic
	HR3	Standardize HR Technology	Medium	Medium	Long Term
	HR4	Succession Planning	Medium	Medium	Long Term
	HR5	Employee Feedback Mechanisms	High	Low	Lower Priority
Procurement	PR1	Shared Delivery Model for Procurement	Medium	High	Strategic
	PR2	Enhanced Group Purchasing	Medium	Medium	Quick Win
	PR3	New Procurement Technology	Medium	Medium	Strategic
Comms., Marketing, and Tourism	CT1	Investigate Collaborative Communications	Low	Medium	Strategic
	CT2	Review Structure for Communications, Culture, and Tourism Organization	Medium	Low	Lower Priority
	CT3	Increase Attention to Communication and Visitor KPIs	Medium	Low	Lower Priority
Information Technology	IT1	Develop an IT Strategy	Medium	Low	Strategic
	IT2	Align Delivery Model for IT	Medium	Medium	Strategic
	IT3	Standardize Online Service Offerings	Medium	High	Long Term
	IT4	New IT Support Systems	High	Low	Lower Priority
Legal Services	LS1	Shared/Delivery Model for Legal Services	Low	Low	Long Term
	LS2	Pool Resources for Outsourced Support	Medium	Low	Strategic
Emergency Management	EM1	Consolidate Emergency Response Plan and Control Group	Medium	Low	Strategic

Service Area	Unique ID	Proposed Recommendation	Ease of Implement ation	Expected Benefits	Priority
	EM2	Increase Collaborative Training and Response Drills	Medium	Low	Long Term
	EM3	Continue with Transition to IMS for Emergency Management for all North Simcoe Municipalities	Medium	Low	Quick Win
Fire & Emergency Services	FES1	Enhance Data Analysis and Annual Reporting	Medium	Low	Long Term
	FES2	Identify Opportunities for Increased Coordination on Public Education Activities	Medium	Medium	Lower Priority
	FES3	Explore Potential for Greater Collaboration of Maintenance of Specialized Fire Services Equipment	Medium	Medium	Quick Win
	FES4	Collaborate on Radio Enhancements	Low	Low	Long Term
	FES5	Ensure Establishing and Regulating Bylaws Accurately Reflect the Current Needs of Municipalities	Low	Low	Long Term
	FES5	Review Shared Fire Chief Funding Arrangement between Penetanguishene and Midland	High	Medium	Quick Win
Land Use Planning	LUP1	Explore a Strategic and Policy Planner Resource	Low	Medium	Strategic
	LUP2	Adopt KPIs and Outcome Measurements	Medium	Low	Long Term
	LUP3	Standardize Planning Approach	Low	Medium	Long Term
Building Services	BU1	Share Experiences with Technology	Medium	Medium	Quick Win
	BU2	Review of Services Agreement and Resource Augmentation Opportunities	Medium	Low	Lower Priority
	BU3	Review of User Fees to Match Services Provided	Low	Low	Long Term
	BU4	Reinforce Legal and Safety Messages to the Public	Medium	Medium	Quick Win
Engineering Services	ES1	Develop a Common Vendor of Record/List of Pre-qualified Vendors for Engineering Services	Medium	Medium	Long Term
	ES2	Enhance/Implement New Technology to Support Engineering Services	Low	Low	Long Term
Fleet Management	FM1	Develop a North Simcoe Fleet Management Resourcing Strategy	Low	Low	Long Term
	FM2	Implement a Formal Process for Reviewing Fleet Needs Across each North Simcoe Municipality	Low	Medium	Strategic
	FM3	Implement and Fully Utilize Fleet Management Information System	Low	Low	Long Term

5.4 Implementation Scatterplot and Gantt Chart

The scatterplot on the following page provides a graphic representation of the Ease of Implementation and the Expected Benefits for each recommendation. The placement of each recommendation on the scatterplot is based on an analysis of each recommendation across the following characteristics:
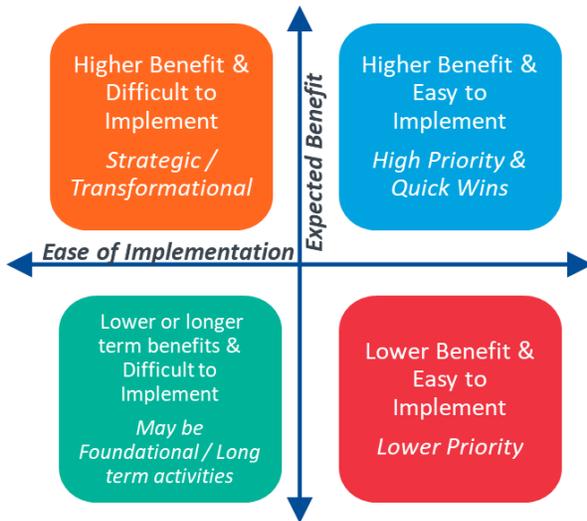
Prioritization Criteria

A. Expected Benefit

1. Improved Staff Efficiency
2. Improved Resident Experience
3. Expected Cost Savings

B. Ease of Implementation

4. Ease to Address
5. Expected Timeline
6. Implementation Cost

To support the North Simcoe Municipalities as they look to implement the recommendations, our team has developed a Gantt chart that provides some direction for recommendation phasing. The Gantt chart below looks to balance quick win opportunities with longer-term effort activities. Furthermore, we have attempted to balance the workload, to not overwhelm staff at any one point in time.

It is important to note that some activities will take an extended amount of time, as they may require greater amounts of research, planning, or development.

5.4.1 Implementation Scatter Plot and Gantt Chart – Corporate Services
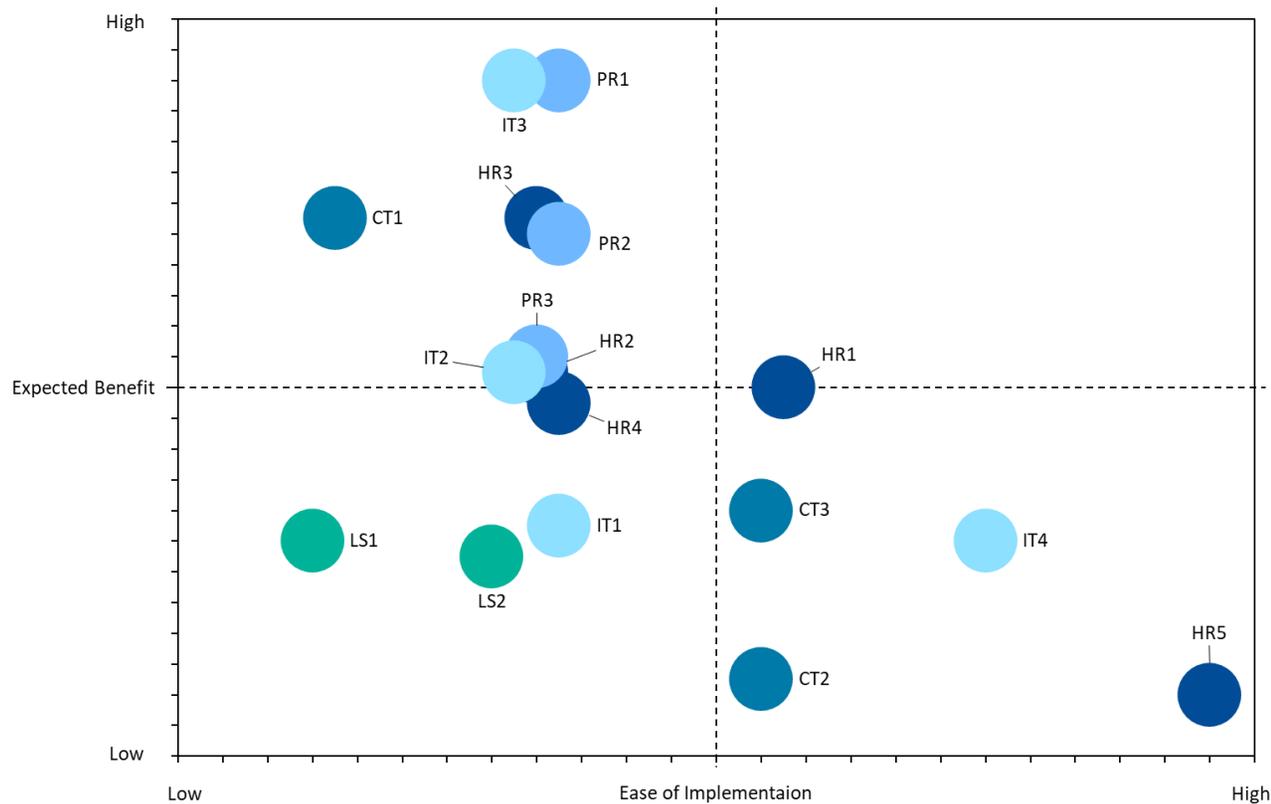
HR1	Shared Delivery Model for HR/H&S
HR2	Formalize Joint H&S Training
HR3	Standardize HR Technology
HR4	Succession Planning
HR5	Employee Feedback Mechanisms
PR1	Shared Delivery Model for Procurement
PR2	Enhanced Group Purchasing
PR3	New Procurement Technology
CT1	Investigate Collaborative Communications
CT2	Review Structure for Communications, Culture, and Tourism Organization
CT3	Increase Attention to Communication and Visitor KPIs
IT1	Develop and IT Strategy
IT2	Align Delivery Model for IT
IT3	Standardize Online Service Offerings
IT4	New IT Support Systems
LS1	Shared/Delivery Model for Legal Services
LS2	Pool Resources for Outsourced Support

| Corporate Services			2021				2022				2023				2024			
Profile Area	ID	Recommendation	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Human Resources/Health and Safety	HR1	Shared Delivery Model for HR/H&S					■	■	■	■								
	HR2	Formalize Joint H&S Training			■													
	HR3	Standardize HR Technology											■	■	■			
	HR4	Succession Planning						■	■									
	HR5	Employee Feedback Mechanisms		■														
Procurement	PR1	Shared Delivery Model for Procurement							■	■								
	PR2	Enhanced Group Purchasing		■	■													
	PR3	New Procurement Technology												■	■	■		
Communications, Marketing, and Tourism	CT1	Investigate Collaborative Communications			■	■												
	CT2	Review Structure for Communications, Culture, and Tourism Organization					■	■										
	CT3	Increase Attention to Communication and Visitor KPIs							■	■	■							
Information Technology	IT1	Develop an IT Strategy							■	■	■							
	IT2	Align Delivery Model for IT										■	■	■				
	IT3	Standardize Online Service Offerings													■	■	■	
	IT4	New IT Support Systems													■	■		
Legal Services	LS1	Shared/Delivery Model for Legal Services									■	■	■					
	LS2	Pool Resources for Outsourced Support				■												

5.4.2 Implementation Scatter Plot and Gantt Chart– Protective and Development Services
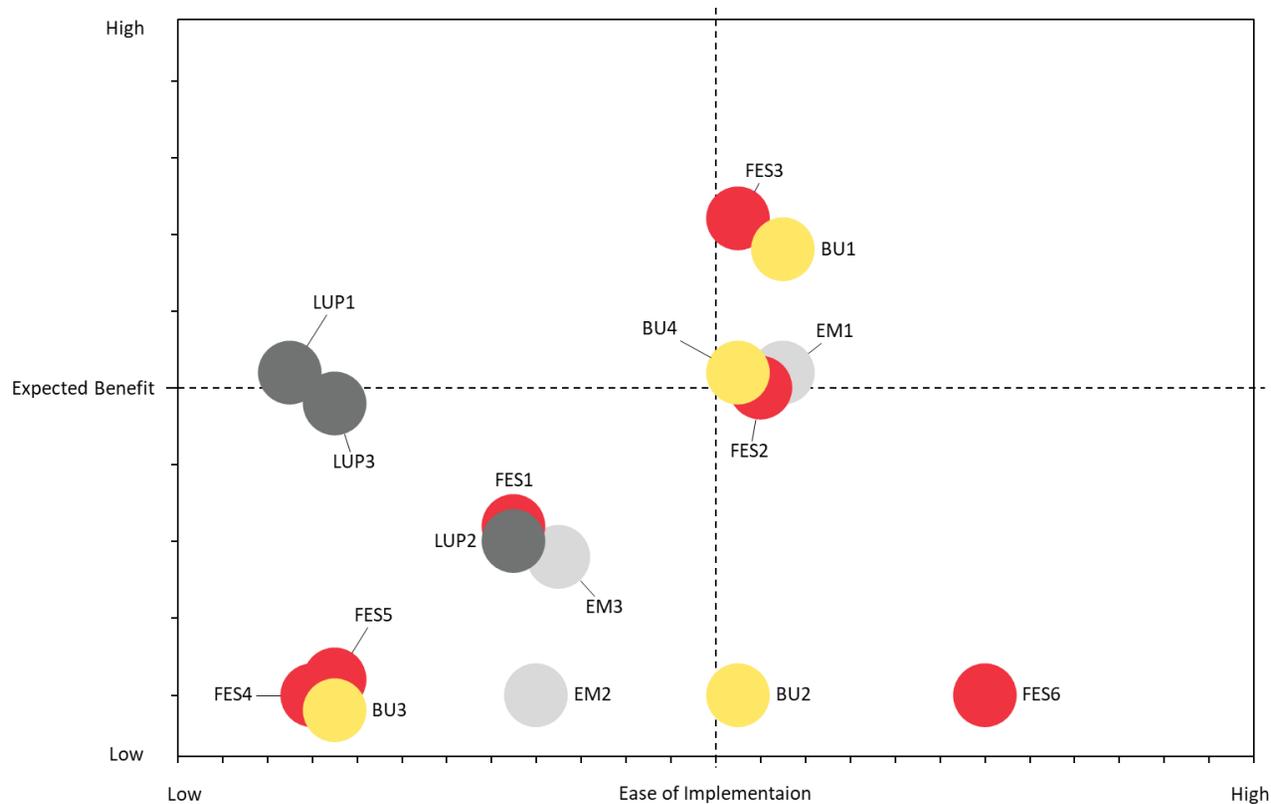
EM1	Consolidate Emergency Response Plan and Control Group
EM2	Increase Collaborative Training and Response Drills
EM3	Continue with Transition to IMS for Emergency Management for all North Simcoe Municipalities
FES1	Enhance Data Analysis and Annual Reporting
FES2	Identify Opportunities for Increased Coordination on Public Education Activities
FES3	Explore Potential for Greater Collaboration of Maintenance of Specialized Fire Services Equipment
FES4	Collaborate on Radio Enhancements
FES5	Ensure Establishing and Regulating Bylaws Accurately Reflect the Current Needs of Municipalities
FES6	Review Shared Fire Chief Funding Arrangement between Penetanguishene and Midland
LUP1	Explore a Strategic and Policy Planner Resource
LUP2	Adopt KPIs and Outcome Measurements
LUP3	Standardize Planning Approach
BU1	Share Experiences with Technology
BU2	Review of Services Agreement and Resource Augmentation Opportunities
BU3	Review of User Fees to Match Services Provided
BU4	Reinforce Legal and Safety Messages to the Public

Protective and Development Services:			2021				2022				2023				2024			
Profile Area	ID	Recommendation	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Emergency Management	EM1	Consolidate Emergency Response Plan and Control Group				■	■											
	EM2	Increase Collaborative Training and Response Drills									■	■						
	EM3	Continue with Transition to IMS for Emergency Management for all North Simcoe Municipalities		■	■													
Fire and Emergency Services	FES1	Enhance Data Analysis and Annual Reporting							■	■								
	FES2	Identify Opportunities for Increased Coordination on Public Education Activities		■	■													
	FES3	Explore Potential for Greater Collaboration of Maintenance of Specialized Fire Services Equipment		■	■	■												
	FES4	Collaborate on Radio Enhancements					■	■										
	FES5	Ensure Establishing and Regulating Bylaws Accurately Reflect the Current Needs of Municipalities					■											
	FES6	Review Shared Fire Chief Funding Arrangement between Penetanguishene and Midland					■											
Land Use Planning	LUP1	Explore a Strategic and Policy Planner Resource				■	■											
	LUP2	Adopt KPIs and Outcome Measurements													■	■		
	LUP3	Standardize Planning Approach										■	■					
Building Services	BU1	Share Experiences with Technology	■	■														
	BU2	Review of Services Agreement and Resource Augmentation Opportunities			■	■												
	BU3	Review of User Fees to Match Services Provided						■	■									
	BU4	Reinforce Legal and Safety Messages to the Public		■	■													

5.4.3   Implementation Scatter Plot and Gantt Chart– Operational Services
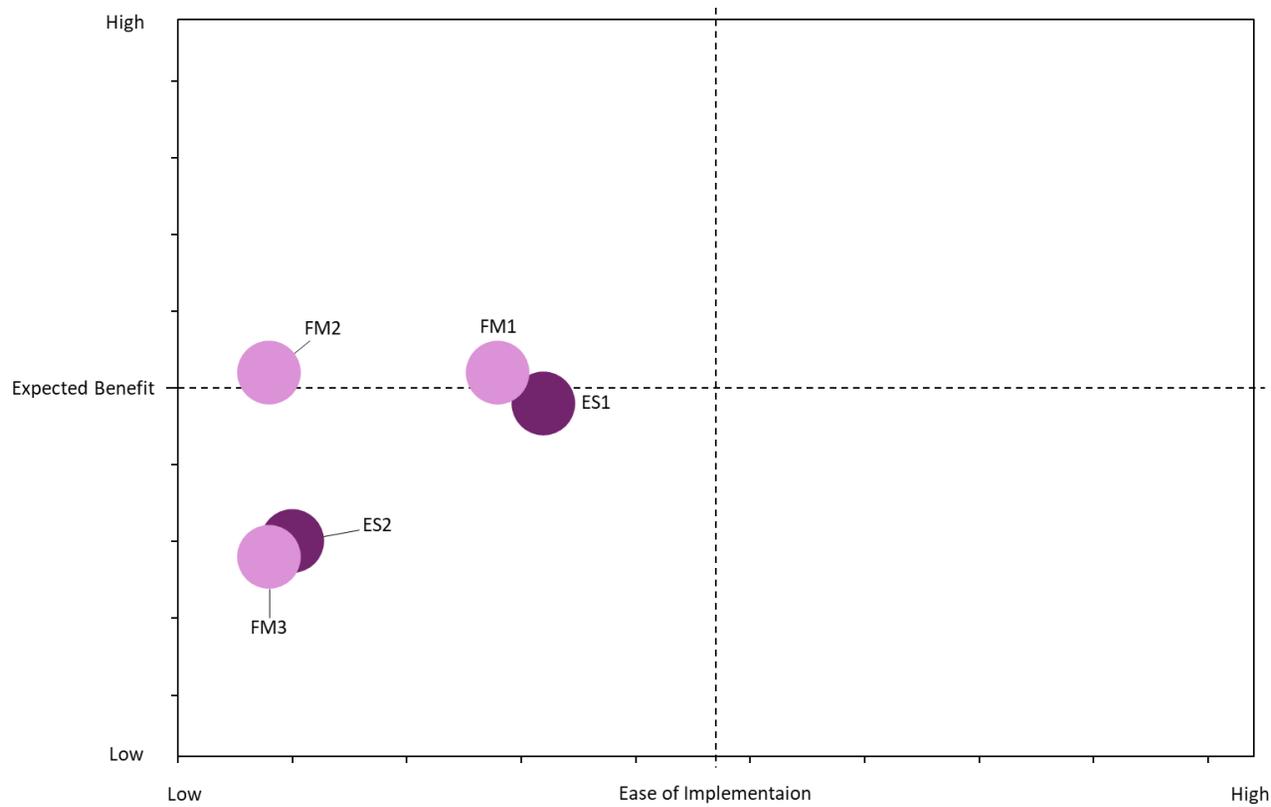
|	
ES1	Develop a Common Vendor of Record/List of Pre-qualified Vendors for Engineering Services
ES2	Enhance/Implement New Technology to Support Engineering Services
FM1	Develop a North Simcoe Fleet Management Resourcing Strategy
FM2	Implement a Formal Process for Reviewing Fleet Needs Across each North Simcoe Municipality
FM3	Implement and Fully Utilize Fleet Management Information System

Operational Services			2021				2022				2023				2024			
Profile Area	ID	Recommendation	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Engineering Services	ES1	Develop a Common Vendor of Record/List of Pre-qualified Vendors for Engineering Services		█														
	ES2	Enhance/Implement New Technology to Support Engineering Services													█	█	█	
Fleet Management	FM1	Develop a North Simcoe Fleet Management Resourcing Strategy						█	█									
	FM2	Implement a Formal Process for Reviewing Fleet Needs Across each North Simcoe Municipality				█												
	FM3	Implement and Fully Utilize Fleet Management Information System												█	█			

6.0 Appendix

6.1 Current State Report

6.1.1 Summary of Key Themes

1. **Willingness to Collaborate and Consistent Commitment to Service Excellence** – During consultations, stakeholders responsible for the delivery of services included in the review recognized the need to ensure that services are delivered in an efficient and effective way. This included an openness to explore opportunities to collaborate with peer municipalities to bring better outcomes or value to the residents of North Simcoe. Across the municipalities, there is a willingness to 'put any idea on the table' for review.

2. **Lean Staffing Levels with Some Staff Wearing Multiple Hats** – Staff resource constraints were consistently referenced as a limitation to service delivery across the North Simcoe municipalities. Staff often had responsibilities that spanned multiple services/functions with many corporate services decentralized. In some cases, this has also resulted in the duplication of services across multiple departments within a Municipality without clear centralization of service expertise.

3. **Limited Collection of Metrics or Data** – Across the North Simcoe Municipalities there is a clear opportunity to improve the level of data collection, and its use in decision making moving forward. Limited examples of KPIs or performance data were available, and at this time, it is not clear that data is used to drive decision making or promote cultures of continuous improvement across the municipalities.

4. **Municipalities are Independently Procuring Similar Services with Limited Coordination** – Municipalities engage third-party vendors to support the delivery of services – both internally, and to the community. In many cases this is a more effective delivery method than maintaining costly in-house expertise for low-volume activities. However, across the North Simcoe municipalities, there is duplication in the procurement of vendors (i.e., related to legal, IT, engineering, fleet management). There is likely an opportunity to consolidate vendor contracts/arrangements to reduce procurement activities and potentially attract additional vendors and more competitive pricing to the region.

5. **Unique Municipal Identities and some Rural / Urban Differences** – Throughout the current state phase of the Service Delivery Review, it is clear that there is a desire for each municipality to maintain its unique identify and tailor services to its specific communities. This has included some differences in service priorities that have emerged between the more urban and more rural communities (i.e., differences in geography/size and infrastructure needs; land use planning and tourism priorities; fire and emergency management coverage areas, etc.). While differences in priorities, and a desire to maintain independence have been identified, they have not been seen as factors preventing more collaboration across the region – rather, it will be important to develop future state solutions that can accommodate the unique identities of each municipality.

6.1.2 Public Engagement – Survey Findings

As part of the Current State activities, a public survey was developed and deployed by the Optimus SBR team, with support from the MPT. The survey was accessible online as well through hard copies made available at the Municipal Offices. The survey was open from December 8, 2020, to January 4, 2021. Links to the survey were posted on the websites of each municipality, and notice was also provided through media releases and during the public information session held with each municipality. The survey received 273 responses, all of which were provided online. Responses were received from each community:
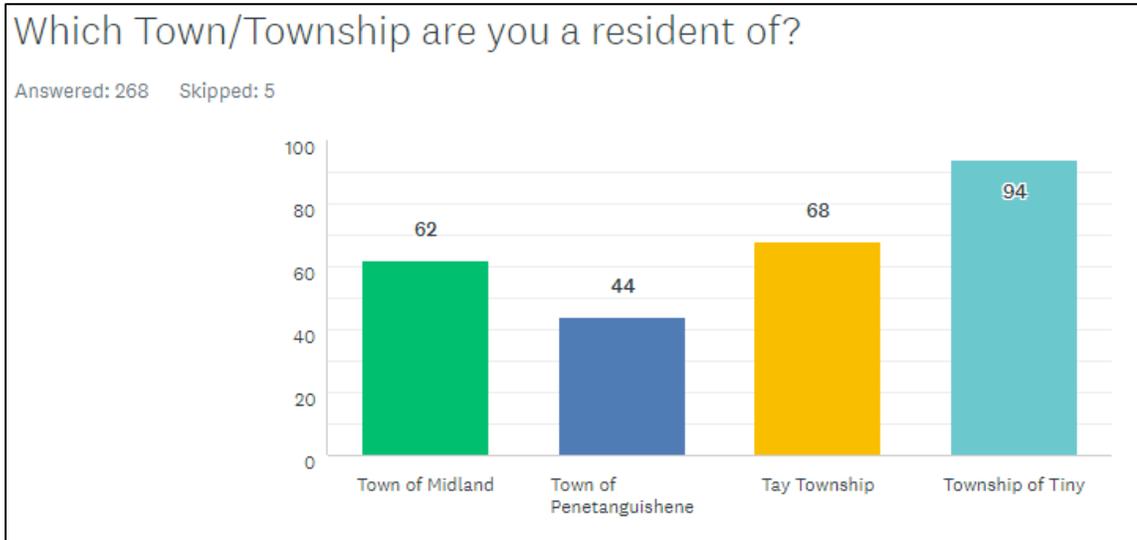
Permanent residents represented 93% of responses, with seasonal residents responsible for the remaining 7% (18 responses). Of the 18 seasonal responses, 17 of the seasonal responses were from Tiny (25% of responses from that municipality). Across the municipalities, the overwhelming majority of respondents (95%) indicated that they own property in their municipality. No respondent identified as a business.

Survey responses are generally reflective of an older population. Across the municipalities, over half of respondents were over the age of 54. Less than 30% of the responses to the survey were from individuals 44 or under. 56% and 61% of respondents from Tay and Tiny were over the age of 54. For both Midland and Penetanguishene, there was an even 50% split among respondents 18-54 and 55-65+.

Age Range	Tay Township	Town of Midland	Town of Penetanguishene	Township of Tiny
18-24	0%	0%	5%	0%
25-34	10%	19%	18%	4%
35-44	19%	19%	18%	14%
45-54	13%	11%	9%	18%
55-64	28%	19%	27%	27%
65+	28%	31%	23%	34%
No answer	1%	0%	0%	3%

Approximately 40% of respondents to the survey have been residents of their municipality for over 20 years (range – 39% Tiny to 47% Midland). One-quarter of respondents have been residents for 5 or less years, with Penetanguishene having the highest percentage of respondents indicating 5 or less years of residency.

Across the region, 43% of respondents indicated the value of services you received for tax dollars that property owners pay as Excellent or Good. However, there is some variation in responses at a municipal level:

Thinking broadly about the services offered by the Municipality, how would you rate the value of services you receive for the tax dollars that property owners pay?
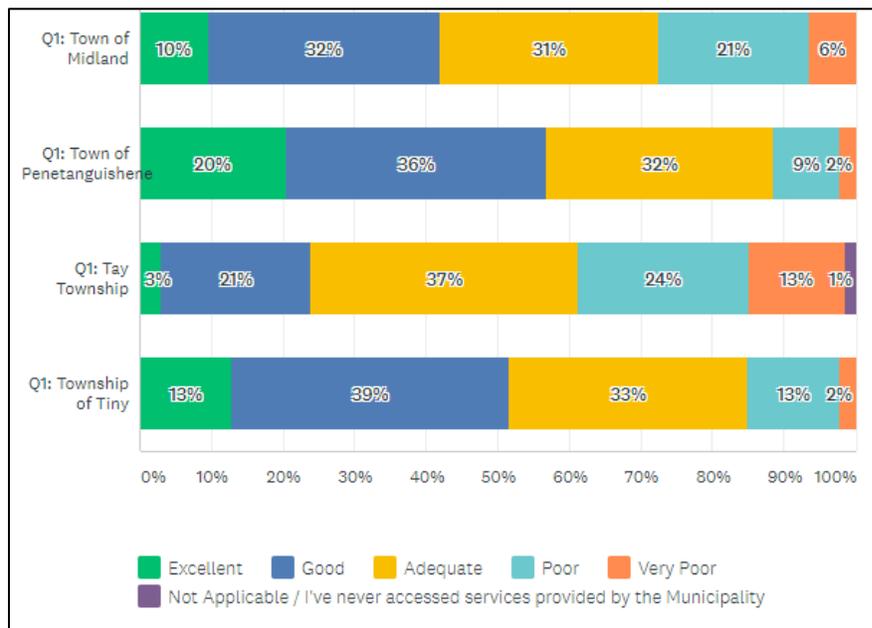
Respondents were asked to rank the importance of service delivery characteristics. Across the four Municipalities, there was alignment on the top four characteristics, which were:

1. Customer focused/customer service;
2. Accountability;
3. Transparency; and,
4. Streamlined and efficient.

This order was consistent in each municipality except Midland, which had streamlined and efficient as the top response, followed by customer focused/customer service, transparency, and accessibility. The importance of these attributes was also identified in response to questions asking for potential areas of improvement in service delivery.

The remaining characteristics included: easy to access, speed, accessibility, and technology driven, in that order. There was a clear divide between the top four and bottom four characteristics. However, it is important to note that easy to access, speed, accessibility and technology are important components of customer focused delivery.

With respect to perceptions on current service delivery themes that were consistent across the municipalities included:

- Residents perceptions, based on interactions with staff, that staff are overburdened and overloaded with tasks;
- Generally positive assessments of customer service interactions, although there are a number of comments suggesting that email or phone message responses can be slow. Some comments also suggested that it is difficult to reach the 'right person' when calling into a municipality (i.e., automated information directories); and,
- A number of comments indicated that experiences interacting with the municipality vary significantly by department.

Respondents were asked to identify what they would like their municipality to focus on in the future to improve service delivery. Responses were permitted in free-text format, and themes across the municipalities included:

Respondent comments for areas to improve the future delivery of services, by Municipality			
Midland	**Penetanguishene**	**Tay**	**Tiny**
• Customer Service • Municipal office hours • Website and online services • Speed of service delivery	• Customer Service • Speed of service delivery • Communication to residents	• Customer Service • Communication to residents • Demonstrate accountability for tax dollars • Website and online services	• Customer Service • Speed of service delivery • Website and online services •

Respondents were asked questions regarding the community focused services in-scope for the Service Delivery Review.

Fire and Emergency Services

Respondents across the Municipalities expressed a high level of satisfaction with Fire and Emergency Services. In free-text responses inviting additional comments, there were multiple comments suggesting the importance of cross-municipal collaboration to facilitate cost controls.

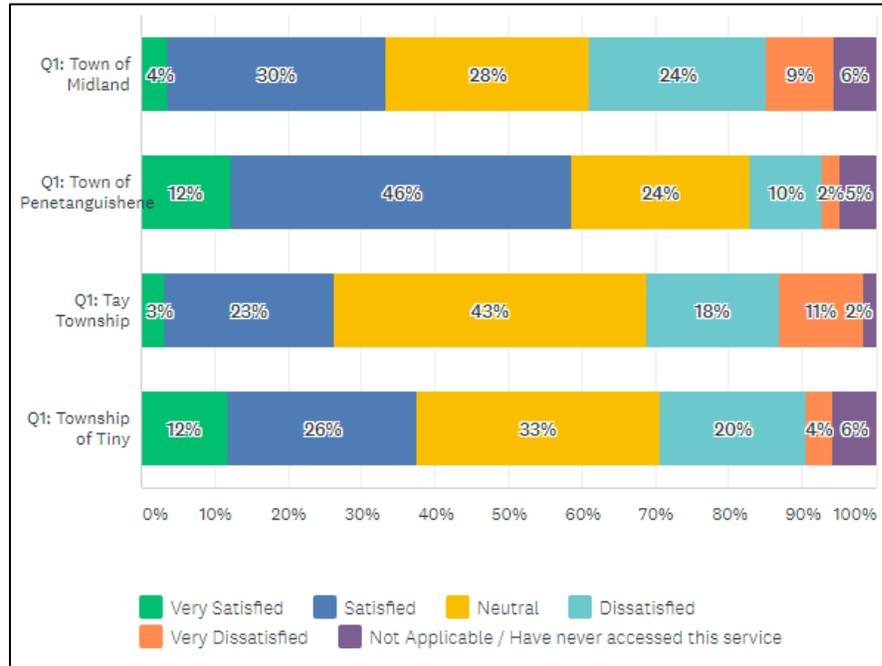**What is your level of satisfaction with the Fire & Emergency Services you receive in the Municipality?**

Fire and Emergency Services – Themes from Free-Text Responses			
Midland	**Penetanguishene**	**Tay**	**Tiny**
• Need to be mindful of costs for the service • Consider a non-emergency number such as 311	• Explore opportunities to work together across municipal boundaries • Very professional staff	• Need to be mindful of costs for the service • Explore opportunities to work together across municipal boundaries	• Very professional staff with good community presence

Communication Services

Satisfaction with communication services varied across North Simcoe. Generally, opportunities for improvement focused on more regular updates on events and municipal decisions and ensuring it is easy to access or find information. A service similar to TinyConnect may be beneficial in addressing the desire for residents to receive more communication directly from their municipality.

What is your level of satisfaction with the Communication services provided by the Municipality?

Communication Services – Themes from Free-Text Responses			
Midland	**Penetanguishene**	**Tay**	**Tiny**
• Continue to grow social media profile and online communication – including Engaging Midland. • Expand ability to 'alert' residents of special meetings, decisions, construction, etc. • Consider regular Town/Mayor newsletter.	• Ensure communication mixes online/ technology driven methods with traditional communication methods.	• Improve website layout/ability to find information. • More regular and frequent updates.	• TinyConnect is a good tool to keep informed about events and municipal updates • Consider more regular newsletter-style updates. • Virtual engagement /council meetings reduce barriers to participation for community members.

Marketing and Tourism

When reviewing the free-text responses related to Marketing and Tourism (approximately 50 across the municipalities), there are two predominate, and opposing views. Not surprisingly, the comments are split between those respondents who would like to see more promotion of tourism to the benefit of local businesses, suppliers, and employers. These individuals would like to see enhanced online marketing and local bylaws/infrastructure that encourage visitors. Others felt that tourism marketing should be minimized as the region is already 'busy with seasonal visitors'. While reviewing comments, it is also not clear that residents understand the relationship between the municipalities and organizations such as the North Simcoe Economic Development Corporation and their role of working with/on behalf of the municipalities.

**What is your level of satisfaction with the Marketing and Tourism services provided by the Municipality?**
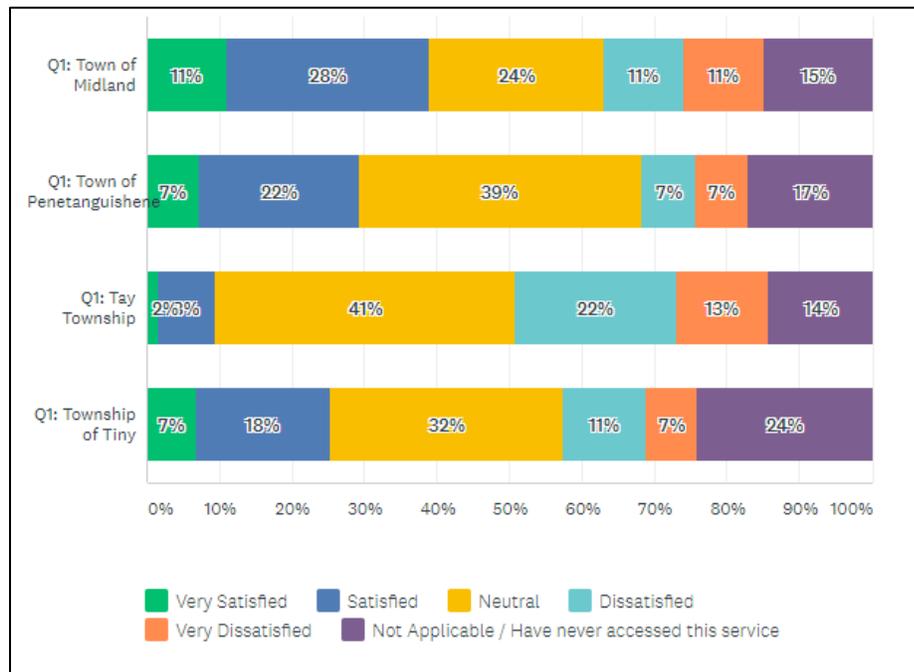
Marketing and Tourism Services – Themes from Free-Text Responses			
Midland	**Penetanguishene**	**Tay**	**Tiny**
• Increase social media presence for tourism marketing • Consider impact of tourism on the ability of residents to access services across the municipality	• Work together (with the municipality and with other municipalities) to promote larger events with greater visibility to benefit local suppliers, businesses, employers	• Focus on promoting the rural/natural attractions (trails, etc.) of Tay. • Promoting Tay as a tourist destination must be met with investments in this infrastructure – parks, trails, etc. • AirBnB type accommodations should be regulated to mitigate disruption on community	• Parking regulations actively discourage tourist activity • Promoting Tiny as a tourist destination must be met with investments in this infrastructure – parks, trails, etc. • Mixed views on whether the Township should actively market itself as a tourist destination

Emergency Management

Responses related to Emergency Management generally indicated a lack of detailed familiarity with the service in general, but a level of comfort in knowing it is available/provided.

What is your level of satisfaction with the Emergency Management Services in the Municipality?
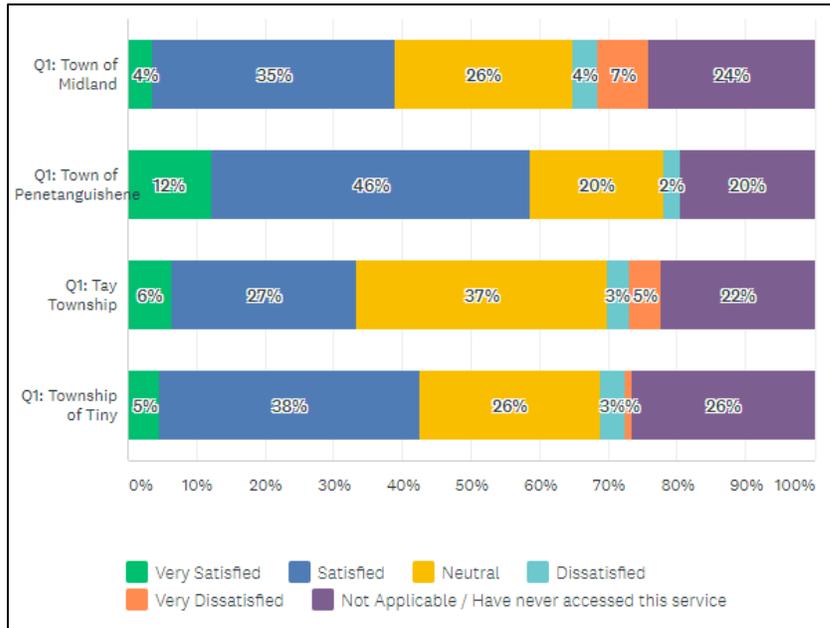

Only a small number of respondents from across North Simcoe provided free-text responses related to Emergency Management. Comments that were provided suggested that the municipalities:

- Work together to deliver this service so that staff can dedicate the appropriate time to the service; and,
- Work to better inform residents about this service and the work that is done to prepare for potential emergencies (i.e., enhance the accountability/transparency).

Building Services

Nearly a quarter of all respondents indicated that they have never accessed their Municipality's Building Services, with a further 30 indicating a neutral view of building services. Of the remaining responses, more respondents indicated Very Satisfied or Satisfied (over Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied) in Penetanguishene and Tay, with the opposite being the case for Midland and Tiny.

What is your level of satisfaction with the Building services in the Municipality?
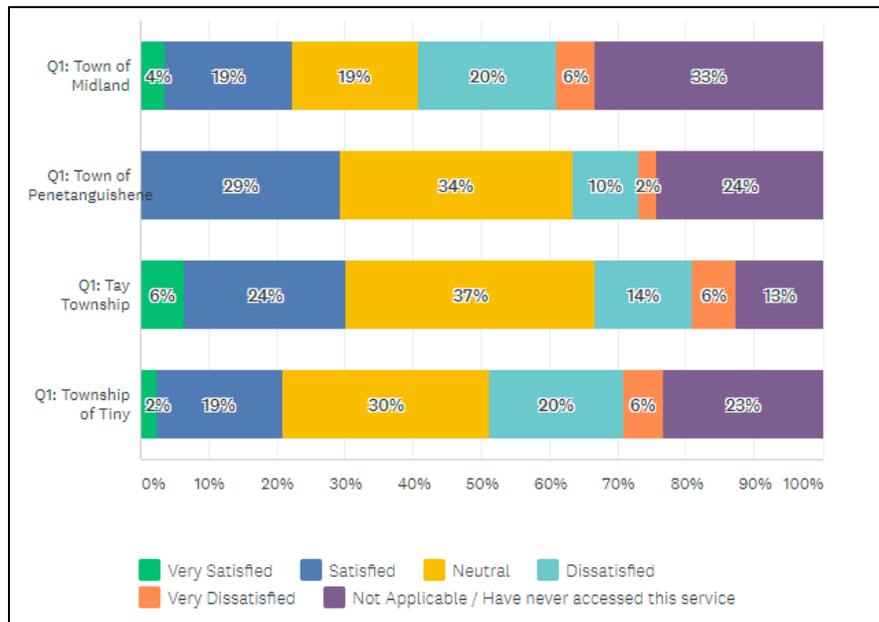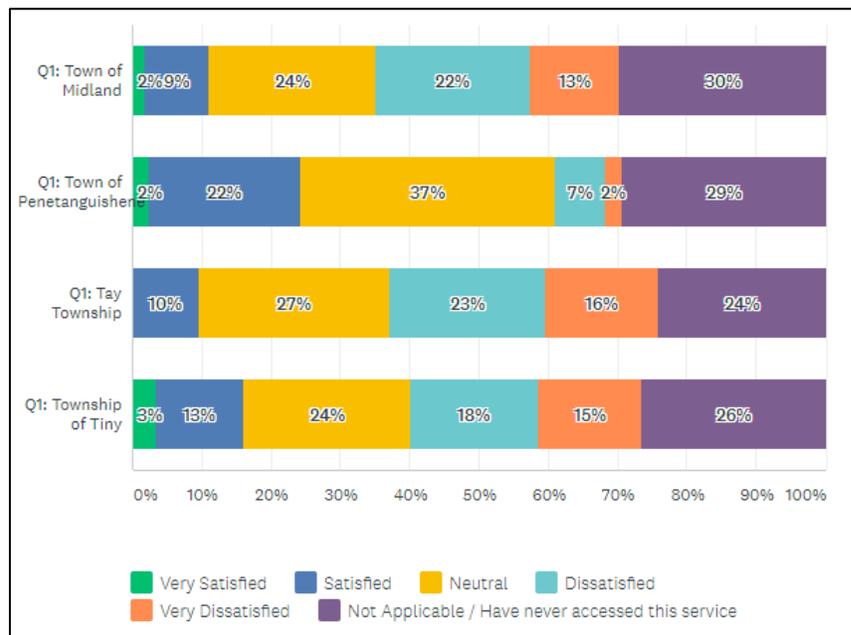

Free-text comments in response to Building Services vary between positive experiences and opportunities for improvement – frequently on the same topic. This may suggest some inconsistencies in the experiences of residents in accessing Building Services, such as obtaining a permit for renovations. Across the municipalities, aspects of this service that respondents valued included:

- Prompt, clear, and easy to understand responses on project inquiries or permit applications/questions;
- Setting and following through on timelines to provide response;
- Maintaining inspection schedules;
- Enforcement of permits on new builds and renovations;
- Affordable costs for permits; and,
- Online/virtual submission of documentation.

Land Use Planning

Similar to Building Services, a large number of respondents indicated that they have never accessed Land Use Planning. Many of the comments received related to policies respondents would like to see promoted in their municipality. There were, however, a collection of comments that did indicate a preference for more communication on land use decisions as they relate to/align with the Official Plan of the relevant municipality. This relates to comments provided on Communication Services, where respondents indicated a desire to receive more frequent updates on municipal decisions.

What is your level of satisfaction with the Land Use Planning services in the Municipality?

Land Use Planning – Themes from Free-Text Responses			
Midland	**Penetanguishene**	**Tay**	**Tiny**
• Promote more development of green space, trails, and parks • Promote the development of more affordable housing	• Improve communication/ updates on decisions • Promote the development of affordable rental units (hotel)	• Promote more development of green space, waterfront access, trails, and parks	• Promote more public access to waterfront, and more accurate signage of public access • Increase communication to residents with respect to how the Official Plan is being implemented/ followed for land use decisions

Engineering Services

Responses related to Engineering Services reflect the limited direct interaction residents may have with this service, but the experiences they have with public works more broadly. Nearly 60% of respondents indicated a neutral opinion, or did not respond, to the Engineering Services question. The small (approximately 20) number of free-text comments received were related to a desire for unspecific road improvements (lane widening, pothole repairs, flooding mitigation, grading, etc.). With respect to the broader delivery of Engineering Services, based on the comments provided, there may be opportunities to improve the communication of projects and priorities to residents.

6.1.3 Councillor Engagement – Survey Findings

Feedback from thirteen Councillors was provided through an on-line survey, written comments, and telephone interviews as requested between late January to early February 2021.

Unlike the Public Survey, all responses were open-ended in nature to allow for free-ranging comment from the Councillors, what were the main themes from their constituents, and the Councillors' version of success for this engagement.

Q) In your opinion, what do you see as the top priorities of this Service Delivery review that we should consider during this review?

A majority of Councillors noted similar comments regarding the sharing and/or combining of services to improve efficiencies. There were some specific comments to the in-scope services such as fire, procurement and legal, while others more general, or noted some services that were out of scope for this review (i.e., Roads, Water, Library services).

Q) Are there key themes you hear from residents concerning how well the externally focused Protective/Development service (i.e., Building Services, Land Use Services, Fire and Emergency Services) are working?

The reduction of red tape and eliminating process delays were reported in multiple surveys, with more wide-ranging service agreements across the municipalities and Simcoe County mentioned. Service and follow-ups were generally positive. Fire and Emergency services were often said to be working well.

Strengths:

- Positive customer service;
- Timely turnaround time; and,
- Continue to streamline processes.

Priorities for Improvement:

- Be helpful rather than prohibitive (Planning and Building)
- Turnaround time for Planning decisions
- Attention to Bylaw enforcement (and not necessarily regarding Planning/Building)
- Shared resources between municipalities where necessary.

Q) Based on your experience and observations interacting with the Municipality staff and leadership, what are the common themes for internal Corporate services (i.e., Human Resources/Health & Safety, Procurement, Information Technology, Communications/Marketing/Tourism Services, and Legal Services) or Operations services (Engineering Services, Fleet Services)?

Responses in this section for Corporate services were highly varied. Requirements for improved technology was a consistent mention, with communications noted both positively and as a "work in progress".

Strengths:

- Communications and information sharing;
- Cultural Alliance, Tourism;
- Dedicated and hardworking staff that enjoy their work and helping ratepayers; and,
- Continual improvement.

Priorities for Improvement or Review:

- Communications and feedback loops;
- Automation and paperless options;
- Customer Service in operational services with improved means to follow-up; and,
- Library Services.

Q) From your perspective, what does success look like at the end of this engagement, for example more collaboration, reducing cost of services, improving efficiencies of processes, etc.?

For this question we received the most consistent responses from a majority of the Councillors that all three examples listed were the primary qualifiers for success in this engagement. Collaboration where it makes sense and reducing or holding costs of services through improved efficiencies. Similar comments describing that the common goal for the municipalities is to understand the services that residents in each municipality can identify for the whole area instead of four independently delivered services.

Current State Findings

Section 1 – Corporate Services

In-Scope Services Reviewed in this Section:

1. Human Resources/Health & Safety

2. Procurement

3. Communications, Marketing & Tourism

4. Information Technology

5. Legal Services

6.1.4 Current State Findings

6.1.4.1 Human Resources (HR)/Health and Safety (H&S)

6.1.4.1.1 Objectives of the Review

HR is tasked with managing a wide variety of responsibilities, including compensation, benefits, recruitment, dismissals, keeping up to date with any laws that may affect the Municipality and its employees, such as organizational health and safety. HR/H&S was selected for review by the MPT with the following objectives in mind:

Objectives of the Service Review	• Identify shared service delivery models to improve service outcomes including Health and Safety • Identify opportunities to mitigate costs through shared services • Explore opportunities to formalize knowledge sharing/ best practices
Framework Focus Areas	• Governance • Resources • Process • Technology
Reasons for Selecting Services	• Potential opportunity to improve capacity through shared service • Limited sharing of best practices / specialized knowledge
Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Assessment	• Identify existing HR services (including Health and Safety) that each Municipality currently operates independently or provides via contract services • Understand existing shared services arrangements (formal or informal), policy agreements, processes, etc.

6.1.4.1.2 Summary of Findings

Strengths

o **Current Resources** – current HR/H&S resources across the Municipalities of North Simcoe are knowledgeable and are generally successful in managing the function.

o **Policies and Procedures** – broadly, all required HR and H&S policies exist and are documented across the four Municipalities of North Simcoe.

o **Cross-Municipality Relationships** – the Municipalities of North Simcoe, and others in the region, have a strong working relationship on matters of HR and H&S.

o **Health & Safety Training** – all the Municipalities offer training and upskilling opportunities to staff, either through in-house programs or outsourced third-party specialists.

Gaps

o **Use of Technology** – limited use of modern technologies or systems, and over-reliance on paper-based processes and spread sheets.

o **Resource Constraints** – current resources are constrained and have little to no excess capacity.

o **Reactive Resource Roles** – existing resources are primarily tasked to manage reactive and transactional based activities and issues, rarely having the requisite time to take on more strategic/proactive activities.

o **Dated Policies and Procedures –** some of the existing policies and procedures documented today may be outdated and require a refresh.

o **Recruitment Function** – challenges in recruiting in large annual volumes or recruiting specific roles and or competencies.

o **Performance Measurement** – KPI's are not consistently used or measured across all the Municipalities of North Simcoe.

o **Critical Role/Risk Management** – many Municipal staff are critical to the operations of the Municipality as they perform a wide variety of responsibilities within their roles, increasing the level of risk to the organization if those critical staff members are no longer able to perform their job duties.

o **Employee Feedback –** Limited opportunities for staff to provide, or for the Municipality to collect, relevant and important input or feedback.
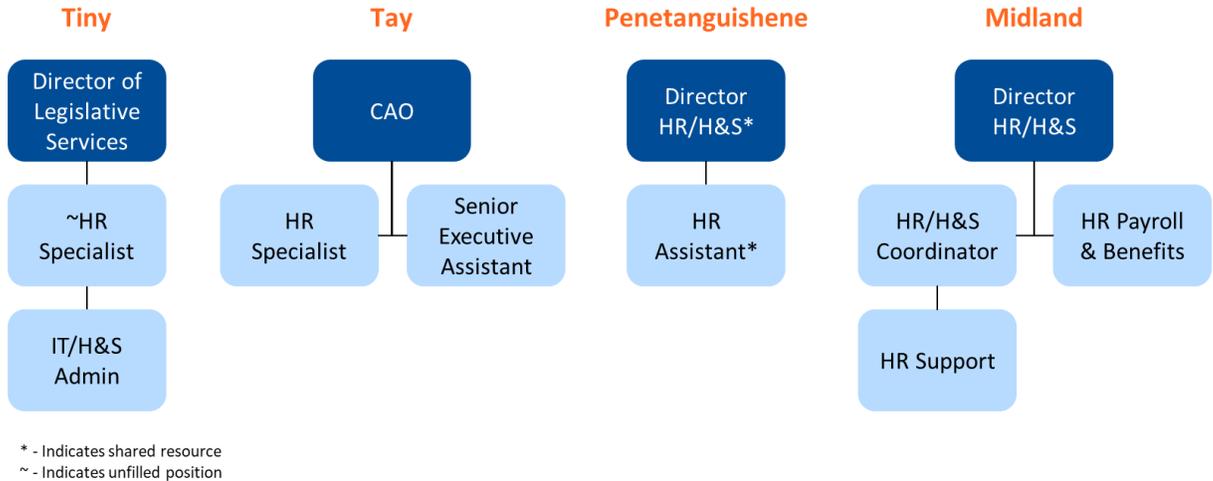
Preliminary Opportunities

o **Shared Delivery Model for HR and H&S** – explore the feasibility of a new shared delivery model for HR and H&S between the Townships of Tay and Tiny.

o **Standardize HR Technology** – pool resources and collaborate to obtain and implement a common HR software solution.

o **Combine H&S Training –** explore the potential of establishing a formal North Simcoe H&S training program combining existing resources and programs available today.

o **Define a Common Approach to Succession Planning** – explore the development of a common regional approach and/or process for succession planning that can be adopted by each Municipality.

o **Establish Formal Employee Feedback Mechanism –** explore the establishment of a formal 'pulse survey' issued to staff annually, providing an opportunity for staff to offer their feedback and for the Municipality to uncover insights into the 'pulse' of the organization.

o **Performance Measurement** – develop a preliminary package of standardized KPIs and targets to increase insight and better track activities and performance levels.

6.1.4.1.3 Service Profile

Governance

Figure 2: HR/H&S Governance Structures

Tiny
- Director of Legislative Services
  - ~HR Specialist
    - IT/H&S Admin

Tay
- CAO
  - HR Specialist
  - Senior Executive Assistant

Penetanguishene
- Director HR/H&S*
  - HR Assistant*

Midland
- Director HR/H&S
  - HR/H&S Coordinator
    - HR Support
  - HR Payroll & Benefits

* - Indicates shared resource
~ - Indicates unfilled position

As seen above, the four Municipalities of North Simcoe organize and staff HR and H&S functions in a fairly similar manner, with some variance in the level of resources dedicated to the function. Current structures across the four Municipalities are clear and enable effective decision making, at the right level of decision maker.

Beyond organizational structures, across the Municipalities of North Simcoe, the HR/H&S roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities are broad and all-encompassing but are generally clear and logical. The core roles and responsibilities of staff within the respective HR/H&S areas include, but are not limited to employee accessibility, performance/role evaluations, employee training and certification, staff recruitment, policy enforcement and general administration. Some notable differences in the scope of HR/H&S roles across the Municipalities include the existence of unionized staff in the Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene, which is not the case in the Townships of Tiny and Tay. In addition, in the Town of Midland, where Payroll and Benefits management falls under the HR/H&S functions as opposed to Finance.

Service Level

During the review, it was identified that some KPIs and tracking metrics specific to HR and H&S are tracked across specific Municipalities, namely the Town of Midland which tracks metrics on recruitment length, payroll errors, number of properties claims and others. However, consistent tracking was not found to occur across all Municipalities and no metrics associated with the number or frequency of employee training initiatives, audits and inspections or corrective actions, etc., were identified.

Resources

The number and roles of resources dedicated to the HR/H&S function across the Municipalities are outlined below:

Municipality	Number of Resources	Resource Descriptions
Town of Midland	• 3.75 FTE	• Director (1) • H&S Coordinator (1) • HR Payroll and Benefits (1) • HR Support (Contract – 0.75)
Town of Penetanguishene	• 1 FTE	• Director (Part-Time – 0.5) • HR Coordinator (Part-Time – 0.5) o *Note: resources are shared with the Township of Georgian Bay*
Tay Township	• 1.5 FTE	• HR Specialist (1) • Senior EA (Part-Time – 0.5)
Tiny Township	• 1.75 FTE	• Director of Legislative Services (Part-Time – 0.25) • HR Specialist (1) o *Note: role currently vacant* • H&S Administrator (Part-Time - 0.5)

As seen above, the level of dedicated human resources to support HR/H&S functions varies by Municipality, with the Town of Midland having the greatest number of resources dedicated to the function and the Town of Penetanguishene having the fewest. It was widely recognized in stakeholder discussions with relevant staff across each Municipality that current HR and H&S resources do a good job of managing the function today and are generally able to execute day-to-day roles and responsibilities with the current resource level in place across each Municipality. To enhance their ability to stay on top of these day-to-day responsibilities, the Townships of Tiny (early 2021) and Tay (late 2020) gained council approval to hire a fully dedicated HR Specialist resource within their respective Townships.

However, when considering the execution of initiatives or activities beyond the day-to-day, capacity constraints were commonly cited as a significant challenge. Current staff acknowledged that they do not typically have the requisite time or excess capacity to stay ahead of day-to-day activities and take on 'other' initiatives that may be more proactive or strategic. These 'other' initiatives, which could be focused on improving workflows, efficiencies, employee experience or performance measurement/tracking are commonly 'left on the table' because of the current capacity constraints. which will help to alleviate some capacity constraints.

Processes

Stakeholder interviews revealed that generally, the current state processes that guide HR and H&S functions and activities are well understood and effective across the Municipalities of North Simcoe today. Further, Municipal staff cited a strong understanding of what key activities are required and what steps need to be followed to deliver the service today.

However, an area where there is an opportunity to streamline operations and increase efficiency and effectiveness is process documentation. Currently, most of the process documentation and

tracking for HR/H&S activities are completed using simple tools such as spreadsheets or paper. While generally suitable for the needs of each Municipality, these tools are limited in supporting more comprehensive reporting, tracking and measurement activities. Further, it was recognized by Municipal staff from all four Municipalities that there are some processes and underlying policies that require updating, as some of fallen out of date due to capacity constraints or limited documentation/tracking.

Otherwise, based on the current organizational structure and level and sophistication of tools and technology in place today, current internal HR and H&S processes were not deemed to require substantial intervention.

Technology

With respect to tools and technologies utilized, the table below contains a list of all HR/H&S related technologies (beyond Microsoft Office Suite products) currently deployed by each Municipality, and their high-level functionality:

Municipality	Technology & Functionality
Town of Midland	• **Microsoft Dynamics GP** – Business and financial management / ERP software • **Deltek (formerly HR Smart)** – Talent management and Human Capital software solution • **ADP** – Full range of Business, ERP and HCM capabilities o Replacing GP this year and Deltek in 2022
Town of Penetanguishene	• **Vadim-iCity** – Business and financial management / ERP software
Tay Township	• **N/A**
Tiny Township	• **N/A**

As seen above, some modern HR/H&S technologies and online tools have been adopted recently, particularly in the Town of Midland, which is in the process of implementing a new ERP software with ADP that will provide the ability to track and manage activities in a more centralized and efficient manner.

The remaining Municipalities of North Simcoe however, as outlined above, generally rely on paper-based processes and spreadsheets to track and manage HR/H&S activities. While these internal 'systems' and processes are well understood internally and are generally good enough to execute the HR/H&S functions today across the Municipalities, they do not present the most efficient or effective processes, as greater adoption of modern tools and technologies could improve workflows, increase accountability and reduce risk. Today, none of the four Municipalities of North Simcoe currently have or use a formal HRIS software solution. Furthermore, no uniform third-party software systems or technologies are utilized across the four Municipalities.

Cost

Given that each Municipality budgets and reports HR and H&S expenditures somewhat differently, the table below outlines and compares the historical annual budgeted and actual expenditure of on corporate H&S, across the Municipalities of North Simcoe over the past 3 years:

Municipality	2017	2018	2019	Total
Town of Midland				
H&S Budget	$17,250	$42,250	$97,000	**$156,500**
H&S Actual	$3,450	$7,123	$7,123	**$17,696**
Town of Penetanguishene				
H&S Budget	$6,000	$6,000	$8,000	**$20,000**
H&S Actual	$4,369	$3,595	$2,358	**$10,322**
Tay Township				
H&S Budget	$14,115	$14,715	$14,715	**$43,545**
H&S Actual	$6,912	$6,144	$4,716	**$17,772**
Tiny Township				
H&S Budget	$17,568	$15,594	$29,766	**$62,928**
H&S Actual	-	-	-	-
Source: 2017-2020 Operating Budgets				

As seen above, generally, the costs to deliver H&S programs and training for staff are relatively modest, and expenditure typically comes in well under budget, as seen above in the cases of Tay Township the Town of Midland and the Town of Penetanguishene.

6.1.4.1.4 Analysis, Gaps, and Considerations

Strengths

- o **Current Resources** – current HR/H&S resources across the Municipalities of North Simcoe are knowledgeable and are generally successful in managing the function despite technology, capacity, and support limitations.
- o **Policies and Procedures** – generally, all required HR and H&S policies exist and are documented across the four Municipalities of North Simcoe.
- o **Cross-Municipality Relationships** – it was recognized that the Municipalities of North Simcoe, and others in the region, have a strong working relationship on matters of HR and H&S. Several cross-Municipality committees or groups have been established and act as forums for sharing knowledge and best practices.
- o **Health & Safety Training** – all the Municipalities offer training and upskilling opportunities to staff, either through in-house programs, or outsourced third-party specialists.

Gaps

- o **Use of Technology** – while some online and modern technologies have been recently adopted by the Municipalities of North Simcoe, the function is generally over-reliant on paper-based processes and spread sheets to track HR activities, with none of the four Municipalities currently have or use a formal HRIS software solution. Further, even where technologies are used today, there is no uniform third-party software or technology deployed across the four Municipalities.

o **Resource Constraints** – while current resources do a good job managing HR and H&S functions with limited capacity and support, it was widely recognized by staff from all the Municipalities that resourcing, or lack thereof, was a challenge. Current staff have no excess capacity and often do not have the requisite time to stay ahead of day-to-day activities.

o **Reactive Resource Roles** – existing resources are primarily tasked with managing more reactive and transactional based HR and H&S activities and issues. Current HR and H&S rarely have the capacity or mandate to expand their scope and take on more strategic/proactive activities.

o **Dated Policies and Procedures** – while required documentation and policies all generally exist today; it was recognized by various stakeholders that many of the existing policies are outdated and require updates.

o **Recruitment Function** – while the level of annual recruitment activity varies widely on a Municipality-by-Municipality basis, it was recognized that the recruitment of specific roles and or competencies are a challenge for some of the Municipalities.

o **Performance Measurement** – KPI's are utilized by some Municipalities to track important HR/H&S statistics (e.g., Recruitment length, Payroll errors, Property claims etc.), but are not used consistently or measured across all the Municipalities of North Simcoe.

o **Critical Role/Risk Management –** as a result of resource constraints**,** many Municipal staff are required to take on a wide variety of responsibilities within their existing roles. This makes those staff more critical to the operations of the Municipality, increasing the level of risk to the organization if those critical staff members are no longer able to perform their job duties, be that due to illness or departure. Further, while some cross training and succession planning activities were uncovered across some Municipalities, there is limited evidence of formal or structured succession planning and cross-training processes and documentation in place today.

o **Employee Feedback –** Limited opportunities exist for Municipal staff to provide input or feedback or for the Municipalities to understand current areas of strength and opportunities for improvement, in a more formal manner.

6.1.4.1.5 Future State Opportunities

o **New Shared Delivery Model for HR and H&S** – explore the potential of creating a centralized HR/H&S function between the Townships of Tay and Tiny, with a universal mandate to serve both participating Municipalities equally, in correspondence with the relative needs and contributions of each.

o **Standardize HR Technology** – explore the potential of the Municipalities of North Simcoe to pool collective resources and collaborating to obtain one common HR software solution. One opportunity could be to piggy-back off the new ADP solution being implemented in the Town of Midland.

o **Establish a Combined North Simcoe H&S Training Program** – while expenditure to deliver H&S training is relatively modest today, costs could be further reduced by combining resources across the Municipalities of North Simcoe to establish a formal health and safety training program. This program could combine all internal H&S training programs offered today (MOL, WHIMIS etc.) across the four Municipalities under one more comprehensive program, removing duplicate training offerings. The program could operate under a centralized delivery model where there is one central owner, or as a true shared service model where there is joint 'ownership' across all Municipalities. This

program could be a component of an expanded shared delivery model for HR and H&S or implemented as a standalone initiative.

- o **Define a Common Approach to Succession Planning** – a common regional approach and/or process for succession planning could be developed
- o **Establish Formal Employee Feedback Mechanism –** Municipalities could individually establish a formal 'pulse survey' that is issued across each organization on an annual basis. This mechanism would provide existing staff with an opportunity to share their thoughts and feedback, while concurrently allowing each Municipality to uncover insights into the 'pulse' of the organization in a more formal manner, helping to better understand current strengths and areas for improvement.
- o **Performance Measurement** – a preliminary package of standardized KPIs should be developed to enhance reporting, better track HR/H&S activities and employee performance levels into the future. Enabled by enhanced technology, HR/H&S activities and employee performance could be measured more holistically and against defined targets. Expanding the measurement of performance can help to ensure current policies are being complied with, fiscally responsible decisions are being made, and can help uncover opportunities for improvement or identify existing gaps or issues.

6.1.4.2   Procurement

6.1.4.2.1 Objectives of the Review

The procurement function focuses on managing and optimizing the processes and policies that support the acquisition of required goods or services for the Municipality. An effective procurement service can translate into substantial organizational cost savings and efficiencies while helping to ensure fiscally responsible and equitable purchasing decisions. Procurement was selected for review by the MPT with the following objectives in mind:

Objectives of the Service Review	- Modernize procurement practices through a clear understanding of all options available - Explore new/additional options for procurement of services and products (e.g., shared Vendor of Record) - Identify opportunities for potential cost savings through innovative/improved procurement processes - Identify opportunities for increased effectiveness through pooling resources
Framework Focus Areas	- Governance - Service Levels - Resources - Processes
Reasons for Selecting Services	- Explore the use of shared/joint procurement mentality (collective purchasing) - May be requirements to review and update existing Procurement Policy - Duplication of procurement activities across Municipalities - Some capacity constraints in terms of expertise
Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Assessment	- Document current strengths and gaps associated with the current Procurement Policies, including compliance with public sector procurement requirements (i.e., Trade Agreements, etc.) - Understand current group procurement activities undertaken by the North Simcoe Municipalities and other neighbouring municipalities/Counties

6.1.4.2.2 Summary of Findings

Strengths

o **Policies and Procedures –** each Municipality has recently updated its procurement policy documents and related procedures within the last five years.
o **Adoption of Online Technologies –** most Municipalities have recently adopted some more modern technologies to enable the procurement function.
o **Templates and Procedures –** some Municipalities have recently developed and implemented new standardized templates and processes for procurement activities.
o **Current Resources –** current procurement resources across the Municipalities of North Simcoe are knowledgeable and do a good job of managing the function today.

Gaps

- o **Operating Structures –** apart from the Town of Midland, procurement operations are run in a decentralized manner with no centralized oversight.
- o **Limited Standardization** – limited work has been contemplated or completed to standardize common product or service specifications and requirements amongst the four Municipalities of North Simcoe.
- o **Shared Procurements –** group purchases, as the Municipalities of North Simcoe or as part of other consortiums are infrequent occurrences today.
- o **Vendor Management –** no modern vendor managed inventory or performance management systems or tools in place.
- o **Resource Constraints –** human resources, or lack thereof, is a significant challenge in optimizing the function/service.
- o **Technology –** limited use of modern procurement technologies.

Preliminary Opportunities

- o **Shared Delivery Model for Procurement –** explore the potential for a shared delivery model or a centralized procurement function between the four Municipalities of North Simcoe.
- o **Better Leverage Group Purchasing –** utilize more opportunities to pool buying power through group purchasing as part of the Georgian Bay Purchasing Group or with the County of Simcoe.
- o **Expand the Number and Capability of Resources –** creating a dedicated procurement function or increasing the level of capacity and expertise within the current function.
- o **New Technology** – explore new technology solutions that can help streamline processes, reduce time, and enable greater access to data.
- o **Performance Measurement** – develop a preliminary package of KPIs and targets to increase insights and better track service and performance levels for the procurement service and program operations.

6.1.4.2.3 Service Profile

Governance

Figure 3: Procurement Governance Structures
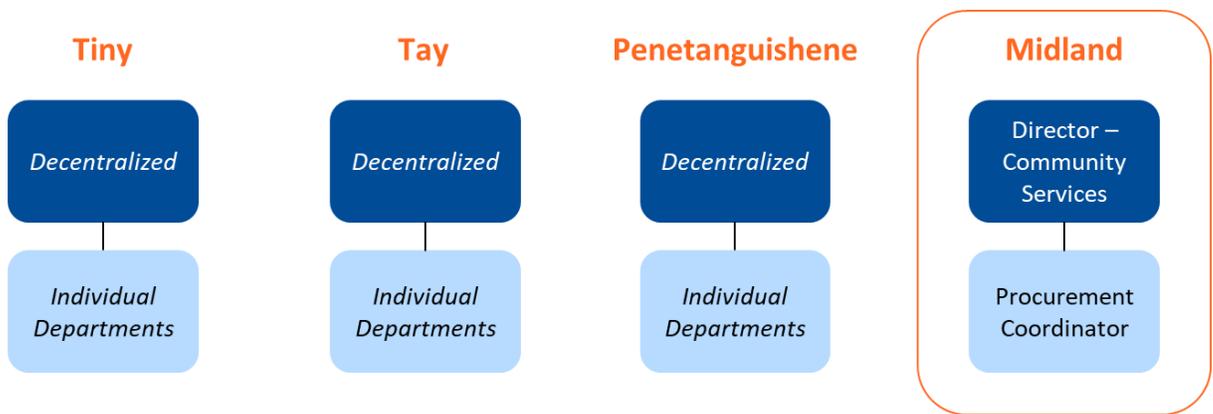
As a decentralized service in the Town of Penetanguishene and the Townships of Tiny and Tay, procurement responsibilities and accountabilities are assumed by the leader of the responsible department leading the specific procurement process. For example, if the Public Works department were to require a specific service from a third-party vendor, the department would be responsible for following proper procurement process and procedure to acquire such services, with the Director of Public Works ultimately bearing the responsibility and accountability for following the proper the procurement process and ensuring the services from a selected vendor are timely, of high quality and meet the Municipalities needs. Often times in Municipalities with a decentralized procurement function, a large amount of procurement expertise is cultivated within the Public Works Department, by virtue of the size and frequency of the procurements they undertake relative to other departments.

Conversely, the Town of Midland utilizes a more 'centralized' operating structure for the procurement service, with a dedicated resource that reports to the Director of Community Services, as outlined in the Figure above. While the procurement department in the Town of Midland works with each respective department, it is ultimately responsible and accountable for following the proper procurement process and ensuring the services from a selected vendor are timely, of high quality and meet the Municipalities needs.

Service Level

Broadly speaking, the Municipalities of North Simcoe track procurement service or performance at a very high level, typically against overall Municipal and/or departmental budgets. While some tracking of performance indicators such as vendor performance or cost savings/optimization may occur in individual instances, these insights and measures are disparate. No formal procurement KPI's (e.g., compliance rate, PO and invoice accuracy, supplier lead time, cost per invoice and PO etc.) with defined targets and tracking were uncovered in data and documents or in discussions with stakeholders across the Municipalities. Given the lack of detailed performance information, it is challenging to tangibly understand if the procurement service is meeting targets, under-performing, or over-performing today.

Resources

As mentioned previously, the procurement function is predominately decentralized across the Municipalities of North Simcoe and all procurement related activities, policies and procedures are managed at the individual department level. As a result of this structure, the Townships of Tiny, Tay and the Town of Penetanguishene do not have any dedicated procurement resources. Despite this, broadly speaking, there are sufficient resources, both in number and capability, across the various Municipal staff to meet *current levels of service* for procurement.

The Town of Midland differs, however, as they do utilize a more centralized operating structure for procurement with one full-time resource dedicated to the function, who was hired in 2018. As the single procurement-focused employee at the Municipality, this resource is responsible for managing all procurement related activities and initiatives across the organization. This resource has been successful in implementing a variety of process improvements, such as new standardized templates, and realizing cost savings on the acquisition of goods and services at the Town of Midland. Midland's procurement coordinator also offers as much support as possible to the other Municipalities of North Simcoe, in an informal manner. However, an insufficient number of support resources was cited as a challenge to continuing to both improve the Town of Midlands

performance and level of service for procurement and continuing to support other neighbouring Municipalities.

Processes

Stakeholder interviews revealed that generally, current state procurement processes are clearly defined in the by-law of each Municipality, and staff have a solid understanding of what key activities are required and what steps need to be followed to complete the procurement process today. Each Municipality has set clear internal thresholds that trigger certain QA processes and reviews for procurements over specified dollar amounts (i.e., the requirement for CAO or Council approval).

However, it was cited that when council approval is required, the QA and review process could cause some challenges for staff around timelines and reaching cut-off dates. As such, some opportunity may exist across the four Municipalities to further clarify staff delegation parameters, review QA processes and threshold limits to help reduce the flow of 'regular' procurement events to council, engaging them predominately on more 'irregular' events, such as budget issues or significant exceeding of a predetermined threshold. Beyond this, based on the current organizational structure and level and sophistication of tools and technology in place today, current procurement processes were not deemed to require substantial intervention.

Technology

Some modern and online procurement technologies and services have been adopted across the Municipalities of North Simcoe in recent times. Below if a list of all procurement technologies, and their high-level functionality, currently deployed by each Municipality:

Municipality	Technology & Functionality
Town of Midland	• **Biddingo** – online portal connecting buyers (Provincial, Municipal, Education, Crown Corporation, Housing, Construction and Healthcare sectors) and suppliers
Town of Penetanguishene	• N/A
Tay Township	• **Biddingo** – online portal connecting buyers (Provincial, Municipal, Education, Crown Corporation, Housing, Construction and Healthcare sectors) and suppliers
Tiny Township	• **Bids&Tenders** – digital bidding platform connecting buyers and suppliers • **Everbridge (Tiny Connect)** – Community and vendor engagement tool

Despite the use of digital bidding and engagement technologies above, the Municipalities and relevant staff remain over-reliant on paper-based processes and spread sheets to track procurement activities, outcomes, and performance from a back-end perspective. Purchasing module/functionalities from current ERP platforms utilized across the Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene (see Section 6.1.4.1.3) have not been fully integrated with Municipal processes or financials. Further, no technology-based vendor managed inventory (VMI) or performance management systems or tools are in place today across the Municipalities of North Simcoe.

Cost

The table below outlines and compares the historical budgets (where possible) and actual annual expenditure on tenders to procure goods and services across the Municipalities of North Simcoe over the past 3 years:

Municipality	2017	2018	2019	Total
Town of Midland*				
Budget	-	-	-	-
Actual	-	-	-	-
Town of Penetanguishene				
Budget	-	-	-	-
Actual	$13,300,000	$1,500,000	$2,000,000	**$16,800,000**
Tay Township				
Budget	$4,788,296	$5,008,987	$5,133,112	**$14,930,395**
Actual	$4,708,276	$5,004,890	$5,217,350	**$14,930,516**
Tiny Township				
Budget	$7,027,000	$9,126,000	$6,483,000	**$22,636,000**
Actual	$4,455,000	$8,187,000	$5,477,000	**$18,119,000**
Source: Internal Financial Data				
* – Indicates data not available				

As seen above, the cost of procuring goods and services across the Municipalities represents a significant cost to the Municipalities of North Simcoe. Collectively, the Municipalities listed above spent ~$50 Million over the previous 3-year period on tenders to procure goods and services. While expenditures are substantial, each Municipality has done well to contain costs and prevent overspending, as each have generally kept total 3-year costs in line with approved 3-year budgets.

Beyond expenditure on procurement tenders themselves, the cost associated with the delivery of the procurement service function is driven primarily the cost of staff time. For the Municipalities with decentralized procurement functions, Town of Penetanguishene and Townships of Tiny and Tay, the cost of staff time to deliver the function are grouped collectively under a general salary line item within each department. Furthermore, stakeholder interviews revealed that within these Municipalities, staff time spent on procurement activities was generally not tracked actively or consistently. For the Town of Midland, which has a centralized procurement function, similarly, the primary driver of the cost of the function is the single dedicated staff resource. However, as a result of the dedicated focus of this staff resource, the combination of their day-to-day management role and process improvement work has helped to mitigate the amount of time other department-level staff spend on procurement.

6.1.4.2.4 Analysis, Gaps, and Considerations

Strengths

o **Policies and Procedures** – each of the four Municipalities have recently updated and/or modernized their procurement policy documents, and related procedures, within the last five years, with the oldest policy dating back to 2017.

o **Adoption of Online Technologies** – most Municipalities have recently adopted some more modern technologies to enable the procurement function, such as Bids&Tenders or Biddingo.

o **Templates and Procedures** – some of the North Simcoe Municipalities have recently developed and implemented new standardized templates and processes for procurement activities, enabling a more consistent and coordinated approach compared to historical operations.

o **Current Resources** – current procurement resources across the Municipalities of North Simcoe are knowledgeable and do a good job keeping things in order and managing the function today, despite technology, capacity, and support limitations.

Gaps

o **Operating Structures** – apart from the Town of Midland, the other Municipalities of North Simcoe operate the procurement function in a decentralized manner. This structure results in each individual department taking the lead on running procurements for their specific needs, with no centralized oversight.

o **Limited Standardization** – to date, very limited work has been contemplated or completed amongst the four Municipalities of North Simcoe to collaborate and look for opportunities to standardize common product or service specifications and requirements, resulting in missed opportunities for shared procurement and group purchasing.

o **Shared Procurements** – shared procurement activities between the four Municipalities of North Simcoe or as part of a larger consortium are infrequent occurrences, resulting in missed opportunities to pool resources, increase buying power and realize cost savings on the purchase of goods or solicitation of services.

o **Vendor Management** – none of the Municipalities of North Simcoe have modern vendor managed inventory or performance management systems or tools in place today, and these were recognized by staff as best practices they want to acquire.

o **Resource Constraints** – while current resources do a good job managing procurement functions with limited capacity and support, it was widely recognized by staff from all the Municipalities that resourcing, or lack thereof, was a significant challenge in optimizing the service. Current staff often do not have the requisite time to plan and strategize purchasing activities due to the demands of day-to-day activities.

o **Technology** – while some online and modern technologies have been recently adopted by the Municipalities of North Simcoe, the function is generally over-reliant on spread sheets to track procurement activities and purchase orders. This can lead to some challenges with year-end reconciliation and limitations on future forecasting or planning activities.

6.1.4.2.5 Future State Opportunities

o **Shared Delivery Model for Procurement** – explore the potential benefits of creating a centralized procurement function between the four Municipalities of North Simcoe, with a universal mandate to serve all participating Municipalities equally, in correspondence with the relative needs and contributions of each. This type of centralized delivery model could not only allow for the Municipalities of North Simcoe to standardize the service at a transactional level but also enable a more proactive approach and enhance the strategic value of the function by expanding both the number and capability of dedicated procurement resources in the region. Furthermore, a well-designed shared delivery model could enable more efficient operations, improved policy compliance, enhanced level of vendor/supplier relationships, facilitate greater collaboration between

Municipalities and can and lead to greater cost optimization and savings for the Municipalities, which can help to offset or cover incremental investment costs.

o **New Technology –** while current processes and tools are clearly understood and are satisfactory for service delivery today, going forward, there is an opportunity to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the procurement processes for each Municipality by adopting more modern technologies. Bringing in the right technology solutions, such as the integration of new or existing ERP platforms, a comprehensive VMI tool and/or a digitized purchase order system, could help to streamline processes, reduce time spent on tactical activities, more effectively manage vendors, and provide real-time visibility on contract information. Further, technology enables centralized information storage, retrieval, and long-term retention, which reduces the risk of business losses that exist with decentralized systems and can support enhanced service level reporting and insights.

o **Performance Measurement** – under a centralized/shared delivery model, or as individual Municipalities, a preliminary package of KPIs should be developed to enhance insights and better track service and performance levels for procurement and overall program operations into the future. Enabled by new technology, this preliminary package of performance measures could allow procurement performance to be measured more holistically, against defined targets and capture both process and outcome measures, with a clear distinction between both. Expanding the measurement of procurement performance can help to ensure procurement policies are being complied with, fiscally responsible decisions are being made, Municipal spending is being optimized and can also help uncover opportunities for enhanced management and oversight on operational matters, such as program planning deficiencies.

o **Expand the Number and Capability of Resources –** under a centralized/shared delivery model, or individually, creating a procurement function or increasing the level of capacity and expertise within the current function can provide a variety of benefits for the Municipalities of North Simcoe. Those benefits could include more efficiency in the RFP and contracting processes, greater levels of compliance with policies, realization of greater cost savings, improved ability to support and guide others on processes and best practices/techniques and could expand the potential of shared procurements with other municipalities/agencies within, and beyond, the North Simcoe consortium.

o **Better Leverage Group Purchasing –** utilize more opportunities to pool buying power through group purchasing, either as part of the Georgian Bay Purchasing Group, with the County of Simcoe, as the collective Municipalities of North Simcoe or beyond (such as province-wide procurement opportunities).

6.1.4.3 Communication, Marketing, & Tourism

6.1.4.3.1 Objectives of the Review

Communication, Marketing, & Tourism includes communication from the Municipality related to news or current events; as well as the promotion and support for tourist or cultural events within the community. Communication, Marketing, & Tourism was selected for review by the MPT with the following objectives in mind:

Objectives of the Service Review	• Improve clarity on goals of Marketing and Tourism activities in North Simcoe • Establish Service Level objectives • Create an inventory of marketing activities that staff, Council, and residents want for the future
Framework Focus Areas	• Governance • Service Levels
Reasons for Selecting Services	• Multiple groups appear to be involved in services, • May not be clarity on service goals or method for achieving them
Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Assessment	• Understand current Marketing, Communication, and Tourism activities and focuses • Understand relationship(s) with external marketing/tourism partners • Understand public requirements and preferences for communication

6.1.4.3.2 Summary of Findings

Strengths

o **Communications Focused** – all four Municipalities have dedicated resources to actively communicate with residents through various engagement platforms and technologies, including social media.

o **Collaboration approach using the Heart of Georgian Bay** – each of the four Municipalities utilizes the shared web site and visitor engagement facilities provided by the Economic Development Corporation of North Simcoe (EDCNS) under the umbrella marketing of the Heart of Georgian Bay

o **Collaboration in the Cultural Alliance** – the four Municipalities plus the Beausoleil First Nation have collaborated to form the Cultural Alliance to celebrate, foster, promote, and leverage cultural resources in the Heart of Georgian Bay.

o **Commitment to the Economic Development Corporation of North Simcoe** – Active Council and municipality representation at the Director and Committee levels has ensured that the EDCNS provides the appropriate balance of marketing outreach to residents (existing, potential, and seasonal), industry, and tourism to meet the diverse needs of the four North Simcoe municipalities.

o **Visitor Activities and Events** – where tourism is more heavily promoted by the Municipalities of Midland and Penetanguishene, there is a high level of tourist attractions and visitor events. Events and attractions include the Best Butter Tart Festival, Centennial Museum, Cruise Ship dockings, and Ste. Marie Among the Hurons (which is just outside

of Midland in Tay Township). The Wye Marsh, Tiny Township Farm Crawl and the public beaches provide visitors with activities in the more resident and seasonal resident populations in the Townships of Tiny and Tay.

Gaps

o **Inconsistent Reporting Structures** – staff alignment for these services differs among the Municipalities. Even Communications, which is part of each municipality structure, is not consistently placed within the organization structure. It was noted that there that there has been adjustment and movement of staff between departments in recent years resulting in a desire to ensure role clarity and direction by affected staff.

o **Staffing Tourism** - where tourism is more heavily promoted by the Municipalities of Midland and Penetanguishene, the increased arrivals of cruise ship visitors and the resulting harbour events indicate that greater emphasis on summer staffing levels will be required in the future.

o **Budget Uncertainty** – cultural programs and tourism budget requests are generally on a year-to-year basis, which limits future planning and the expectation of continuity for events and programs.

Preliminary Opportunities

o **Investigate Collaborative Communications** – capitalize on the experiences in building the current collaborative efforts that the Municipalities have successfully used for the Heart of Georgian Bay and Cultural Alliance programs for Communications platforms and methods. This will provide a broader outreach across all municipalities, while providing the potential for cost savings and consistency of messaging.

o **Review Structure for Communications, Culture and Tourism Organization** – based on the growing importance of communications to all municipal activities and the expected boost in tourism-related traffic in the Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene, a review of best practice organization structures is warranted to ensure that these activities are supported, measured, and managed within each municipality's ability and priority.

o **Increase Attention to Communication and Visitor KPIs** – while statistics as to communication and visitor activity was noted, consistency of measurement results from the Communications and Tourism areas across the Municipalities would greatly assist in recognizing staffing and cost requirements across the North Simcoe communities.

6.1.4.3.3 Service Profile

Governance

Figure 4: Communications, Marketing and Tourism Governance Structures
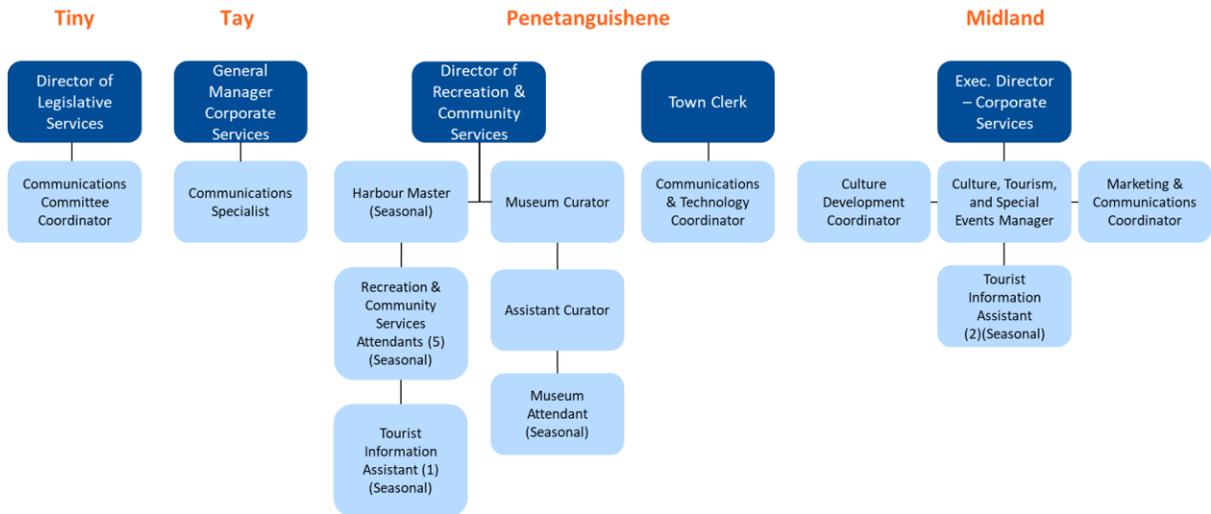
The municipalities organize staffing according to the emphasis that is placed upon Communications, Marketing and Tourism functions within the communities. Both Tiny and Tay Townships view this area as a Communications function, with the majority of the Tourism and Marketing requirements fulfilled by the Economic Development Corporation of North Simcoe (EDNS) through the Heart of Georgian Bay.

While the Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene also utilize the EDNS and Heart of Georgian Bay, the Towns take on additional responsibility for tourism and cultural events and activities within their particular town, but also provide support and leadership in the co-ordination of both cultural and tourism activities across the North Simcoe area.

Both Tiny and Tay Townships have concentrated on the Communications aspects of this service, with Tiny instituting their TinyConnect communication program and Tay recently adding a dedicated Communications role in their organization to help Tay communicate more effectively with their residents.

Midland maintains a Marketing & Communications Coordinator focusing on communication and engagement related activities as opposed to Marketing. Midland also has a Tourism and Special Events Manager to undertake approximately nine events that the Town runs each year, as well as work closely with third party events that host events on municipal property. Recently the cruise ship operations have added a significant workload to the Tourism department (Covid-19 year 2020 excepted) with regular dockings from June through September. There are additional plans for two new cruise lines to begin visits in 2022 and 2023. Cruise ship Celebration Day events at the Town Dock plus organizing bus tours and shuttles for the passengers ensures that the visitors are welcomed and can reach out to the community.

The Midland Culture Development Coordinator has been the driving force for the creation and fostering of the Cultural Alliance in the Heart of Georgian Bay. The Culture Alliance in the Heart

of Georgian Bay is comprised of Beausoleil First Nation, The Town of Midland, The Town of Penetanguishene, The Township of Tiny and the Township of Tay. Each municipality in North Simcoe participates in the Cultural Alliance, with much support coming from volunteers and event committees. Together they are celebrating, fostering, promoting, and leveraging cultural resources in the Heart of Georgian Bay, with a view to growing a prosperous year-round creative economy, and enhancing the quality of life and cultural awareness for all residents.

Penetanguishene has recently added a Technology and Communications Coordinator role to ensure consistency of messaging from the Town departments to residents and visitors. The Tourism and Cultural aspects for the Town are under the Director of Recreation & Community Services. Part of this role to work with the Harbour Master supporting tourists visiting by boat and staffing the Visitor and Tourism Centre located at the harbour in summer, which moves to the Museum in winter.

Penetanguishene also manages and operates the Centennial Museum and Archives, with a Curator and Assistant Curator on staff. As noted above, the Visitor and Tourism Centre is operated out of the Museum location during the off-season months. The Museum reinforces the French Heritage of the region and promotes the past of the "most historic town west of Quebec City" which is proudly displayed in the 135-year-old Centennial Museum.

Service Level

All municipalities use EDCNS for overall outreach and reporting of activity. Certain aspects of tourism are viewed differently between the Townships and the Towns. Both Tiny and Tay townships are primarily resident and seasonal resident based. Tourism and industry are not major economic drivers for the townships. They rely on EDCNS for measurement of service levels and with a great majority of municipal communications concentrated on residents.

For the towns, tracking of activity at the Tourist Information centers plus additional visitor counts from cruise ships and downtown activity by student "Ambassadors" are used to report to council. Events have separate surveys, again having summer students to assist in the collection, which has provided more detailed information on visitor postal codes and confirmation of outreach. These are also coordinated with the Heart of Georgian Bay to pool information and findings on the events. The towns also work closely with the businesses in the towns to look at sales and activities from the various events, such as the Best Butter Tart Festival and Tall Ships moorings.

Tracking the tone and responses through social media also provides additional data, such as the number of people that like and follow events and activities to gauge reach. The municipalities rarely purchase advertising thru social media. By tracking the number of followers for the different engagement sites, the municipalities can come up with ways to boost the numbers of those who take part.

The engagement survey provided feedback relating to the Communications requirement for both digital and traditional communications. While satisfaction was highest rated from Penetanguishene (58%), Midland and Tay rated larger dissatisfaction scores – however it should be noted that Tay Township has only recently added dedicated communications staff to the organization.

For Marketing and Tourism, the survey results provided Tay Township with the highest neutral score of 41%, and also 35% as dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This may indicate a need to review

funding to more of the natural attractions such as trails and parks and addressing the vacation rental issues, which were noted in the survey. Midland reported the highest satisfaction rating of 39%, which would point to the events, attractions, and cultural focus of their team.

Resources

For the Townships, neither marketing nor tourism is a formal part of their organization structure. They rely, as do the Towns of Penetanguishene and Midland to a lesser extent, on the outside alliance with the Economic Development Corporation of North Simcoe and the Heart of Georgian Bay to oversee the Destination Marketing Organization for North Simcoe. Each of the municipalities contributes financially to this alliance on an annual basis. There is also web site information on the local area through the Simcoe County site as well as involvement with the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario through the Bruce Grey Simcoe as Regional Tourism Organization 7.

Municipal representation for the EDCNS is provided at the Director level with at least one member of Council or CAO from and appointed by each of the four North Simcoe municipalities. The Board is comprised of between 11 and 13 Directors.

The site of the local Tourism information center has been discussed for possible collaboration, however at this time, both Midland and Penetanguishene staff a summertime tourist location at their respective harbours and docks with summer and/or part-time resources. Penetanguishene transitions this service to their Museum location for the off-season with limited staffing.

With the Midland emphasis on the cruise ship dockings in recent years, there is a concern that the staffing levels will need to be increased with the expected additional ships and dockings expected in future years.

Technology

As noted above, all four municipalities have dedicated resources to the Communications role, with Technology assisting and supporting the manner and level of interaction with the community, as well as visitors to the area.

The municipalities have implemented the following communications methods:

- Tiny implemented TinyConnect – a mass notification system to stay informed on topics such as road closures, burn bans, hear about community events, recreational programs, and public meetings, as well as receiving alerts about pending or existing emergencies.
- Engaging Midland - the Town of Midland has introduced a new public engagement platform utilizing the Bang the Table platform. This allows the public to follow and participate in engagement opportunities to help shape projects, policies, and initiatives by responding to spot surveys, review community presentations, and participate in discussion forums.
- Connect Penetanguishene – the Town of Penetanguishene has also introduced the Bang the Table platform where residents can contribute ideas to actively shape and strengthen the community. Direct connections to council members, recent project (Town Dock and Arena studies) information, and suggestions for Town "ideas" are current offerings.
- Tay Township provides an eNewsletter and news, notices, and announcement subscription service to its residents by providing a menu of selectable items such as

Employment opportunities, Emergency Alerts, Events, News/Notices, Recreation, and Service Disruption & Information notices.

All municipalities utilize and monitor social media accounts. Twitter is used by all four, with Facebook and Instagram registered all but Tay Township. It should be noted that Tay has only recently added a dedicated communication resource to their organization.

Within the municipalities, there are also additional social media accounts relating to the Cultural Alliance, Centennial Museum, Tourism Midland, and particular Events and Activities.

Cost

Reviewing the costs of providing the Communications, Marketing and Tourism services is not appropriate, based on the very different staffing levels and emphasis on Tourism that individual municipalities offer.

However, there is a consistent service that all the municipalities utilize for the outreach provided by EDCNS, which each municipality funds on an annual basis as follows:

Municipality	Funding	Source
Town of Midland	$ 154,676	2019 Budget
Town of Penetanguishene	$ 65,250	2019 Budget
Tay Township	$ 66,500	2019 Budget
Tiny Township	$ 87,000	2020 Budget

6.1.4.3.4 Analysis, Gaps, and Considerations

The review of these services shows a high level of collaboration already in place amongst the North Simcoe municipalities. Active involvement in the EDCNS by all municipalities has provided a level of marketing outreach that any single municipality could not produce. In less than two years, the Cultural Alliance, initially fostered by the Town of Midland, has been embraced by the other municipalities and the Beausoleil First Nation and has enhanced the cultural awareness for all residents.

The importance of the communications role of the municipality has been recognized, with all four municipalities now having dedicated communications staff for this service. With these resources in place, it was noted that they are also collaborating on a regular basis to share their experiences with the different resident, seasonal resident, and visitor groups.

While the importance of communications has been identified, the municipalities must remember that the methods, technologies, and challenges of communications are ever-changing. The role must be supported with the appropriate level of management, technical resources and equipped to provide metrics against community outreach objectives.

It is also shown that where the municipalities desire to expand the tourist and visitor markets with local events, festivals, harbour, and dock activities, and attracting cruise ship dockings, these municipalities have filled calendars during more typical (i.e., non-Covid-19 pandemic) seasons.

As more events and cruise ships are planned to go forward, appropriate staffing and resources to support the larger visitor expectations must be identified. In order to plan, develop, and prepare

for these future events, continued attention to the tracking of event metrics and the comparison to municipal objectives should be standard practice.

6.1.4.3.5 Future State Opportunities

- o **Investigate Collaborative Communications** – capitalize on the experiences in building the current collaborative efforts that the Municipalities have successfully used for the Heart of Georgian Bay and Cultural Alliance programs for Communications platforms and methods. This will provide a broader outreach across all municipalities, while providing the potential for cost savings and consistency of messaging.
- o **Review Structure for Communications, Culture and Tourism Organization** – Based on the growing importance of communications to all municipal activities and the expected boost in tourism-related traffic in the Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene, a review of best practice organization structures is warranted to ensure that these activities are supported, measured, and managed within each municipality's ability and priority.
- o **Increase Attention to Communication and Visitor KPIs** – while statistics as to communication and visitor activity was noted, consistency of measurement results from the Communications and Tourism areas across the Municipalities would greatly assist in recognizing staffing and cost requirements across the North Simcoe communities.

6.1.4.4   Information Technology

6.1.4.4.1 Objectives of the Review

Another important corporate function, information technology (IT), is critical for enabling efficient, effective, and secure Municipal operations. The IT function increasingly plays a critical role in effective service delivery.

IT was selected for review by the MPT with the following objectives in mind:

Objectives of the Service Review	• Commonalities exist in applications, services, and security • Specialized services require high level of expertise best provided across the municipalities
Framework Focus Areas	• Technology • Cost
Reasons for Selecting Services	• Identify opportunities to pool internal and/or third-party resources to provide improved technology coverage for all municipalities • Identify opportunities to standardize technology where efficiencies and increased service levels can be attained
Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Assessment	• Understand existing IT services and resources within each Municipality (either by in-house staff or via outsourcing) • Understand level and preferred use of technology by residents in each Municipality

6.1.4.4.2 Summary of Findings

Strengths

o **Current Maintenance and Support** – positive feedback regarding internal IT staff being knowledgeable and providing strong levels of maintenance and support service today with limited capacity and supporting technology.

o **Outsourced Service Satisfaction** – generally, there is a solid level of satisfaction from the Municipalities of North Simcoe with the current service levels received from outsourced third-party IT support.

o **Strategic Outsourcing –** broadly the Municipalities of North Simcoe are using third-party support logically today, focused on gain access to expensive infrastructure and greater levels of expertise that is currently unachievable in the current environment.

Gaps

o **IT, Digital and Customer Experience Strategies –** lack of a formalized strategies surrounding IT, digital or customer experience to guide decision making and investments across individual Municipalities, or collectively across the region.

o **Limited Communication and Collaboration** – different IT service delivery models employed by the Municipalities result in very little collaboration or sharing of resources or best practices today.

o **Resource Constraints** – current IT teams are thin, and existing resources are constrained with little to no excess capacity.

- o **Reactive Resource Roles** – existing resources are primarily tasked to manage reactive and transactional activities and issues, rarely having the requisite time to take on more strategic/proactive activities.
- o **Online Services** – individually and collectively, the Municipalities of North Simcoe are not offering many basic online services to the public.

Preliminary Opportunities

- o **Align Delivery Model for IT** – explore the potential for a shared delivery model or a centralized IT function between the four Municipalities of North Simcoe.
- o **Develop IT Strategy** – develop and establish a comprehensive IT strategy to support and guide effective decision making, planning, and alignment with internal IT needs and digital service offerings.
- o **Standardized Online Service Offerings** – opportunity for the Municipalities of North Simcoe to partner and standardize specifications/requirements to bring more services online in collaboration.
- o **Expanded IT Resources –** explore increasing the level of resource capacity and expertise within the current IT function.
- o **New IT Support Systems** – explore and adequately vet new technology solutions that can support IT resources through streamlined processes, time reductions and greater access to data.
- o **Performance Measurement** – develop a preliminary package of standardized KPIs and targets to increase insight and better track activities and performance levels.

6.1.4.4.3 Service Profile

Governance

Figure 5: IT Governance Structures
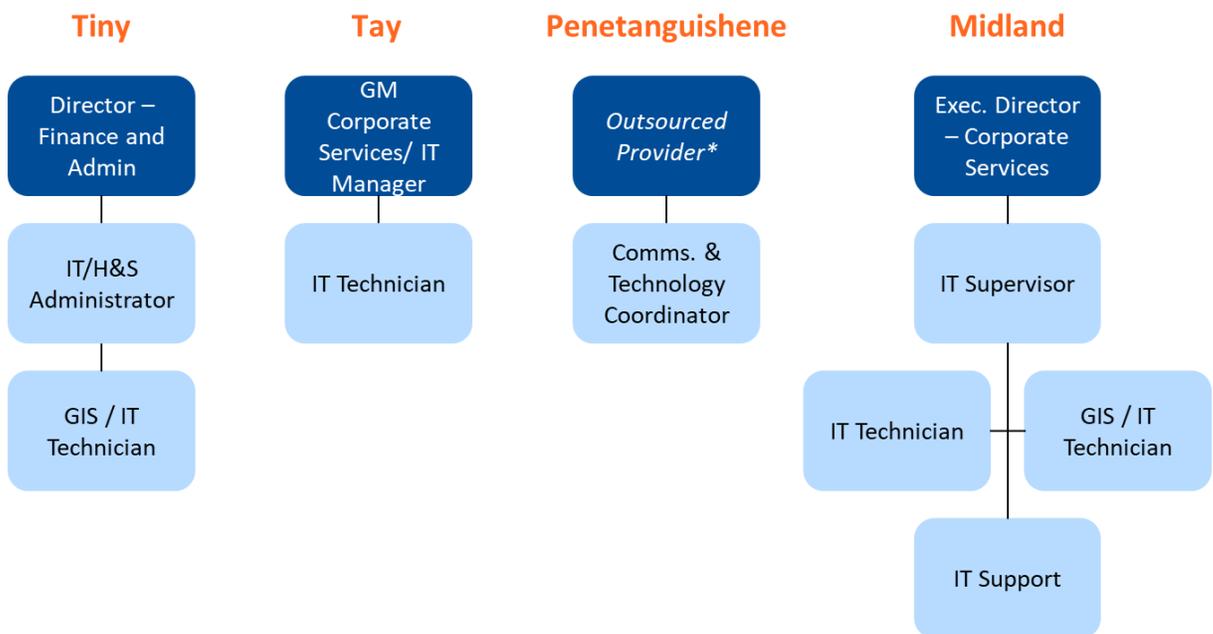
Three of the four Municipalities of North Simcoe have dedicated IT resources in-house that support the delivery of the function today. Broadly, each Municipality organizes and staffs the IT function in accordance with its delivery model for the function and the degree to which the function utilizes in-house or outsourced support. Examining the figure above, the Town of Penetanguishene operates a completely outsourced delivery model for IT, with only one resource who manages the vendor relationship.

Comparatively, the Town of Midland has a relatively large in-house team dedicated to the function and only utilizes third-party support for specific components of the IT function through maintenance and support contracts. Across the three Municipalities with some in-house IT functions, all have a senior director or general manager level resource who is accountable for ensuring the department is meeting the various IT needs and requirements of the Municipality to support ongoing operations.

Examining the governance around decision making for specific IT investments and initiatives, no evidence was found in data and documents or in discussions with stakeholders of a documented strategy or approach from the individual Municipalities or coordinated strategy/approach across the collective group. As such, the Municipalities currently lack a 'big picture' view towards the investments or initiatives they need to make or pursue.

Service Level

The Municipalities of North Simcoe track IT service or performance at a very high level, typically against overall Municipal and/or departmental budgets. While some tracking of performance indicators such as vendor performance or a number of IT tickets/requests may occur in individual instances, these insights and measures are disparate. No formal procurement KPI's (e.g., cost per request, first level resolution rate, tickets/requests per week, average handle time, staff satisfaction etc.) with defined targets and tracking were uncovered in data and documents or in discussions with stakeholders across the Municipalities. Given the lack of detailed performance information, it is challenging to tangibly understand if the IT service is meeting targets, under-performing, or over-performing today.

Resources

The number and roles of resources dedicated to the IT function across the Municipalities of North Simcoe are outlined below:

Municipality	Number of Resources	Resource Descriptions
Town of Midland	• 3.5 FTE	• IT Supervisor (1) • IT Technician (1) • GIS/IT Technician (Part-Time - 0.5) • IT Support (1)
Town of Penetanguishene	• 0.25 FTE	• Communications and Technology Coordinator (Part-Time – 0.25)
Tay Township	• 1.75 FTE	• GM Corporate Services/ IT Manager (1) • IT Technician (1)
Tiny Township	• 1 FTE	• IT/H&S Admin (Part-Time – 0.5) • GIS/IT Technician (Part-Time - 0.5)

As seen above, the level of dedicated human resources to support IT functions varies by Municipality, based largely on the service delivery model employed. In the Town of Midland and Township of Tay, IT services are provided through an in-house delivery model where IT assets and activities are managed internally across the dedicated IT staff. These Municipalities typically have more dedicated IT staff to support the in-house delivery model, as these resources typically serve as the first line of contact for anything and everything IT related in the respective organizations.

In the Town of Midland and Township of Tay, it was widely recognized in stakeholder discussions with relevant staff that the current resources do a good job of managing the IT function today and are able to execute more transactional day-to-day roles and responsibilities. However, staff also acknowledged that with the current resources in place today, they do not always have the capacity to execute and take on initiatives or activities that are more strategic, complex and require greater infrastructure demands (such as system maintenance, security, software management etc.). Despite the capacity challenges identified, both Municipalities were generally satisfied with their in-house delivery models and confident in their teams' ability to meet the IT needs of the Municipality and staff.

Conversely, in the Town of Penetanguishene and Township of Tiny, IT services are delivered through a more outsourced delivery model, where IT assets and activities are managed partially or fully by a third-party provider under a managed services agreement, in this case with Compu-SOLVE technologies. As such, these Municipalities require less dedicated IT staff to deliver the service. Stakeholder discussions with both Municipalities cited a high degree of satisfaction with the current service levels received from Compu-SOLVE technologies, and confidence in the ability of the provider to meet the IT needs of the Municipality and staff.

Given the different approaches that are taken by these Municipalities in how IT services are staffed and delivered, there is little to no collaboration or sharing that occurs across the Municipalities when it comes to IT, which limits efficiencies for all. As such, there is an opportunity to align this approach across the region.

Technology

To deliver IT services across the Municipalities of North Simcoe, each municipality utilizes a variety of different tools and technologies today. However, more broadly, there does not appear to be a formal coordinated strategy or approach to IT, digital or customer experience in place across the individual Municipalities or collectively across the region of North Simcoe. As such, there is limited consideration given to, and insight around internal IT/technology usage, or how it connects and works with individual departments and the services provided by the Municipality.

The current lack of a formalized strategy around IT, digital or customer experience across individual Municipalities, or collectively across the region, has resulted in an uncoordinated and unguided approach to the work of IT teams and in how tools and technologies are assessed, procured, and integrated to better enable the delivery of services for residents or for staff within the Municipalities. For example, it was uncovered in stakeholder discussions that the Municipalities often procure tools and systems from 'one-solution' vendors that may meet the immediate need of a specific initiative, such as bringing a service offering online. However, due to the lack of future planning and guidance of an overarching strategy, that tool or system may not work for another similar initiative that the Municipality wants to take on in the future. This results in many different tools and systems being acquired that are not fully optimized or integrated,

which is inefficient for the Municipality and can be a source of frustration to residents from a user experience perspective.

Cost

The table below displays the historical annual budget versus actual expenditure on all IT services across the Municipalities of North Simcoe over the past 3 years. This includes the cost of Managed Service Agreement's (MSA's), the cost of IT procurement, and any internal IT staff costs.

Municipality	2017	2018	2019	Total
Town of Midland				
Budget	$266,498	$406,452	$552,034	**$1,224,984**
Actual	$224,066	$533,909	$529,728	**$1,287,703**
Town of Penetanguishene				
Budget	$112,821	$182,500	$176,450	**$471,771**
Actual	$155,321	$201,583	$219,219	**$576,123**
Tay Township[3]				
Budget	$181,028	$196,591	$252,685	**$630,304**
Actual	$188,255	$203,950	$244,208	**$636,414**
Tiny Township				
Budget	$304,900	$667,100	$622,000	**$1,594,000**
Actual	$300,800	$490,400	$525,000	**$1,316,200**
Source: Internal Financial Data				

As seen above, the Municipalities of North Simcoe collectively spent over $3.8 Million over the previous 3-year period on IT Services, which is a substantial cost. Further, the cost of delivering IT services can commonly exceed annual budgets. This is due to the fact that IT budgets are largely driven by the projects planned to occur in that fiscal year, which can vary extensively in cost from initiation to completion due to additional complexity and evolving needs/requirements.

Overall, given the bespoke operating models, level of dedicated resources and utilization of third-party support, each Municipalities budgeted, and actual IT expenditures break out somewhat differently. For example, in the Town of Midland, dedicated IT resources to support its in-house delivery model make up the largest component of its IT expenditure. Comparatively, the Town of Penetanguishene has no cost of in-house staff, thus costs are only for their MSA's and IT Procurement spend. The table below summarizes the components that make up each Municipalities actual IT expenditure in the table above:

Municipality	Cost Items		
	MSA's	**IT Procurement**	**Internal Staff**
Town of Midland	☒	☑	☑
Town of Penetanguishene	☑	☑	☒
Tay Township	☒	☑	☑
Tiny Township	☑	☑	☑

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[3] Note: upwards of 10% of Tay's figures include costs attributable to IT staff salaries for work on non-IT related projects

☑ – Indicates inclusion in total costs

☒ – Indicates not included in total cost

Source: Internal Financial Data

6.1.4.4.4 Analysis, Gaps, and Considerations

Strengths

o **Current Maintenance and Support** – positive feedback regarding internal IT staff being knowledgeable and providing strong levels of maintenance and support service today with limited capacity and supporting technology.

o **Outsourced Service Satisfaction** – across the Municipalities of North Simcoe various amounts of IT work is outsourced to the local third-party IT provider Compu-SOLVE Technologies, and in general, there is a solid level of satisfaction from the Municipalities of North Simcoe with the current service levels received and relationship with the third-party provider.

o **Strategic Outsourcing** – broadly the Municipalities of North Simcoe are using third-party support logically today, focused on gain access to expensive infrastructure and greater levels of expertise that is currently unachievable in the current environment.

Gaps

o **IT, Digital and Customer Experience Strategies** – current lack of a formalized strategies surrounding IT, digital or customer experience, leading to unguided and uncoordinated decision making and investments being made collectively across the region, individual Municipalities, and their respective individual departments.

o **Limited Communication and Collaboration** – different IT service delivery models employed by the Municipalities result in little to no collaboration or sharing of resources or best practices, or that occurs across the Municipalities when it comes to IT, which limits efficiencies for all.

o **Resource Constraints** – it was widely recognized by staff from Municipalities with an in-house delivery model, that while current resources do a good job managing IT functions with limited capacity and support today, capacity, or lack thereof, was a significant challenge in completing all desired activities. Current IT staff have no excess capacity and often do not have the requisite time to stay ahead of day-to-day activities.

o **Reactive Resource Roles** – existing resources are primarily tasked to manage reactive and transactional activities and issues. Current IT staff rarely have the capacity or mandate to expand their scope and take on more strategic/proactive activities.

o **Online Services** – while some progress has been made recently on moving some services online, individually, and collectively, online service offerings across the Municipalities of North Simcoe are very limited. Many basic online services that are commonly found online in other comparable jurisdictions, such as bill/fine payments, applications for building and planning permits and general certificates (marriage, death etc.), are not available online to the public today.

6.1.4.4.5 Future State Opportunities

o **Align Delivery Model for IT** – explore the potential benefits of creating a centralized IT function between the four Municipalities of North Simcoe, with a universal mandate to serve all participating Municipalities equally, in correspondence with the relative needs

and contributions of each. This centralized/shared function could be built around an in-house delivery model by combining and enhancing the internal resources available across all Municipalities. Conversely, the function could be built around an outsourced delivery model, where more IT services are purchased from Compu-SOLVE technologies, but in a collaborative fashion to achieve greater buying power and preferred rates from the vendor. Either type of centralized delivery model would allow for the Municipalities of North Simcoe to align, standardize, and simplify the IT function (including tools, technologies, and processes) to make the function more efficient at the transactional level. Further, such a model could enhance the strategic value of the function, by expanding what is possible with greater levels of IT resource capacity and capability available across the region.

o **Develop IT Strategy** – as part of a shared delivery model, or as individual Municipalities, develop and establish a comprehensive IT strategy to support and guide effective decision making, planning, and alignment with internal IT needs and digital service offerings. The development of a formalized IT strategy across individual Municipalities, or collectively across the region, would support a more coordinated approach that serves as a guide to the work performed by internal or external IT teams, and in how tools and technologies are assessed, procured, and integrated to better enable the more effective and efficient delivery of services for residents or for staff within the Municipalities.

o **Standardized Online Service Offerings** – at a fundamental level, all the Municipalities of North Simcoe provide the same public facing services to residents. While today some Municipalities are more progressed than others on the delivery of online services, there is an opportunity for the Municipalities of North Simcoe to partner, as part of a shared delivery model, or as individuals, and standardize specifications/requirements to bring services online in collaboration. Doing so could significantly increase efficiencies, resulting in cost savings by removing duplicate activities across Municipalities, and reduced time to deployment of solutions.

o **Expanded IT Resources –** as part of a shared delivery model, or as individual Municipalities, increasing the level of capacity and expertise within current IT teams could provide benefits for the Municipalities of North Simcoe, including greater internal capacity to complete transactional maintenance and support activities, and expand the potential of internal IT teams to focus on strategic and value-add projects such as IT or Digital strategies or the delivery of online services to residents.

o **New Support Systems** – while current technology tools are well understood and are satisfactory for IT service delivery as it exists today, there remains an opportunity to increase the effectiveness and efficiency for in-house IT teams by adopting and fully utilizing more supporting IT technologies. Bringing in the right back end/support solutions, such as an IT ticketing software could enable the Municipalities and their respective IT teams to resolve internal and external maintenance and support queries more efficiently, streamline the IT issue resolution process and enable greater data tracking and reporting insights.

o **Performance Measurement** – as part of a shared delivery model, or as individual Municipalities, a preliminary package of standard KPIs should be developed to enhance insights and better track operational, service and performance levels for IT into the future. Enabled by more integrated tools and technology, this preliminary package of performance measures could allow IT service and performance to be measured more holistically, against defined targets and helping to ensure policies are being complied

with, IT service levels are meeting the needs of staff and residents, and that Municipal spending on IT is being optimized.

6.1.4.5   Legal Services

6.1.4.5.1 Objectives of the Review

Legal Services is a wide-ranging service function with the mandate of overseeing all legal matters of the Municipality and being actively involved in any activities that require legal opinion or guidance. Functions such as corporate governance, legal or strategic advice, procurement or contractual disputes, and land use planning or local by-law may fall under the umbrella of legal services. Legal Services was selected for review by the MPT with the following objectives in mind:

Objectives of the Service Review	• Identify opportunities to pool resources, including the potential use of more in-house legal resources
Framework Focus Areas	• Resources • Cost
Reasons for Selecting Services	• Potential duplication of service • Outsourcing of 'regular/ administrative' functions
Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Assessment	• Understand the need and requirements for legal expertise for each Municipality

6.1.4.5.2 Summary of Findings

Strengths

o **Current Resources and Support** – for the Town of Midland, current in-house legal services resources are highly knowledgeable, capable, and confident in the ability to successfully manage the service.

o **Service Satisfaction** – there is a high level of satisfaction from the Municipalities of North Simcoe with the current service levels received from outsourced third-party legal firms.

Gaps

o **Fragmented Support** – each Municipality uses a variety of different outsourced third-party support to handle legal affairs.

o **Process Documentation** – for the Town of Midland, which has some in-house legal resources, current processes and procedures are not well documented, if at all.

o **Resource Constraints** – for the Town of Midland, lack of resource capacity is a significant challenge, as the current staff often do not have the requisite time to focus on higher-value strategy type work due to the demands of day-to-day activities.

Preliminary Opportunities

o **Pool Resources for Outsourced Legal Support** – explore the potential of the Municipalities collaborating and pooling resources to collectively partner with third-party legal firms.

o **Enhanced Existing In-House Legal Teams** – build business cases to determine the costs/benefit of adding or bringing in an in-house lawyer and/or legal support staff to manage 'routine' functions and the management of requests between third-party firms and the Municipality.

o **Shared Delivery Model for Legal Services** – explore the potential of creating a centralized legal services function between the Municipalities of North Simcoe.

6.1.4.5.3 Service Profile

Governance

Figure 6: Legal Services Governance Structures
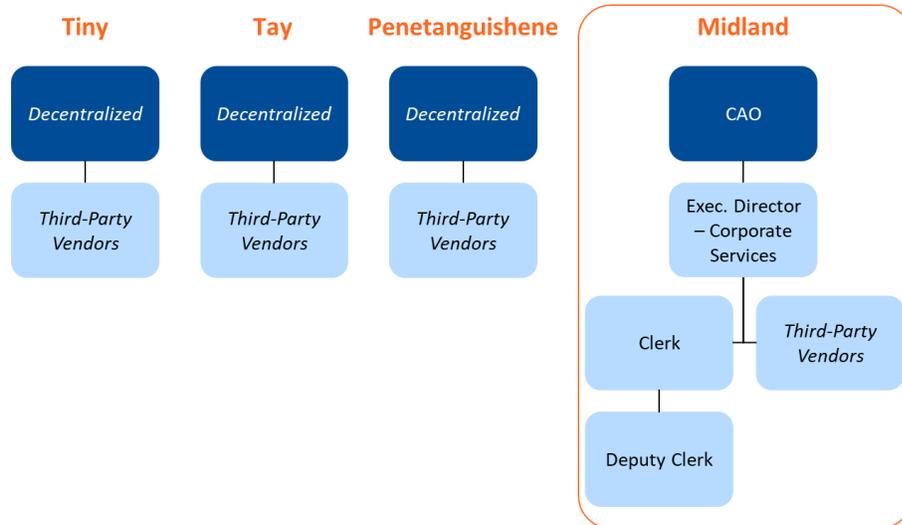
As a decentralized service in the Town of Penetanguishene and the Townships of Tiny and Tay, all legal services, including responsibilities and accountabilities, are contracted out to various third-party legal firms. However, the Town of Midland utilizes some partially dedicated in-house resources for legal services, such as the Director of Corporate Services that reports into the CAO, and two supporting Clerks, as outlined in the figure above. While the Town of Midland has some in-house legal resources to draw on for routine or non-complex activities or legal matters, the Town still relies on the ability to contract out a significant number of activities to third-party firms.

Service Level

Overall, performance measurement (via KPI's) and service levels have not been defined for legal services across the Municipalities of North Simcoe. The Municipalities are not currently collecting this data and thus not tracking against it. However, as noted above, stakeholders generally expressed positive comments on the quality of legal services provided by third-party firms today.

Resources

As previously mentioned, legal services are predominately decentralized and contracted out across the Municipalities of North Simcoe today. As a result of this structure, the Townships of Tiny, Tay and the Town of Penetanguishene do not have any dedicated legal resources. In discussions with stakeholders regarding the third-party vendors used by the Municipalities today, there was general agreement that resources provided by the vendors were sufficient, both in number and capability, and each Municipality had a high level of satisfaction with the current service levels received from the contracted vendors.

The Town of Midland differs slightly from the other three Municipalities, however, as they do have one resource partially dedicated to the legal services of the Municipality, who was hired in October of 2020. The Director of Corporate Services, while only partially dedicated to legal

services, is responsible for managing all related legal activities, inquiries, and initiatives across the organization.

Processes

As previously mentioned, legal services are predominately decentralized and contracted out across the Municipalities of North Simcoe today. As such, the vast majority of legal-related activities, policies and procedures are managed by the contracted third-party firm. As such, current processes for delivering legal services were not deemed to be inefficient or requiring intervention.

Cost

The table below displays the historical annual budget versus actual expenditure on outsourced legal services across the Municipalities of North Simcoe over the past three years:

Municipality	2017	2018	2019	Total
Town of Midland*				
Budget	-	-	-	-
Actual	-	-	-	-
Town of Penetanguishene				
Budget	$42,000	$42,900	$42,900	**$127,800**
Actual	$36,434	$52,983	$175,646	**$265,063**
Tay Township				
Budget	$92,500	$87,500	$89,500	**$269,500**
Actual	$72,557	$90,689	$87,735	**$250,981**
Tiny Township				
Budget	$102,600	$97,000	$110,700	**$310,300**
Actual	$137,900	$154,360	$114,800	**$407,060**
Source: Internal Financial Data ***** – Indicates data not available				

As seen above, actual expenditure on legal/litigation services can represent a fairly large cost to the Municipalities, with 2 of 3 Municipalities spending over the budget during the 3-year period. Examining the Town of Penetanguishene, expenditures are significantly greater than the allocated budget, mainly due to the significant costs incurred during 2019. Similarly, Tiny Township has incurred more than expected costs for legal/litigation services each year, but most notably in 2018.

6.1.4.5.4 Analysis, Gaps, and Considerations

Strengths

o **Current Resources and Support** – currently, Midland's in-house legal resource is confident in the ability to manage the function effectively despite capacity and support limitations.

o **Service Satisfaction** – a large amount of legal work across the Municipalities of North Simcoe is outsourced to third-party legal firms, and generally, there is a high level of satisfaction with the current service levels received from contracted third-party vendors.

Gaps

- o **Legal Support Utilization** – Each Municipality uses a variety of different outsourced third-party support to handle legal affairs and often use different vendors for different types of legal activities or functions, typically resulting in smaller agreements and lesser utilization and potential for sub-optimal pricing.
- o **Process Documentation** – generally across the Municipalities of North Simcoe with some in-house legal resources, current processes and procedures are not well documented, if at all.
- o **Resource Constraints** – while current resources generally do a good job managing the function with limited capacity and support, it was recognized by those in-house legal resources that capacity, or lack thereof, was a significant challenge in delivering the service effectively. Current staff often do not have the requisite time to focus on higher-value strategy type work due to the demands of day-to-day activities.

6.1.4.5.5 Future State Opportunities

- o **Pool Resources for Outsourced Legal Support** – explore the potential of the Municipalities of North Simcoe to collaborate and pool collective resources in partnering with third-party legal firms to become a larger client with more negotiating power and deserving of more attention. It is noted, however, that there are specific situations (e.g., disputes) in which each Municipality would want separate law firms.
- o **Enhanced Existing In-House Legal Teams** – each Municipality could build a business case to determine the costs and benefits of adding or bringing in additional lawyers and/or legal support staff to manage requests and activities between third-party firms and the Municipality and execute those more 'routine' legal functions that are commonly outsourced to third-parties today due to resource and capacity constraints.
- o **Shared Delivery Model for Legal Services** – explore the potential of creating a centralized legal services function between the Municipalities of North Simcoe, with a universal mandate to serve all participating Municipalities equally, in correspondence with the relative needs and contributions of each.

Current State Findings

Section 2 – Protective and Development Services

In-Scope Services Reviewed in this Section:

6. Emergency Management

7. Fire & Emergency Services

8. Land Use Planning

9. Building Services

6.1.4.6 Emergency Management

6.1.4.6.1 Objectives of the Review

Emergency Management involves the planning and coordination of responses to emergency situations that may arise within a municipality; including the development of an Emergency Response Plan. Emergency Management was selected for review by the MPT with the following objectives in mind:

Objectives of the Service Review	• Identify opportunities to improve coordination of Emergency Management across municipalities • Identify opportunities for resource/role sharing
Framework Focus Areas	• Governance • Process
Reasons for Selecting Services	• Review and explore opportunities for shared Emergency Management planning, coordination, etc. • Review opportunities for coordinating training/ preparedness and response drills
Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Assessment	• Understand existing Emergency Management roles and responsibilities • Review existing policies and procedures associated with Emergency Management

6.1.4.6.2 Summary of Findings

Strengths

o **Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities –** Each municipality has clearly identified Community Emergency Management Coordinator and Emergency Management Program Committee/Community Control Group. Roles and responsibilities are well defined and were described as being understood by stakeholders involved in Emergency Management. Stakeholders commented that each municipality complies with underlying provincial legislation.

o **Established Emergency Response Plans –** Each municipality has developed and approved Emergency Response Plans.

o **Well Resourced EOCs –** Emergency Operation Centres, and designated alternate sites have been created by each Municipality and were described as well resourced (tools, technology, etc.)

Gaps

o **Duplicated Roles Across the Municipalities and Limited Prioritization –** Emergency Management is not the dedicated focus of any individual across the municipalities. It is an additional duty (i.e., Fire Chief/Deputy Chief as the CEMC), which is difficult to prioritize with other competing day-to-day tasks. Regular activities, such as plan reviews, risk assessments, etc., are completed by resources in each municipality without formal coordination.

o **Small Staff Complements Limit Emergency Management depth –** The relatively small size of each of the municipalities means that in the event of a prolonged emergency response situation, there is limited capacity to 'rotate teams' across the MECG.

o **Emergency Management Culture does not appear to have advanced beyond provincial requirements –** While stakeholders clearly articulated that municipalities have established processes and procedures to comply with provincial legislation, it does not appear than an emergency management culture has been promoted across the municipalities – for example, there is opportunity to enhance the resiliency of programs and services across the municipality through initiatives such as business continuity planning.

o **Limited Joint Training** – Stakeholders noted that joint training initiatives occur very infrequently.

Preliminary Opportunities

o **Consolidation of Emergency Response Plan and Control Group -** Future State project activities should explore options to formalize the sharing of Emergency Management. This could include establishing a single/shared CEMC position, consolidation of emergency management program committees, integrated Emergency Response Plan, increased integration with the county, etc.

o **Increased collaborative training and response drills** – Develop shared training programs/plans for Emergency Management.

o **Support/Continue transition to IMS for Emergency Management for all North Simcoe Municipalities –** A transition to IMS for Emergency Management has already been identified as an objective and should continue.

6.1.4.6.3 Service Profile

Governance

All four North Simcoe municipalities have established Emergency Response Plans. The Emergency Response Plans support the response and management of an emergency in the community. This includes steps/guides to response efforts, identification of key persons/roles, equipment, and resources for use in an emergency. The Emergency Response Plan also outlines the required coordination during an emergency.

In each municipality, the plan is maintained by the Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) with the Emergency Management Program Committee/Community Control Group. Each Municipality has a designated CEMC and alternate. Emergency Management Program Committee/Community Control Group structure is also defined for each municipality, along with roles and responsibilities.

Currently, each municipality is responsible for the development and implementation of their own individual and unique Emergency Response Plans. This also includes annual updates, training, exercises and drills, hazard assessments, etc.

Service Level

No specific KPIs or metrics specific to Emergency Management were identified during the review. For example, no metrics associated with the number or frequency of training initiatives, hazard assessments, etc., were identified.

Resources

As noted above, each municipality has identified key staff involved in Emergency Management. The CEMC generally consists of 8-10 members, with alternates also identified. The relatively small size (in terms of staffing) of the North Simcoe municipalities was identified as a limitation to Emergency Management. Specifically, in the event of a sustained emergency situation, some stakeholders felt that it would be difficult to staff multiple teams with staff from a single municipality.

Each municipality has a designated Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and secondary/alternate EOC (in some cases, the secondary EOC was identified as a neighboring municipality's EOC). Stakeholders did not identify any concerns or gaps with respect to the resourcing, technology, and functionality of their municipality's EOC.

Processes

Each municipality's Emergency Response Plan outlines key roles, responsibilities, and high-level processes associated with Emergency Management. The Emergency Response Plans for both Tay and Tiny are based on Incident Management System (IMS). IMS provides a standardized approach to emergency management and guides how "personnel, facilities, equipment, procedures, and communications may be coordinated within a common structure during an incident."[4]

Midland and Penetanguishene have not transitioned to an IMS for Emergency Management, however, it was noted that this is an initiative that some key stakeholders would like to move forward with and may have been a priority for 2020 prior to COVID-19 disruptions.

Cost

Staff time is a primary driver of Emergency Management costs. Excluding staff costs, budgeted amounts for Emergency Services range from approximately $2,000-$18,000 for each municipality. This represents less than 1% of the municipalities' budgets.

6.1.4.6.4 Analysis, Gaps, and Considerations

Currently, each Municipality individually provides Emergency Management services, including Emergency Response Plan, Emergency Management Program Committee/Community Control Group, training and exercises, reporting, etc. A consistent theme across stakeholder consultations is that competing priorities across the municipality mean Emergency Management does not receive a high level of attention (i.e., only 10% of key stakeholder time).

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[4] Ontario. (2018). "A Guide to Incident Management System Implementation." Available via: https://www.emergencymanagementontario.ca/english/emcommunity/ProvincialPrograms/IMS/Resources/CommunicationProducts/IMS_FAQ.html

Stakeholders noted that past training and exercises have 'occasionally' involved multiple municipalities, not regular or frequent events. Generally, in the area of Emergency Management, this was seen by stakeholders as an opportunity for improvement by increasing collaboration to better use limited resources and coordinated planning/response to emergency situations.

6.1.4.6.5 Future State Opportunities

Based on the summary of current state findings from document review and stakeholder consultations, the following preliminary future state opportunities have been developed for consideration. These opportunities represent a 'long-list' of considerations to be further refined and reviewed with key stakeholders.

- o **Consolidation of Emergency Response Plan and Control Group** – Future State project activities should explore options to formalize the sharing of Emergency Services. Options to consider should include:
    - Establishing a single/shared CEMC for all four municipalities (or a subset of them – i.e., urban/rural).
    - Consolidate Emergency Management Program Committee/Community Control Groups across the four municipalities (or a subset of them)
    - Increase integration of Emergency Management with the County (i.e. County-level CEMC that works with Community Emergency Management Program Committees of each municipality).
    - Rotation of a lead role with the objective of organizing and implementing training, exercises, reporting, etc. This would also support some consolidation of a broader Emergency Plan.
    - Consolidation of Emergency Response Plans
- o **Increased collaborative training and response drills** – Develop shared training programs/plans for Emergency Management.
- o **Support/Continue transition to IMS for Emergency Management for all North Simcoe Municipalities –** A transition to IMS for Emergency Management has already been identified as an objective and should continue.

6.1.4.7   Fire & Emergency Services

6.1.4.7.1 Objectives of the Review

Fire and Emergency Services includes services to protect life and property from fire and other hazards through emergency responses, public education, and enforcement activities. Fire and Emergency Management was selected for review by the MPT with the following objectives in mind:

Objectives of the Service Review	• Identify opportunities for cost-savings from shared procurement • Consider additional opportunities for shared training • Explore opportunities for shared resources and/or staff
Framework Focus Areas	• Governance; Service Levels; Process; Costs; Resources;
Reasons for Selecting Services	• Significant cost associated with providing service (high budget item) • Procurement and training not coordinated between Fire Departments
Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Assessment	• Understand current examples of shared service delivery/resources for Fire and Emergency Management • Understand service levels and KPIs associated with each Municipality's Fire and Emergency Services

6.1.4.7.2 Summary of Findings

Strengths

o **Strong Collaboration and Existing Working Group -** The municipalities have established quarterly meetings of the Fire Chiefs, which includes regular agenda items focused on items/activities such as procurement planning, recruitment, and training requirements.

o **Well Resourced Departments –** Consultations with stakeholders indicated that overall, the Fire Departments of North Simcoe are well resourced with respect to facilities, equipment, and vehicles. Capital plans have been established to consider future needs.

o **Existing Shared Services –** The Municipalities of Midland and Penetanguishene have established a shared Fire Chief Position (0.5 FTE for each municipality) as the Chief of each independent fire department.

Gaps

o **Limited Performance Reporting –** Currently, limited data is being used for reporting purposes. Annual reports are not prepared by the Fire Departments, although Tay Township did provide a copy of a monthly Fire Department activity report prepared for Council.

o **Overlapping Training Costs/Efforts –** While there is some collaboration on training activities, each Fire Department is also involved in independent training activities, including using/sending firefighters to external facilities for training exercises. Chiefs noted that the growing level of regulatory requirements around staff certifications would likely add to training requirements and costs.

o **Duplicated Maintenance Activities/Costs –** Fire Departments maintain specialized equipment that may not always be serviceable by town mechanics. Each Department is maintaining its own equipment and has individual agreements to service equipment.

o **Staffing Levels –** The rural volunteer departments noted ongoing challenges associated with maintaining full staffing complements for their Fire Departments.

Preliminary Opportunities

o **Enhance Data Analysis and Annual Reporting –** Establish processes for data collection and the development of annual reports.

o **Explore Opportunity for a Shared Resource(s) to Enhance Data Analysis and Reporting –** Three of the four Fire Departments use the same technology platform, the establishment of a shared administrative resource(s) to support this function would enable the better/more consistent collection, review, and analysis of data from the Departments.

o **Identify Opportunities for Increase Coordination on Public Education Activities -** This may include a collaborative approach to better understanding priority education activities (i.e., based on risk-data) and coordaining communication – especially for businesses/institutions/ organizations that may operate across the North Simcoe municipalities.

o **Explore Potential for Greater Collaboration on the Maintenance of Specialized Fire Services Equipment –** Review and consider a shared resource with the expertise to perform specialized maintenance services and/or more collaboration in the contracting of third-party vendors performing specialized maintenance activities.

o **Develop a Formal Business Case for a Shared Training Facility in North Simcoe –** Future State activities will further define the potential benefits of developing a business case for the development of a North Simcoe fire training facility.

o **Ensure Establishing and Regulating Bylaws accurately reflect the current needs of municipalities –** Establishing and Regulating Bylaws should clearly outline the services provided by the Fire Department.

o **Collaborate on Radio Enhancements –** Consider collaboratively moving services towards a digital platform and linking all through the existing four tower sites, with the resulting enhanced redundancy and security that this provides.

6.1.4.7.3 Service Profile

Governance

The four North Simcoe Municipalities each operate their own independent Fire Department overseen by a Fire Chief. In Tiny and Penetanguishene, the Fire Chief reports to the Chief Administrative Officer. Fire Chiefs for Midland and Tay report to members of the senior leadership teams (Executive Director Community and Development, and General Manager Protective and Development Services). The Fire Chief position for Midland and Penetanguishene is a shared resource split between each municipality (0.5 FTE each).

Across the four Municipalities, the Fire Chiefs are accountable for ensuring the Departments meet the requirements of the individual department Establishing and Regulating bylaws. The Fire Chiefs are supported by Deputy Fire Chiefs, and other members of the Fire Department's leadership team whose responsibilities generally align to mandated department requirements, including Public Education, Inspection, and Suppression/Response. This includes:

▪ Tay - Deputy Fire Chief/Fire Prevention Officer

- Tiny – Deputy Fire Chief (Operations, Training, Apparatus and Equipment) and Division Chief (Prevention/Public Education, Emergency Management, Occupational Health and Safety and Building Facilities)
- Penetanguishene – Deputy Fire Chief
- Midland – Deputy Fire Chief

Across the four Fire Departments, the Fire Departments are responsible for the recruitment of staff, fleet management, and procurement (except Midland, where there is corporate procurement support) activities. The processes and resources involved in these activities are detailed below.

The Fire Chiefs of North Simcoe have established a Working Group that meets quarterly to discuss operational and capital requirements. Additional information is included in the relevant sections below.

Service Level

The Councils of each of the North Simcoe Municipalities have the means to outline the services offered by each Municipality's fire department. Through bylaws and resolutions, the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 (FPPA), allows a Council to outline the types and level of fire protection services it provides to ensure they met local needs and circumstances. The FPPA also establishes public education and fire prevention as mandatory municipal responsibilities.

Establishing and Regulating Bylaws are a common method for indicating the type and level of fire protection services provided by a Municipality. These documents were provided by three of the North Simcoe Municipalities (Midland, Penetanguishene, Tiny). The table below summarizes services offered by each Municipality, based on a review of Establishing and Regulating Bylaws and key stakeholder interviews.

Service	Municipality			
	Town of Midland	**Town of Penetanguishene**	**Tay Township**	**Tiny Township**
Fire Suppression	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Motor Vehicle Rescue (on and/or off Roadways)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emergency First Responder	EMS Primary; only if EMS delayed	EMS Primary; only if EMS delayed	Yes	Yes
Ice/Water Rescue	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Confined Space Rescue	Via Fee for Service with City of Barrie	Via Fee for Service with City of Barrie	No	No
Trench Rescue	Via Fee for Service with City of Barrie	Via Fee for Service with City of Barrie	No	No

Service	Municipality			
	Town of Midland	**Town of Penetanguishene**	**Tay Township**	**Tiny Township**
Hazardous Material Response	Via County MOU with the City of Barrie	Via County MOU with the City of Barrie	Via County MOU with the City of Barrie	Via County MOU with the City of Barrie
High Angle Rescue	Via Fee for Service with City of Barrie	Via Fee for Service with City of Barrie	Via Fee for Service with City of Barrie	No
Fire Safety/ Public Information	- School fire safety programs - Commercial, industrial, and institutional staff training	- School fire safety programs - Commercial, industrial, and institutional staff training	Yes	- Particular emphasis on children and seniors fire safety programs
Fire Prevention Program	- Examination and inspection for compliance with legislation, regulations, etc.	- Examination and inspection for compliance with legislation, regulations, etc.	- Examination and inspection for compliance with legislation, regulations, etc.	- Examination and inspection for compliance with legislation, regulations, etc.

The services provided by each Municipality's Fire Department were described as a response to ensuring mandated requirements (i.e., Public Education and Fire Prevention) are achieved and meeting community needs with respect to fire/emergency responses.

Currently, the service levels are not reported on an ongoing or regular basis (i.e., no annual reports, etc.) across any of the Municipalities. No Key Performance Indicators or summaries of Department activities (i.e., call volumes and types, response times, etc.) were available. This is despite the identification of a requirement in the Establishing and Regulating Bylaws reviewed that required the preparation of an annual report for the department. Consequently, it is difficult to provide an evidence-based assessment of service levels.

This represents a clear opportunity for improvement for municipalities to enhance reporting capabilities. A consistent theme in discussions with Fire Chiefs and Deputy Chiefs noted that annual reporting has not been prioritized by leadership/Council in recent years, and that limited administrative support hinders the ability to generate reports or conduct analysis on department activities.

During these consultations, Fire Chiefs and Deputy Chiefs did not express any issues or concerns with the provision of frontline operations related to fire suppression, rescue, medical responses, etc. The rural municipalities did note a growing concern about the growing turnover rate of volunteer firefighters and maintaining a consistent level of trained crews available for dispatch, especially during the Monday to Friday,9am to 5pm, timeframe. With respect to public education activities specifically, while no stakeholder expressed a specific concern or issue with how these activities are delivered, there were comments indicating that this could be an area where some stakeholders would like to see improvements – specifically that there could be an opportunity to work more closely together across the North Simcoe Group.

Resources

Fire Departments across North Simcoe are staffed with a mixture of full-time and part-time staff, including the use of volunteer/on-call firefighters that operate out of eleven Fire Halls across the North Simcoe Region.

North Simcoe Fire Department Resources				
Resources	**Municipality**			
	Midland	**Penetanguishene**	**Tay**	**Tiny**
Fire Halls	1	1	4	5
Chief	0.5	0.5	1	1
Deputy/Division Chief	1	1	1	2 - Full Time
Executive/Office Support	1	0.5	0.5	1
Fire Prevention Officer	1	1 - Volunteer	*	2 - On-Call
Fire Training Officer	1		0.65	2 - On-Call
Mechanical Officer				1 - On-Call
District Chief			4 - Volunteers	2 - On-Call
Fire Captain / Lieutenants	4			15 - On-Call
Firefighter	6 - Full-Time 18 - Volunteer	28 - Volunteers	~75 - Volunteers	70 - On-Call

Each Fire Department operates its own equipment to support department operations. As outlined below, Fire Departments appear to have established asset management processes to ensure equipment is well maintained and replaced within the established lifecycle. Consultations with Fire Chiefs did not raise concerns or issues related to access to equipment/vehicles impeding any Department's ability to deliver services.

North Simcoe Fire Department Equipment				
Equipment	**Municipality**			
	Midland	**Penetanguishene**	**Tay**	**Tiny**
Vehicles Detailed	- 3 Light Duty - 2 Pumpers - 1 Tanker - 1 Aerial - 1 Rescue	- 2 Light Duty - 2 Pumper - 1 Tanker - 1 Aerial - 1 Utility	- 3 tankers - 4 pumpers - 4 Rescue - 1 Brush Truck - 2 Light duty	- 3 Light Duty - 6 Pumper - 2 Rescue - 5 Tanker - 1 Utility

In addition to the inventory of vehicles listed above, each Department maintains additional equipment, including hoses, bunker gear, breathing apparatuses/cylinders, radios/communication equipment, etc. Fire Chiefs noted that this equipment is also covered through asset management processes, ensuring appropriate maintenance and repairs when necessary, and replacement based on specific lifecycle requirements. Fire Chiefs also identified

the opportunity to access other resources through mutual aid agreements with other municipal jurisdictions.

Processes

While complete policies and procedures were only provided by the Township of Tiny for Fire and Emergency Services, no stakeholder consulted with expressed concerns with respect to the status of policies and procedures for the Fire Department. Stakeholders indicated that policies and procedures are current and reflect the operations/operating reality of the Fire Departments. Stakeholders also did not express concerns or issues regarding collaboration on frontline operational activities related to fire suppression/emergency response (i..e mutual aid, etc.).

Public Education

During discussions with stakeholders, it was noted that public education/awareness activities regarding fire safety/awareness promotion are not coordinating across the North Simcoe Fire Departments. While there is no legislative requirement, or existing processes establishing this as a requirement, some stakeholders saw this as a potential opportunity for greater collaboration.

Fleet Management

The Fire Chiefs and their Deputies are responsible for the management of Fire Department assets, including the department's fleet of vehicles. This includes scheduling and tracking maintenance needs for equipment used by the department. This is primarily done at an individual municipality level and in close collaboration with the municipalities' Public Works Department. Where possible and available, Fire Departments are using internal municipal mechanics to complete basic maintenance needs/work on non-specialized equipment. Some equipment operated by the Fire Departments require specialized technicians to service, and in these cases, this work is outsourced.

Procurement

In Penetanguishene, Tay, and Tiny, Fire and Emergency Services stakeholders noted that they are responsible for completing their procurement activities. Most often, the Public Works department would support larger procurements if necessary, as these municipalities do not have dedicated procurement support. The Fire Chiefs further noted that procurement needs is a standing agenda item on the quarterly Working Group meeting for the North Simcoe Chiefs.

Training and Recruitment

All four Fire Departments use volunteer firefighters. Only Midland also uses full-time staff. Recruitment, and broader HR activities, are generally the responsibility of the Fire Chief, unless delegated to a deputy. Recruitment specifically was identified as an activity that is largely driven by the Fire Chiefs and their deputies.

Given the need to recruit a large number of volunteer firefighters across the region, the four Fire Departments (along with the Township of Georgian Bay) have already established processes/activities to collaborate on recruitment (as well as training). Fire Chiefs recognized these as valuable activities as they are able to reach a larger audience of applicants in a method much more cost-effective than any individual department working alone. Examples of past

activities include joint annual recruitment drives that include common information sessions, applications and written/practical tests, and orientation guides/materials.

Both of the rural municipalities, Tay and Tiny, noted difficulties in recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters, with a high amount of turnover. This was described as less of an issue in Penetanguishene. Tay and Tiny both have multiple fire halls (four and five) to staff, requiring them to maintain a larger complement of firefighters.

Technology

Fire Department software has the ability to support effective electronic records management, including fire safety inspections and public education activities; assist with asset management (testing and maintenance planning and records) and inventory control, and staff record management. This can also include tracking performance measures and benchmarks/targets to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of activities.

Currently, two software systems are used by the Fire Departments, FireHouse (Tay) and FirePro (remaining three municipalities). The importance of data collection and monitoring was acknowledged by the Fire Chiefs/Deputy Chiefs consulted with, and no significant issues with software were raised. Tiny Township specifically mentioned a recent focus on improving the utilization of their FirePro software to better manage records and activities. However, the general limitation to full utilization of software, expressed by stakeholders across the North Simcoe region, was a limited staff capacity for data input/setup and analysis. As summarized above, technology is not currently being used to report on and analyze service level performance across any of the Fire Departments.

Cost

Fire costs are influenced by a number of unique factors in any specific municipality, including fire risks (building construction, type, etc.), geography (urban/rural mix, size, station, and travel times), fire prevention activities, collective agreements, staffing, etc. In North Simcoe Fire Department, operating budgets range from under $1M to over $2.5M, however, this represents roughly 8%-13% of budget costs across all municipalities.

Staff costs represent the largest component of the Departments' operating costs. For the municipalities using volunteer/on-call firefighters, this includes remuneration for training, fire prevention, and other activities as well as responses. Other significant cost drivers for Fire and Emergency Services include:

- o   Training (recruit training and ongoing training; internal/external)
- o   Repair and maintenance (facilities and equipment)
- o   Insurance

6.1.4.7.4 Analysis, Gaps, and Considerations

The North Simcoe Fire Departments' stakeholders described positive working relationships and a commitment to the delivery of effective and efficient fire and emergency services. The municipalities have established quarterly meetings of the Fire Chiefs, which includes regular agenda items focused on items/activities such as procurement planning and recruitment and training requirements. As summarized above, the municipalities also collaborate on recruitment activities in an attempt to address the challenges faced with maintaining adequate staffing levels.

Across the four fire departments, there appears to be an opportunity to improve the analysis and reporting of data to better understand service levels, including targets and KPIs. Currently, this information was not described as playing a prominent role in decision making.

Training is a critical requirement for Fire Department staff. Currently, this involves the use of internal trainers and external providers where required, as well as arranging for department firefighters to attend external training facilities.

6.1.4.7.5 Future State Opportunities

Based on the summary of current state findings from document review and stakeholder consultations, the following preliminary future state opportunities have been developed for consideration. These opportunities represent a 'long-list' of considerations to be further refined and reviewed with key stakeholders.

- o **Enhance Data Analysis and Annual Reporting –** KPIs and performance targets should be established for each department, in alignment with department Establishing and Regulating bylaws. KPIs and performance data should be reviewed regularly to identify opportunities for operational improvements. For example, this would include the ability to better understand the root cause of fire response calls, with a view that focusing efforts on root cause issues could reduce the need for deployment of resources.
- o **Explore opportunity for a shared resource(s) to enhance data analysis and reporting –** Three of the four Fire Departments use the same technology platform, the establishment of a shared administrative resource(s) to support this function would enable the better/more consistent collection, review, and analysis of data from the Departments.
- o **Identify Opportunities for Increase Coordination on Public Education Activities** – The Fire Departments currently collaborate on public education activities, however, some stakeholders identified that there might be additional opportunities to enhance this coordination. This may include a collaborative approach to better understanding priority education activities (i.e., based on risk-data) and coordaining communication – especially for businesses/institutions/ organizations that may operate across the North Simcoe municipalities.
- o **Explore Potential for greater collaboration on the maintenance of specialized fire services equipment –** Currently, each municipality engages external vendors for maintenance on specialized fire services equipment/vehicles. A shared resource with the expertise to perform specialized maintenance services would reduce the reliance each municipality has on external providers (and corresponding costs). Alternatively, a joint contract with a third-party provider may be a more efficient structure for engaging external support. Future State activities will attempt to quantify the potential impact of a shared mechanic resource in comparison to existing vendor costs.
- o **Develop a formal business case for a shared training facility in North Simcoe –** The North Simcoe fire departments currently incur training costs associated with renting/attending and travelling to training facilities outside of North Simcoe. This represents a duplicated cost across the municipalities, which may be possible to reduce if training could be provided in North Simcoe. Future State activities will further define the potential benefits of developing a business case for the development of a North Simcoe fire training facility.
- o **Collaborate on Radio Enhancements –** Consider collaboratively moving services towards a digital platform and linking all through the existing four tower sites, with the resulting enhanced redundancy and security that this provides.

o **Ensure Establishing and Regulating Bylaws accurately reflect the current needs of municipalities –** Establishing and Regulating Bylaws should clearly outline the services provided by the Fire Department.

6.1.4.8   Land Use Planning

6.1.4.8.1 Objectives of the Review

Local government planning establishes land use patterns through growth strategies and Official Plans. The Land Use Planning service coordinates growth and decides where services are placed and provides a framework for municipal zoning bylaws. Staff are responsible for advising the public, Council and the Committee of Adjustment on planning related matters.

Land Use Planning was selected for review by the MPT with the following objectives in mind:

Objectives of the Service Review	• Identify opportunities for sharing of specialist staff resources
Framework Focus Areas	• Resources • Cost • Technology • Process
Reasons for Selecting Services	• Staffing capacity constraints; • Address possible impacts from updated Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)
Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Assessment	• Understand key similarities, differences, and gaps across Municipalities' planning efforts • Identify duplication, gaps, and discrepancies for resident/customer processes • Understand state of Official Plans and Zoning By-Laws for municipalities • Examine number and complexity of variances and amendments

6.1.4.8.2 Summary of Findings

Strengths

o **Official Plans and Zoning By-Laws updated** – three of four Municipalities have recently updated their Official Plans, with Tay Township following in 2021. Zoning By-Law updates to align to the Official Plans are following directly. With these in place, it ensures that each is current with recent legislation changes and prepared as much as possible for future updates.

o **Collaborative approach taken by North Simcoe planners** – Planning representatives from each of the four Municipalities meet every 4-6 weeks to review current issues noted in their municipalities and possible resolution to upcoming provincial legislation.

o **Municipal Councils respect the planning function** – in general the municipal planning staff appeared to be well supported by the four municipal councils. However, there is a consistent message that Councils did not support a full cost recovery model to encourage development, which can challenge planning staff to support the process in an effective manner.

o **Townships work closely with applicants** – as the townships deal with few commercial applications, their concentration is on more residential and private building matters. They

have developed a good reputation with local residents by attending technical meetings in person with the applicants to assist in processing applications as promptly as possible.
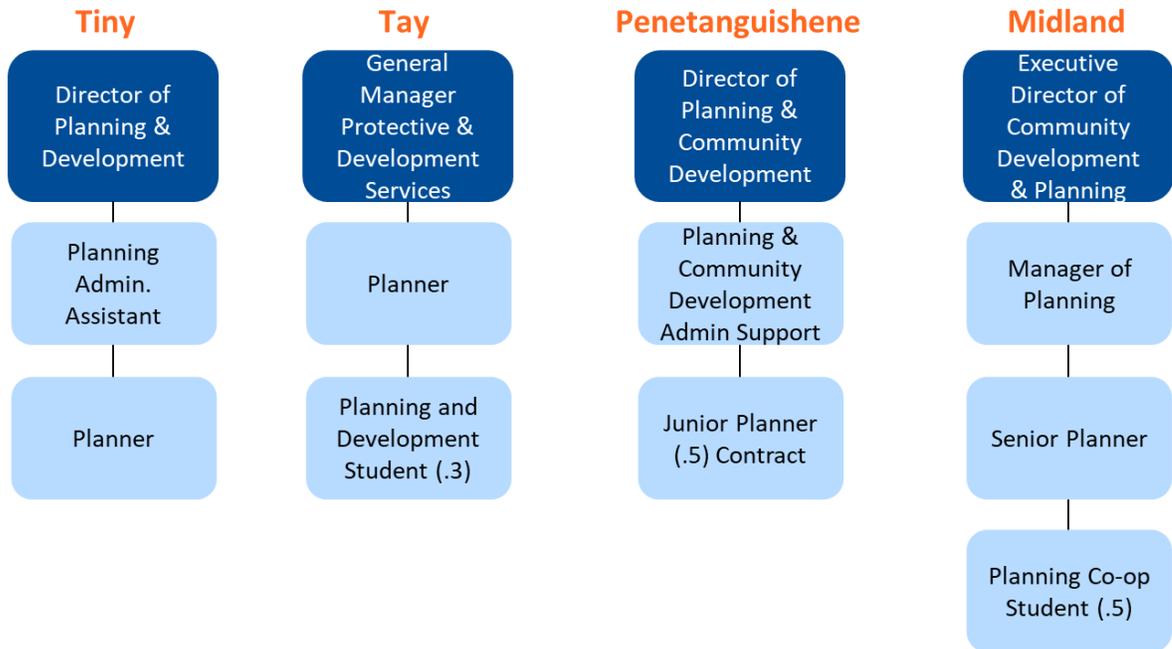
Gaps

o **Lack of development and policy planners –** because of the small size of the North Simcoe municipalities, the focus is on planner staffing as opposed to having the time and resources for developing strategy and policy. In addition, experienced planners are in high demand, highlighting recruitment and retention issues for the municipalities.

o **Lack of maintained KPI's -** There are many processes covered by Planning staff besides large applications. Currently there are no KPI's maintained that sets out the quantity and quality of staff efforts in supporting these processes. Most planning processes require council intervention or approvals, and these can be time consuming in the shepherding reports through various committee/council meetings.

o **Resource shortfall for Town Planners** – noted in Midland and Penetanguishene that the level of ad-hoc requests for planning services directly impacts the service that can be provided for more strategic direction and policy issues.

o **Fee structure for larger and complex developments are too low** – the time required is not appropriate to planning fees charged.

Preliminary Opportunities

o **Explore strategic and policy planner resource** – perform a cost benefit analysis on whether third-party service or a recruited resource can service all or part of the North Simcoe municipalities, attention to longer term strategic and policy issues of planning is needed.

o **Adoption of KPI's and outcome measurements** – with the future considerations of reviewing processes for all planning applications based on resulting KPI results in order to streamline the processes through the use of technology and delegation.

o **Review fee structure for larger and complex developments** – while ensuring that the application fee structures are competitively priced for North Simcoe development, the longer development life cycle of subdivision developments must relate to the planning activities involved in the lengthy processes. Ensure that there is an appropriate sharing of process costs between applicants and the tax base.

o **Standardize planning approach** - aligning, where possible, processes in all four municipalities to a more standardized approach where practical. This could facilitate the ability for resource sharing (one process to learn and implement) as well as streamlining communication to residents and developers alike (one process vs. four processes)

6.1.4.8.3 Service Profile

Governance

Tiny	Tay	Penetanguishene	Midland
Director of Planning & Development	General Manager Protective & Development Services	Director of Planning & Community Development	Executive Director of Community Development & Planning
Planning Admin. Assistant	Planner	Planning & Community Development Admin Support	Manager of Planning
Planner	Planning and Development Student (.3)	Junior Planner (.5) Contract	Senior Planner
			Planning Co-op Student (.5)

Note: there are multiple responsibilities at senior levels for the planning and building functions.

Service Level

There is a marked difference in planning activities between the Townships of Tiny and Tay and the Towns of Penetang and Midland. There is a significant differential between catering to residents building or expanding homes and cottages versus the development builder proposing larger scale subdivision applications.

As anticipated in the Engagement survey, there is a high Not Applicable choice for the customer satisfaction level for Planning Services, as many residents would not use these services until in a development mode. Interestingly, of the remaining residents that provided a rating for Land Use Planning services, it appears that residents either are equally neutral/satisfied versus dissatisfied in Midland and the Townships of Tiny and Tay. Penetanguishene had a much higher neutral/satisfied rating. From the comments provided, additional communications as to the Official Planning exercise and planning process were requested.

Penetanguishene and Midland have experienced a growth in volumes of applications that have doubled since 2015.

Both Towns report a difficulty in meeting subdivision planning applications

- Requirement for meeting timelines for formal council and public meetings carried more weight than supporting the applicant's need for a timely and fair process
- In many cases there are developments approved in planning several years ago. Larger developments can take years between concept, shovels in the ground, and completion

Tiny Township had noted an increasing level of historic preservation affecting their applications.

Resources

Municipality	Number of Resources	Salary & Benefits
Town of Midland	2	$161,592
Town of Penetanguishene	2	$156,317
Tay Township	2.2	$286,961
Tiny Township	2.5	$230,681
Source: 2019-2020 Operating Budgets		
Notes: **-** Directors/ Senior Staff assumed as 0.5 FTE except Tay where G.M. is allocated 0.9 FTE		

While the staffing for the planning function appears consistent, the additional resources in the Townships are for junior and/or student planning resources. The review and management of the more complex files often require additional planning resources that are contracted by municipalities. Currently, planners from the North Simcoe municipalities meet every 4-6 weeks.

Processes

The Planning Act is the principal legislation that prescribes how municipalities may plan, manage, and regulate land use in Ontario's communities. The Planning Act outlines matters of Provincial interest and enables the Province to issue policy statements that provide direction to municipalities on these matters of Provincial interest.

The Planning Act enables municipal councils to pass a variety of tools to regulate the use of land and the placement of buildings and structures on a lot. Under Section 16 of the Planning Act, most municipalities are obligated to prepare and adopt Official Plans in accordance with the requirements of the Act. Official Plans contain the goals, objectives, and policies to guide decision making on land use planning matters. This offers municipalities the opportunity for engaging the public with a process to reach out to provincial ministries, local service groups, contractors, residents, businesses, and seasonal visitors. Municipal decisions, by-laws, and public works are required to conform to the policies of the Official Plan.

From the following table, the North Simcoe municipalities have recently updated their Official Plans (through Midland is currently under appeal with their plan) with Tay Township in the midst of gaining approval of their plan for 2021. All are expected to revise their Zoning By-Laws in the next year.

Municipality	Last Official Plan Update	Last Zoning By-Law Update
Town of Midland	2020	2021
Town of Penetanguishene	2020	2021
Tay Township	1999	2001
Tiny Township	2018	2021
Source: Municipal Data		

All municipalities have provided advice and steps required in the Planning process on their web sites. While these are helpful in understanding the overall process, there is frequent reference to

meeting with the Planning Departments to ensure appropriate insight to the application is received by the applicant prior starting any project. Ensuring that residents realize that the processes involve multiple steps and approvals by the municipality and adjustment committees will take time and will be based on the complexity of the application. Realistic timelines for these steps, and the ability for the municipality to meet these dates are crucial to maintaining public satisfaction.

Subdivision and multi-unit planning applications that are received, mostly in the Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene, often require multiyear review and planning decisions. This also takes the form of additional effort to review situations where the application changes based on the progress of the developer and the market conditions. When additional studies are required, the impact of staff turnover (since the first application) and the possible requirement for other consulting staff to finalize a decision, results in additional cost and staff time. Based on the complexity of the application, this requires staff time of the senior planning team. An example in Penetanguishene was provided where a development is now in its fourth phase and has been in approval since 1982.

Technology

There is very little technology involved in the service. The municipalities use different Excel spreadsheets for tracking applications and physical files of drawings and documents. All the municipalities use the GIS system provided by Simcoe County. It was noted that for security reasons, access to the GIS system was restricted to in-office computers, which caused issues during COVID-18 restrictions.

The GIS planning map software is available for resident use and is provided on the municipality websites.

Cost

Municipality	Planning		Committee of Adjustment	
	Revenue	Expenses	Revenue	Expenses
Town of Midland	$70,566	$217,211	$25,100	$22,101
Town of Penetanguishene	$15,000	$223,280	$10,000	$4,740
Tay Township	$49,500	$456,315	$8,130	$3,170
Tiny Township	$138,600	$446,166	$44,500	$82,232
Source: 2019-2020 Operating Budgets, Tay Township 2020 Actual.				

Current planning revenues are not equivalent to expenses and thus the variance must be supported by the tax base of each Municipality.

Note: that the fees for a Midland 1600-unit application received $15,000 from the developer and a similar development in Hamilton would have would have resulted in over $300,000 in fees.

6.1.4.8.4 Analysis, Gaps, and Considerations

The Official Plans are the foundation that local planners have to ensure that development activities within the municipality align regarding community development, employment areas, housing, public space, infrastructure, economic development, energy, resource management, natural heritage, agriculture, cultural heritage, and public health and safety. With Tay Township

in the midst of finalizing its Official Plan, all four municipalities with have Official Plans in place that will provide the basis for any updates to the Zoning By-Laws within each municipality.

Planning applications ensure that developments are approved by the municipality and meet the by-laws for the community. Discussion with applicants to determine what is possible within the guidelines, as opposed to what is not possible, often requires attention from senior staff in order to maintain resident satisfaction in what can be a public matter. While specialized skills may be required for complex situations, the local knowledge and experience with the municipality and its residents has been identified as key to each municipality's planning organization.

The Planning leadership in the municipalities also has responsibility for the Building Services component. While this is typical in smaller municipalities, it does make time allocation decisions difficult, especially where priority or complex planning matters require the involvement of the senior resources. This has led to contracting planning resources to assist in these situations where overloaded senior staff offload applications, as necessary.

There is a lack of KPI's and outcome measurements that sets out the quantity and quality of staff efforts in supporting the Planning processes. These would greatly assist staff in streamlining processes and reviewing staffing requirements.

The Planning function differs between the Townships and the Towns. Similar to the Building Services area (Section 4.9), the Townships are dealing with mostly individual residents looking for approvals for home or cottage new builds, additions, and renovations with possible encroachments or variance requirements. The Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene also have the individual residents, but in addition have the larger subdivisions and commercial builders.

6.1.4.8.5 Future State Opportunities

- o **Explore strategic and policy planner resource** – perform a cost benefit analysis on whether third-party service or a recruited resource can service all or part of the North Simcoe municipalities, attention to longer term strategic and policy issues of planning is needed.

- o **Adoption of KPI's and outcome measurements** – with the future considerations of reviewing processes for all planning applications based on resulting KPI results in order to streamline the processes through the use of technology and delegation.

- o **Review fee structure for larger and complex developments** – while ensuring that the application fee structures are competitively priced for North Simcoe development, the longer development life cycle of subdivision developments must relate to the planning activities involved in the lengthy processes. Ensure that there is an appropriate sharing of process costs between applicants and the tax base.

- o **Standardize planning approach** – aligning, where possible, processes in all four municipalities to a more standardized approach where practical. This could facilitate the ability for resource sharing (one process to learn and implement) as well as streamlining communication to residents and developers alike (one process vs. four processes).

6.1.4.9   Building Services

6.1.4.9.1 Objectives of the Review

Building Services liaises with members of the public regularly, as well as the municipal Planning departments on any build or renovations that occur within the municipality. Prior to starting building work, the Building Services is consulted regarding permits and inspections required. Building permits entail approval from the municipality for any plans to construct, renovate, demolish, or change the use of a building.

Building Services was selected for review by the MPT with the following objectives in mind:

Objectives of the Service Review	• Identify opportunities for a more coordinated approach to streamline resources and processes • Identify opportunities for technology improvements
Framework Focus Areas	• Resources • Process • Technology • Costs
Reasons for Selecting Services	• Resource (staff time) intensive service • Opportunity to improve service planning and delivery using technology to reduce/limit increase of costs
Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Assessment	• Document current examples of shared service delivery • Understand key similarities, differences, and gaps across Municipalities • Understand volumes, timing and complexities for services currently provided in the municipalities

6.1.4.9.2 Summary of Findings

Strengths

o **Current Resources** – municipalities are generally successfully in managing the inspection function according to provincial standards with minimal aids from technology.

o **Collaboration of resources between Midland and Penetanguishene** – there has been a long-standing services agreement for Building Inspection services.

o **Septic System Inspections –** all properties in Tiny Township have septic system inspections completed every six years.

o **Collaboration of Inspectors across Simcoe County –** Regular meetings with Building Inspectors from the whole of Simcoe County are used to update each other on the application of the latest technologies and collaborate on finding solutions to individual issues from the municipalities.

o **Focused on providing good customer service** – as well as meeting provincial standards for inspection timelines, all municipalities work at building good working relationship with residents and builders.
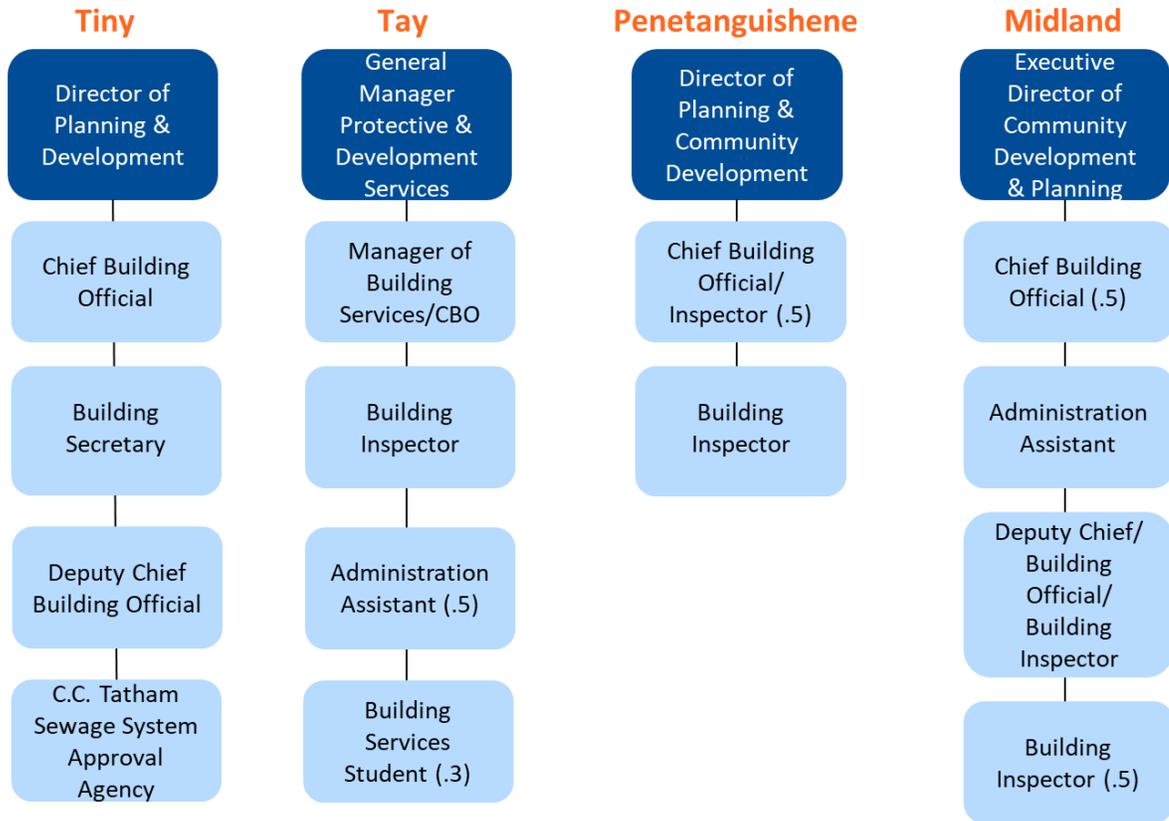
Gaps

o **Customer Expectations for services can be challenging –** municipalities deal with all types of residents, some with fully detailed and completed applications, and some with a design written on a napkin. All expect building services to assist them in the process.

o **Resource Limitations –** while the collaboration of building inspectors for Midland and Penetanguishene has been generally successful, there are peaks of activity that challenge the fixed rate resource sharing arrangement. This fluctuation in demand for services is also a concern for all North Simcoe municipalities.

o **Residents building without Permits –** despite the legal requirements and safety reasons for having buildings inspected as development is in progress, there are many residents that attempt to build – either unknowingly or flouting the law.

Preliminary Opportunities

o **Share experiences with technology –** as new inspection and billing software is planned for Penetanguishene in early 2021, the North Simcoe municipalities should openly share their experiences and lessons learned in the implementation process. Whether the same system is deployed in the other municipalities, or the experiences with tablet devices that Tay Township is considering, not collaborating, and discussing with the other municipalities is a lost opportunity.

o **Review of Services Agreement –** the allocation of resources and costs between Midland and Penetanguishene is fixed at a set rate. This sharing mechanism should be reviewed to ensure that both parties are receiving and funding the services as fairly as possible. Additionally, alternative sources to augment resources should be reviewed across the North Simcoe municipalities to accommodate seasonal or short-term fluctuations in requirements for building services.

o **Review of Fixed User Fees to Match Services Provided** – with the variation of customer expectations for building services ranging from simple consultations through to multiple meetings to assist with drafting of building plans, the fixed user fees based solely on type of building and area is not sustainable.

o **Reinforce the Legal and Safety Messages to the Public** – with a full complement of Communication staff now in each of the North Simcoe municipalities, use these resources to reinforce the Building Inspection process and requirements to build to the Code. This could be included as part of introducing the new technologies that are expected to be deployed in the near future. In addition, educational articles, or videos to assist in the resident's preparation of the Building Application can also improve customer satisfaction and reduce the municipality's time required to provide the service.

6.1.4.9.3 Service Profile

Governance

Tiny	Tay	Penetanguishene	Midland
Director of Planning & Development	General Manager Protective & Development Services	Director of Planning & Community Development	Executive Director of Community Development & Planning
Chief Building Official	Manager of Building Services/CBO	Chief Building Official/ Inspector (.5)	Chief Building Official (.5)
Building Secretary	Building Inspector	Building Inspector	Administration Assistant
Deputy Chief Building Official	Administration Assistant (.5)		Deputy Chief/ Building Official/ Building Inspector
C.C. Tatham Sewage System Approval Agency	Building Services Student (.3)		Building Inspector (.5)

Section 7 of the Building Code Act, 1992, S.O. 1992, Chapter 23, empowers municipal Councils to pass certain By-laws respecting construction, demolition, and change of use permits and inspections. The service is overseen by a senior member of the municipality's leadership team and is supported by a Chief Building Official and Building Inspectors as determined by the individual municipality. Building Services is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Ontario Building Code, local zoning by-laws, and other applicable laws and regulations. They are also responsible for carrying out building inspections wherever required.

Each Municipality has senior leadership that spans both Building and Planning Services.

Tiny Township has additional Septic field inspections for all properties in the township which are contracted to a third-party organization. Inspections are performed for each property on a six-year cycle.

There is a formal sharing of the Chief Building Inspector and Administration Assistant, and a full-time Building Inspector resource between Penetanguishene and Midland. A formal Service Level Agreement is in place where Midland resources are assigned to Penetanguishene, with funding provided by Penetanguishene on a set allocation basis.

Service Level

Municipality	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
	Permits Issued		Inspections		Fees Collected	
Town of Midland	388	404	1,576	2,110	$334,000	$710,000
Town of Penetanguishene	244	211	1,313	1,101	$132,000	$169,000
Tay Township	590	420	2680	2365	$341,000	$232,000
Tiny Township	-	-	-	-	-	$650,000
Source: 2018-2020 Operating Budgets, CBO Reports						

Municipalities report that they do not have issues with meeting inspection requirements to provincial guidelines. However, it is key to note that calls for inspections are at the discretion of the resident, and therefore these can peak with little advance notice. Under the Midland and Penetanguishene sharing of Building Inspectors, there have been situations of high inspection requirements where resources "assigned" to either of the municipalities has provided services the other in order to manage the workload.

This situation works within the geographically smaller confines of Midland and Penetanguishene but are not appropriate for the Townships at either side of North Simcoe group, as the travel distances required between inspections do not allow for easy resource sharing. In addition, both Tiny and Tay Townships have larger geographic areas to cover which increases travel time and travel expenses for the resources, however they are also constrained as higher volumes can impact the level of services provided.

From a customer satisfaction perspective from the Engagement Survey, Tay Township and Penetanguishene had the highest Neutral and better ratings of 67% and 63% respectively. As noted in the Survey section (4.0) above, both positive and negative comments were provided by residents, often relating to the same subject. Comments relating to clear communication on project inquiries, timelines for responses, and enforcement of permits on new builds and renovations identify positive and not positive experiences.

Resources

Municipality	Number of Resources	Salary & Benefits
Town of Midland	3	$196,244
Town of Penetanguishene	2	$158,521
Tay Township	3	$281,954
Tiny Township	3.5	$343,822
Source: 2019-2020 Operating Budgets		
Notes: - Directors/ Senior Staff assumed as 0.5 FTE except Tay where the G.M. is allocated 0.1 FTE * - Net of Penetanguishene Staffing		

The role of building officials as laid out by the *Building Code Act* is to:

- To establish operational policies for the enforcement of the *Act* and the building code within the applicable jurisdiction;

- To co-ordinate and oversee the enforcement of the *Act* and the building code within the applicable jurisdiction; and,

- To exercise powers and perform duties in an independent manner and in accordance with the standards established.

As noted above, Midland and Penetanguishene have a service agreement for Midland to provide the services of the Chief Building Inspector and a Building Inspector for the Town of Penetanguishene.

Processes

Processes are currently manual with forms and process descriptions for resident applications provided on municipality web sites. However, there are planned technology improvements with Penetanguishene implementing Building Inspection software in early 2021, with Midland and Tiny Township to follow expected to follow during the year.

Due to their nature, inspections are scheduled on a daily basis.

Issue is noted that both tiny and Tay townships have much greater geography to cover and therefore the scheduling is of applications across the township are more important.

Midland and Penetang being towns have a much smaller area to cover though the number of inspections is significantly higher.

Technology

As noted above, Penetanguishene will be implementing a new Building Inspection software platform (Evolta / Cloudpermit) for online applications and payments of fees in early 2021. Both Midland and Tiny Township are expected to follow later in 2021 once procurement has been finalized and with the learnings received from Penetanguishene implementation.

With on-line applications, there are significant savings from reduced storage costs have been noted by Tiny Township. Tay Township is expecting a similar system for building applications and inspections including laptop or tablets to do inspections electronically in the field.

Cost

Municipality	Revenue	Expenses
Town of Midland	$529,670	$196,244
Town of Penetanguishene	$198,500	$158,521
Tay Township	$272,382	$297,370
Tiny Township	$526,743	$356,388
Source: 2019-2020 Operating Budgets, Tay Township 2020 Actual.		

Concern that permitting fees are not high enough in some municipalities to cover services and therefore reserves are diminishing.

6.1.4.9.4 Future State Opportunities

o **Share experiences with technology –** as new inspection and billing software is planned for Penetanguishene in early 2021, the North Simcoe municipalities should openly share their experiences and lessons learned in the implementation process. Whether the same system is deployed in the other municipalities, or the experiences with tablet devices that Tay Township is considering, not collaborating, and discussing with the other municipalities is a lost opportunity.

o **Review of Services Agreement –** the allocation of resources and costs between Midland and Penetanguishene is fixed at a set rate. This sharing mechanism should be reviewed to ensure that both parties are receiving and funding the services as fairly as possible. Additionally, alternative sources to augment resources should be reviewed across the North Simcoe municipalities to accommodate seasonal or short-term fluctuations in requirements for building services.

o **Review of Fixed User Fees to Match Services Provided** – with the variation of customer expectations for building services ranging from simple consultations through to multiple meetings to assist with drafting of building plans, the fixed user fees based solely on type of building and area is not sustainable.

o **Reinforce the Legal and Safety Messages to the Public** – with a full complement of Communication staff now in each of the North Simcoe municipalities, use these resources to reinforce the Building Inspection process and requirements to build to the Code. This could be included as part of introducing the new technologies that are expected to be deployed in the near future. In addition, educational articles, or videos to assist in the resident's preparation of the Building Application can also improve customer satisfaction and reduce the municipality's time required to provide the service.

Current State Findings

Section 3 – Operational Services

In-Scope Services Reviewed in this Section:

10. Engineering Services

11. Fleet Management

6.1.4.10 Engineering Services

6.1.4.10.1 Objectives of the Review

Engineering Services is responsible for many capital works projects and overseeing municipal assets such as roads, water, wastewater, stormwater drainage and management, where applicable. Engineering Services is also responsible for the review of development applications as they are presented to the municipalities.

Engineering Services was selected for review by the MPT with the following objectives in mind:

Objectives of the Service Review	• Potential opportunity to rationalize use of third-party services • Potential opportunity to increase contract value/project size to attract additional vendors for third-party services
Framework Focus Areas	• Resources; Costs; Service Levels
Reasons for Selecting Services	• Requires specialized / technical skillsets • Already engage same third parties in many cases;
Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Assessment	• Understand current processes, including for the use of third-party service providers • Understand existing staff capacity constraints • Understand current use of technology, including Asset Management, in municipalities

6.1.4.10.2 Summary of Findings

Strengths

o **Ability to Manage Heavy Workloads** – Across the North Simcoe Municipalities, there are limited resources involved in Engineering Services. Stakeholders noted staff capacity constraints but have implemented processes and the use of third-party resources to complete engineering services.

Gaps

o **Limited tracking of performance metrics –** Across the municipalities, no performance or outcome data specific to Engineering Services was identified during the review, including the ability to actively manage Asset Management lifecycle decisions.

o **Paper-Based Processes –** Development applications appear to be heavily paper-based processes in the North Simcoe Municipalities, with the exception of Midland, which has recently implemented an electronic submission and review system.

o **Technology Access and Tools –** the North Simcoe Municipalities have access to ESRI ArcGIS licensing through the County. This helps promote a common platform and competitive pricing. However, it was noted that ArcGIS is not available to staff when working remotely (i.e., via tablet during a site visit) because of a need to be connected to the Municipality's/County's network. Additionally, MS Excel is used in some of the Municipalities as the primary asset management system.

o **Duplicated procurement of external vendors –** The municipalities engage a number of external vendors to supplement the municipal teams. This is often to provide specialized resources/skillsets. There have been very limited attempts to rationalize the use of

vendors across the region to gain access to improved pricing or competition or to streamline duplicative procurement activities.

Preliminary Opportunities

o **Enhance/Implement new Technology to Support Engineering Services –** Moving forward, future state activities should explore the benefits of greater collaboration on implementing technology solutions. Most specifically, this should include consideration for Electronic Document Submissions and Asset Management tools. Currently, all municipalities are able to meet regulatory requirements around asset management planning (which generally relate to major public works infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water, sewer, etc.), however planned growth in regulatory requirements to extend the need for asset management to all classes of municipal infrastructure may be hindered with the current level of technology and human resources.

o **Develop common Vendor of Record/list of Pre-Qualified Vendors for Engineering Services –** Each municipality used external vendors to supplement internal resources/skillsets. The establishment of a common Vendor of Record/list of Pre-Qualified Vendors for Engineering Services may reduce duplication across the municipalities of maintaining their own individual rosters. Vendor costs should also be monitored more consistently across the North Simcoe municipalities to inform future business cases to identify opportunities to reduce external consulting costs via the enhancement of in-house resources.

6.1.4.10.3 Service Profile

Governance

Across the North Simcoe municipalities, Engineering Services is a component of Public Works Departments ("Operational Services" in Tay; "Environment and Infrastructure" in Midland). Engineering Services report to the Director/General Manager responsible for the group. Currently, each Municipality maintains its own independent Engineering Services function. While stakeholders noted some concerns regarding capacity (summarized below), there were no concerns raised concerning roles or responsibilities associated with Engineering Services.

Service Level

No performance or outcome data specific to Engineering Services was identified during the review. Currently, the Municipalities have no implemented metrics related to the tracking of development applications, nor does it appear that there are robust systems/processes in place to track Engineering Costs at a detailed level.

Resources

Engineering Services across the Municipalities comprise of two to four individuals (in some cases not a full FTE).

Municipality	Number of Resources	Resource Descriptions
Town of Midland	• 2	• Director of Environment and Infrastructure (less than FTE dedicated to Engineering Services) • Engineering Manager
Town of Penetanguishene	• 4	• Director of Public Works (less than FTE dedicated to Engineering Services) • Public Works Support Admin (less than FTE dedicated to Engineering Services) • Manager, Capital Projects • Manager, Asset Management/GIS
Tay Township	• 2	• GM Operational Services/Manager of Engineering Services (less than FTE dedicated to Engineering Services) • Senior Engineering Technologist • External Vendor support for day-to-day management was noted
Tiny Township	• 3	• Director of Public Works (less than FTE dedicated to Engineering Services) • Engineering Manager • Engineering Technologist

Engineering Services utilizes external vendors to support in-house resources. Each municipality described unique approaches to the utilization of external vendors to support Engineering Services. This is summarized below in the *Processes* section.

Processes

Engineering Services is responsible for activities including capital works projects and overseeing municipal assets such as roads, water, wastewater, stormwater drainage and management, where applicable. Engineering Services is also responsible for providing technical comments on planning applications.

Area	Municipality			
	Town of Midland	**Town of Penetanguishene**	**Tay Township**	**Tiny Township**
Development Reviews	• Conducted in-house	• Conducted in-house	• Utilize external vendors for development reviews	• Utilize external vendors for development reviews

Area	Municipality			
	Town of Midland	**Town of Penetanguishene**	**Tay Township**	**Tiny Township**
Design Work	• Utilize external vendors for design/review of roads, water, etc. • Procurement Department supports RFP process for vendors	• Utilize vendors for design/review of capital projects. For large projects, this includes administration/Project Management. Smaller projects may be managed internally • Competitive process of pre-qualified vendors is used for RFPS. This is managed by the Public Works Department	• Utilize external vendors for design/review of capital projects	• Design of roads is done in-house • Bridges, peer reviews utilize external vendors.
Asset Management	• Asset Management not a responsibility of Engineering Services Department	• Responsible for Asset Management updates/ planning	• Asset Management not a responsibility of Engineering Services Department. Supported by external vendor.	• Responsible for the Township's Asset Management Plan

Processes governing Engineering Services design work across the municipalities generally engaged external vendor support to ensure that technical skillsets are applied to specific capital projects.

Midland and Penetanguishene both noted that Development Reviews are conducted in-house as an effort to keep development costs as low. Tiny has decided to use external vendors to support this work to ensure reviews are done quickly.

Technology

Primary technology tools/processes for which tools can be used in support of Engineering Services include GIS, Asset Management tools, and electronic document sharing/review.

Currently, the North Simcoe Municipalities have access to ESRI ArcGIS licensing through the County. This helps promote a common platform and competitive pricing. However, it was noted

that ArcGIS is not available to staff when working remotely (i.e., via tablet during a site visit) because of a need to be connected to the Municipality's/County's network.

Stakeholder consultations with Midland identified a recent implementation of Bluebeam to enable the electronic submission and review of material from the development community. This was described as an initiative to meet the emerging preferences of the development community is going digital with application reviews. With the implementation of this system, it was also noted that there may now need to be a review of processes/procedures involved in the review.

6.1.4.10.4 Analysis, Gaps, and Considerations

Stakeholder consultations across the Municipalities identified concerns concerning resource utilization given what was described as high volumes of work/an expected increase as growth in the communities continues.

Currently, some of the municipalities leverage MS Excel spreadsheets for Asset Management purposes. As the municipalities continue to grow, the ability to rely on MS Excel will be reduced. Consideration should be given to exploring more robust asset management tools, and potential alignment with tools already used in North Simcoe.

6.1.4.10.5 Future State Opportunities

- o **Enhance/Implement new Technology to Support Engineering Services –** Currently, there is a mix of technology solutions used by the North Simcoe Municipalities. Moving forward, future state activities should explore the benefits of greater collaboration on implementing technology solutions. For example:
    - **Electronic Document Submissions** – Midland has implemented Bluebeam as a method of electronic document submission and review, benefits of expanding this to the other North Simcoe municipalities should be explored. This should include benefits to internal staff as well as enhanced consistency within the region for the developer community.
    - **Asset Management** – Asset Management Systems ranged from dedicated systems (WorkTech in Midland) and CityWide (Tay) to MS Excel (Tiny and Tay). There may be opportunities to collaborate on more consistent technology and associated processes across the North Simcoe region.

Additionally, opportunities to better leverage the existing ArcGIS software should be explored. This would likely involve support from the County to determine processes to enable remote access to the system.

- o **Develop common Vendor of Record/list of Pre-Qualified Vendors for Engineering Services** – Each municipality used external vendors to supplement internal resources/skillsets. The establishment of a common Vendor of Record/list of Pre-Qualified Vendors for Engineering Services may reduce duplication across the municipalities of maintaining their own individual rosters.

6.1.4.11 Fleet Management

6.1.4.11.1 Objectives of the Review

Fleet Management involves the scheduling and overseeing of vehicle maintenance and other costs, lifecycle planning and procurement, and utilization analysis.

Fleet Management was selected for review by the MPT with the following objectives in mind:

Objectives of the Service Review	• Quantify potential opportunities for joint fleet planning/procurement • Identify potential efficiencies through shared service provision or technology resources
Framework Focus Areas	• Service Levels; Costs; Resources; Governance
Reasons for Selecting Services	• Significant costs associated with Fleet Management; • Municipalities may 'compete' against each other for resources • Duplicated services associated with maintenance work • Opportunity to review technology used to support service delivery • Limited coordination in fleet purchases or sharing
Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Assessment	• Understand staffing and resources (including technology) available in each Municipality for Fleet Management • Identify capacity/utilization of staff involved in Fleet Management • Document procurement policies related to fleet management

6.1.4.11.2 Summary of Findings

Strengths

o **Fleet Management Planning** – Across the North Simcoe municipalities, stakeholders noted that requirements to track and plan for the fleet assets and their replacements are achieved.

o **Growing Understanding of the Value of Fleet Management** – Stakeholders were consistent in identifying Fleet Management as an important function for enhancement. While stakeholders were felt that current systems/processes generally meet the needs of each Municipality, there was a clear sense that improvements could be made, and that investment will be required to support future growth.

Gaps

o **Recruitment and Retention of Mechanic Resources –** Recruitment and retention of mechanic resources to support Fleet Management activities were identified as a challenge. Added to this, there, the North Simcoe Municipalities compete against one another for skilled resources.

o **Overlapping activities to manage fleet requirements –** Across the individual departments of each Municipality in North Simcoe, there is overlap in fleet management activities,

which may include maintenance and repair, insurance, licensing, accident reports, driver training, etc.

o **Limited proactive maintenance planning –** Outside of Fire Department equipment, limited examples of preventative maintenance planning or scheduling was identified. This makes efforts to prioritize workload and plan inventory requirements more challenging for mechanic resources. It may also prevent work from being done within target timelines/usage targets.

o **Data and KPIs not fully collected or analyzed –** While information appears to be collected on fleet use (i.e., GPS, Excel spreadsheets), this information is not fully utilized to inform decision making with respect to fleet utilization, costs, etc.

Preliminary Opportunities

o **Implement and fully utilize the Fleet Management System –** Implement system and processes to ensure the timely and accurate collection of fleet information. Fleet Management system should support maintenance activities, including scheduling/reminders, warranty information, parts inventory, etc. Such a system(s) should be explored as a shared procurement but could also be procured individually within each municipality.

o **Implement formal processes for reviewing fleet needs across the North Simcoe Municipalities –** Opportunities to increase the collaboration and coordination of fleet purchases across the North Simcoe Municipalities should be explored during future state activities.

o **Establish Fleet Management Positions –** A fleet management position should be explored as a way to consolidate and centralize fleet activities.

6.1.4.11.3 Service Profile

Governance

A similar approach to Fleet Management has been established by the North Simcoe Municipalities. This has generally been a decentralized approach to Fleet Management, where individual departments in each municipality are responsible for the management of their municipal vehicle(s). There is no centralized support function to oversee common fleet management activities such as maintenance planning, warranty repairs, insurance, and licensing, etc. In each municipality, the Public Works Department supports the management of municipal vehicles – specifically through maintenance activities supported by municipal mechanics. However, it is the responsibility of individual departments to monitor vehicle requirements (i.e., maintenance) and coordinate with the public works departments.

Coordination between the municipalities is limited in most areas of fleet management. Specifically, there is now limited coordination in procurement, maintenance/repairs, tools, or technology, etc. It is important to note, however, that stakeholders did note strong working relationships between the municipalities concerning ad hoc day-to-day requests. For example, equipment such as a grater may be used by a neighbouring municipality if needed (generally infrequently).

Service Level

The Municipalities have not established service levels to monitor fleet management activities. While stakeholders from each municipality noted a desire to enhance data collection to support decision making, metrics such as vehicle utilization, maintenance tracking, etc. are not currently available in a straightforward or easy to access format (i.e., if collected, they may be contained within large MS Excel files from which analytics or reporting is cumbersome and not used in a proactive way).

Resources

As noted above, the responsibility to ensure vehicle maintenance is completed generally falls to each department for which a vehicle is located in.

Penetanguishene and Tay each have one staff mechanic. The Tay mechanic is a new position, with the establishment of in-house mechanic services a new function for the municipality. Tiny maintains two in-house mechanics. Midland also currently has two mechanics, with a vacant position for a third. Stakeholders commented that in each municipality, mechanic resources are fully utilized to support existing fleet needs, however, as noted above, there is no data or metrics to quantify this assessment. The municipalities each operate their own garages from which mechanic resources operate out. Municipalities will also use external vendors (local repair shops) for repairs that cannot be completed in-house. Emergency Service vehicles were noted as having a number of specialized components that require external vendors to support.

In Penetanguishene, Tay, and Tine, procurement of new vehicles relies on public works leadership to coordinate. Midland relies on the Procurement Department to identify needs across Departments and coordinate purchases.

Processes

Processes were generally described as manual and reliant on MS Excel to track and report fleet information. Fleet Management appears to be reactive, particularly with respect to maintenance activities/planning.

With respect to inventory management and control for fleet management purposes (i.e. spare parts), there appears to be a consistency with respect to having mechanic resources responsible for ordering and management of inventory. This reduces the amount of time mechanics can spend servicing vehicles. Further, it was not apparent that any municipality had a robust system in place for monitoring the stock of critical and/or high-volume supplies.

Stakeholders from each Municipality confirmed that asset management policies are in place and followed to support fleet planning activities. However, while GPS hardware is being rolled out to the municipal fleets (or has already been), it is not clear that processes are in place across all municipalities to leverage the data provided by this technology to fully understand fleet utilization metrics.

Technology

Penetanguishene noted that software is used to support Fleet Management activities with the remaining municipalities using MS Excel spreadsheets. As noted above, it does not appear that

technology is used to support decision making regarding fleet management (including both regular maintenance planning and lifecycle monitoring).

The municipalities have implemented, or are in the process of implementing, GPS hardware in municipal vehicles, with winter control equipment being prioritized (to support monitoring of minimum maintenance standards).

6.1.4.11.4 Analysis, Gaps, and Considerations

o **Recruitment and Retention of Mechanic Resources** – Recruitment and retention of mechanic resources to support Fleet Management activities were identified as a challenge. Added to this, the North Simcoe Municipalities compete against one another for skilled resources.

o **Overlapping activities to manage fleet requirements** – Across the individual departments of each Municipality in North Simcoe there is overlap in fleet management activities, which may include maintenance and repair, insurance, licensing, accident reports, driver training, etc.

o **Limited proactive maintenance planning** – Outside of Fire Department equipment, limited examples of preventative maintenance planning or scheduling were identified. This makes efforts to prioritize workload and plan inventory requirements more challenging for mechanic resources. It may also prevent work from being done within target timelines/usage targets.

o **Data and KPIs not fully collected or analyzed** – While information appears to be collected on fleet use (i.e., GPS, Excel spreadsheets), this information is not fully utilized to inform decision making with respect to fleet utilization, costs, etc.

6.1.4.11.5 Future State Opportunities

o **Implement and fully Utilize Fleet Management System** – Implement system and processes to ensure the timely and accurate collection of fleet information. Fleet Management systems are valuable tools to support the reduction of waste and redundancies and proactively identify potential issues and problems. This should include fuel (a significant line item in budgets), tires, warranties, parts, labour, etc., towards getting the ongoing total cost of ownership for each vehicle. Processes should be implemented to monitor tends and support the identification of cost increases and potential replacement needs (or replacement deferrals when ownership costs track below expectation). Fleet Management system should also support maintenance activities, including scheduling/reminders, warranty information, parts inventory, etc. Such a system(s) should be explored as a shared procurement but could also be procured individually within each municipality.

o **Implement formal processes for reviewing fleet needs across the North Simcoe Municipalities –** Opportunities to increase the collaboration and coordination of fleet purchases across the North Simcoe Municipalities should be explored during future state activities. This could include both:

- Identification of overlapping needs and the potential to jointly purchase/rent/share equipment.
- Consolidation of purchases into bulk orders for items that are required by multiple municipalities but cannot be shared (e.g., pickup trucks).

- Rationalization and alignment of fleet specifications to provide increased opportunity to purchase parts in an efficient and effective manner (including potential for a pooled inventory). This would recognize that needs may differ across municipalities, but that there are benefits to standardizing as many specifications as possible.

o **Establish Fleet Management Position(s)** – A fleet management position should be explored as a way to consolidate and centralize fleet activities. Currently, many of the fleet management activities noted above are the responsibility of individual departments with other competing priorities. Centralizing fleet management allows individual departments to prioritize/focus on their core activities and can consolidate expertise single resource/group. There were stakeholder comments from some municipalities that indicated a preference towards a more centralized approach to fleet management, however, it is not clear that the workload of any one municipality would warrant a full-time resource for this role (to be further explored during future state activities). Future state activities should explore the potential for a shared North Simcoe fleet management resource(s) to support the management of each municipality's fleet needs (and could further leverage a shared Fleet Management System as described above). This could include a centralized asset oversight function, with a focus on rationalizing life cycle costs and specification/policy development and potentially CVOR related issues around training and reporting.

6.1.5 Jurisdictional Scan

6.1.5.1 Introduction

Optimus SBR was engaged by Town of Midland, Town of Penetanguishene, Tay Township, and Township of Tiny (collectively "the North Simcoe Municipalities") to undertake a joint Municipal Services Review. The Service Review considered 11 in-scope service areas through the lens of both the individual Municipalities as well as North Simcoe collectively. As part of the review, Optimus SBR conducted a jurisdictional scan to identify best practices, lessons learned, and opportunities to help inform recommendations for the North Simcoe Municipalities. The findings from the jurisdictional scan have been incorporated into the report.

6.1.5.2 Methodology

For each in-scope service, Optimus SBR researched other jurisdictions to understand leading practices that other municipalities have implemented to deliver a service collaboratively. For the purposes of our research, 'leading practices' are defined as any action undertaken by a municipality that has led to efficient service delivery and/or a reduction in costs without adversely affecting service levels.

Within each service area, leading practices from each jurisdiction were identified using the following criteria:

- Similar service levels;
- Ability to replicate by other municipalities;
- Sustainable cost savings; and,
- Ease of implementation.

Optimus SBR conducted online research into each service area, and as a next step, key informant interviews will take place, as needed, to gain a deeper understanding of key leading practices. Within the 11 in-scope areas, Optimus SBR looked at both internal and external services that are provided by each Municipality. For the purposes of this report, internal services are defined as services that support each Municipality's corporation, and external services are those that are provided to the community or residents.

The following table outlines the municipalities that were selected as part of this review to each in-scope service:

In-Scope Service	Jurisdiction	Population
Internal Services		
Human Resource/Health and Safety/Legal Services/Fleet Management	District of Muskoka	60,599
	Elgin County	88,978
Procurement	County of Peterborough	138,236
	City of Welland	52,293
Communications, Marketing and Tourism	Town of Owen Sound	21,341

In-Scope Service	Jurisdiction	Population
	City of Kawartha Lakes	75,423
	Municipality of Clarington	105,000
	City of Sudbury	161,531
	City of Timmins	41,788
Information Technology	District of Muskoka	60,599
	Middlesex County	455,526
External Services		
Emergency Management	Perth County	76,796
	Middlesex Centre	17,262
Fire and Emergency Services	Town of Aurora & Town of Newmarket	55,445 & 84,224
Engineering Services/Fleet Management/Building Services/Land Use Planning	Town of Pelham	17,110
	Township of Lake of Bays	3,167
	Town of Parry Sound and 4 Townships in PSAPD	12,262
	Bruce County	66,491
	Municipality of Bluewater	7,136
	Township of West Grey	12,518

6.1.5.3 Key Trends in Municipal Shared Services

A key theme identified in the research was the concept of sharing resources and/or services across municipalities, specifically rural or smaller municipalities. Sharing services between municipalities is both common and widespread across Ontario. Typically, shared service benefits include:

- Reduction in costs through economies of scale and scope
- Enhanced and standardized levels of service
- Heightened capacity to solve problems due to increased staff skillset
- Better efficiency by providing services from staff with expertise

Key trends within the research are:

- Sharing services under a formal agreement is a common practice in Ontario under the *2011 Municipal Act*.
- 92% of municipalities in Ontario are involved in a shared service
- Cost-sharing, lower costs, and improved service delivery are the most cited benefits of a shared service
- Purchasing, Emergency Services (Fire), Emergency Management, and Information Technology are the most shared services

6.1.5.4   Internal Services

Online research consisted of the Optimus SBR team reviewing publicly available information that was posted online for each Municipality, to determine how other similar municipalities have collaborated to deliver internal services collectively. As described above, internal services are those that are provided to the Corporation. This includes:

- Human Resources/Health and Safety
- Procurement
- Information Technology
- Fleet Management
- Legal Services

Leading practices for the above internal services are outlined within this section of the report.

6.1.5.4.1   HR/Health and Safety/Fleet Management/Legal Services

Example #1: District of Muskoka

The District of Muskoka and its six area municipalities:

- Town of Bracebridge
- Town of Gravenhurst
- Township of Muskoka Lakes
- Town of Huntsville
- Township of Lake of Bays
- Township of Georgian Bay

The area municipalities and district developed a "Shared Service Program" that including back-office services including Human Resources, Legal Services, Fleet, Facilities, and Purchasing, as a best practice to seek opportunities to increase savings given a positive history of intergovernmental cooperation.

Example # 2: Elgin County

Elgin County entered into a shared service agreement with Middlesex County to share an Accessibility Coordinator under Corporate Services to save costs. Staff compensation constitutes a vast majority of municipal operating expenses and sharing staff resources can reduce costs. A common challenge to shared staff across different municipalities is the different policies and service levels. However, provincially mandated functions such as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) greatly increases the implementation of shared staff.

Elgin County and Middlesex County implemented a purchase-of-service agreement whereby the County of Middlesex purchases the services of the County of Elgin's Accessibility Coordinate for two days a week.

Financial Implications

Entering into shared service agreements and sharing resources can significantly reduce expenses and increase cost savings. For example, sharing resources across municipalities can reduce costs associated with training, and concerning Example #2 reduce costs associated with duplicating standard policies and procedures. Example #2 initiated cost savings for both the County of Elgin and the County of Middlesex. Specifically, the County of Elgin receives $35,000 per year from the County of Middlesex for the staff member's time, and the County of Middlesex saves money by not having to hire and train its own coordinator, allowing both municipalities to benefit from the full-time staff member.

6.1.5.4.2 Procurement

Group purchasing is a powerful tool that helps municipalities purchase products and services they use regularly. By collectively purchasing goods and services, municipalities can access high quality, competitively priced goods and services while increasing staff capacity. As such, group purchasing reflects best practices for municipalities, and approximately 25% of Ontario's municipalities participate in group procurement activities,[5] which further suggests perceived benefits of shared purchasing.

Example #1 – Peterborough County

The County of Peterborough consists of the upper-tier County government and eight lower-tier municipalities. The County holds a leadership ship role in the Kawartha Collaborate Purchasing Group (KCPG) and other members include, City of Peterborough, City of Kawartha Lakes, County of Northumberland, Public and Catholic School Boards, and Trent University, among others. Participating in group purchasing allows the County of Peterborough and members:
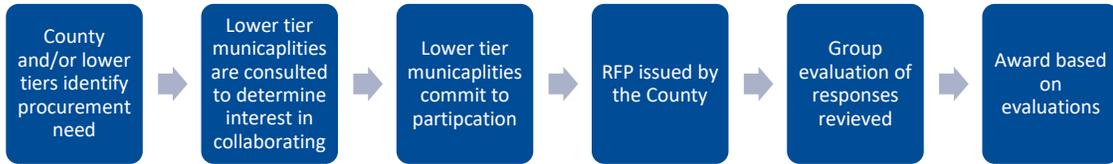
- Price reduction
- Increase product standardization
- Reduce product sourcing time
- Reduce expenses for training new projects and technologies

To increase collaboration, the KCPG group meets quarterly to coordinate procurement activities, as well as vendor presentations on procurement-related topics.

The County's approach to procurement involved initial consultation with other participants to identify procurement requirements. If a procurement need is specified, the County will assess the interest of the lower-tier municipalities. See below for the procurement approach:

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[5] Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. (2012). Shared Service Survey

| County and/or lower tiers identify procurement need | → | Lower tier municaplities are consulted to determine interest in collaborating | → | Lower tier municaplities commit to partipcation | → | RFP issued by the County | → | Group evaluation of responses revieved | → | Award based on evaluations |

Annually, the County undertakes approximately 60 major procurements, of which 33% involved at least one partner. Typical purchases with lower tear municipalities include:

- Bulk Materials (i.e., sand, fuel, salt etc.)
- Vehicles (i.e., trucks, snowplows etc.)
- Contract Services (i.e., line painting, street sweeping, janitorial services etc.)

Benefits for group purchasing for lower-tier municipalities through the County's dedicated procurement function is demonstrated by increased capacity and lower prices.

Example #2 – City of Welland

The City of Welland entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Thorold, Town of Pelham, City of Port Colborne, and Township of Wainfleet to collaborate on joint purchasing, procurement, and shared services initiatives. Before the MOU, the municipalities were also part of the Niagara Public Purchasing Committee for the Niagara Region.

The purpose of the MOU is to work together to take advantage of bulk pricing options across a variety of RFPs, including road construction, sidewalk repairs, and office supplies. In doing so, the municipalities realize cost savings to the benefits of taxpayers. Through the MOU, the municipalities also identified shared services as another cost-saving initiative due to the service capacity and demand variation across these municipalities. For example, lower demand for services in some municipalities may not justify full-time staff to provide the service while other staff may have the capacity and expertise to share.

Financial Implications of Shared Procurement

Shared service arrangements involving procurement resulted in financial benefits. Specifically, Peterborough County indicated a savings range of 5% to 20% (depending on commodity) when switching to a shared service model. These findings are consistent with the benefits of group purchasing undertaken by other Ontario municipalities. See below for more examples:

Jurisdiction	Commodity	Estimated Savings

Townships of Opasatika, Mattice-Val Cote, Fauquier-Strickland, Val Gagne, Moonbeam and the Town of Smooth Rock Falls	Asset Management Planning	10%
Durham Region Cooperative	Road Salt	12%
City of Brampton	Bus Parts	10%

6.1.5.4.3 Communications, Marketing and Tourism

The following are examples of how the Communications role and the Culture and Tourism departments have been organized in different municipalities in Ontario.

Communications

The Communications role has shifted from a legislative and procedural issuing of formal documents and by-laws to frequent, open, and digital engagement with residents, businesses, and visitors.

Smaller municipalities generally have communications aligned directly to the Chief Administration Officer (Town of Owen Sound), or through the Corporate Service function (City of Kawartha Lakes) which generally have supporting Information Technology and Customer Service staffing.

Example #1: Town of Owen Sound

- https://www.owensound.ca/en/city-hall/communications.aspx

Example #2: City of Kawartha Lakes

- https://www.kawarthalakes.ca/en/municipal-services/departments-and-divisions.aspx?_mid_=20464

By looking at larger municipalities, North Simcoe can see the breadth of responsibilities that are possible within the communications function. These organizations generally have the Communications Department Lead (whether it be Officer, Director or Manager) reporting directly to the Chief Administration Officer of the Municipality.

Example #3: Municipality of Clarington

- https://weblink.clarington.net/weblink/0/edoc/289745/CAO-006-20.pdf (pages 4 and 5)

Example #4: City of Toronto

While not an appropriate comparison to the North Simcoe municipalities, the Departments provided by the Communications team for the City of Toronto show all possible services that are part of a fully complemented communications team. Departments in the Strategic Communications Office include: Corporate Communications, Design Services, Digital

Communications, Media Relations, and Departmental communications such as Infrastructure/Public Works and Community & Social Services. The referenced staff listing that follows displays the listing of roles that are provided within each of these departments.

- https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/91e9-city-toronto-organizational-chart.pdf (updated May 26, 2020)
- https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/9562-city-manager-stratcomm.pdf (Strategic Communications office)

Culture and Tourism

As the North Simcoe municipalities utilize the EDNS for their promotion and engagement of the tourism economic development, this service in the Midland and Penetanguishene is primarily one of Event and Facility (i.e., Museum) based services. These services are generally found aligning under the Community Services leadership, often combining the facility, recreation, and client services resources. This does allow a more stable environment from both a staffing and funding perspective.

Example #5: Municipality of Clarington

- https://weblink.clarington.net/weblink/0/edoc/289745/CAO-006-20.pdf (pages 4 - 6)

In cases where events and festivals are an acknowledged priority for the community, the coordination of these activities can directly report to the Chief Administration Officer or to the Economic Development.

Example #6: City of Timmins

- https://www.timmins.ca/UserFiles/Servers/Server_11976345/File/Our%20Services/City%20Hall/Organizational%20Charts/COT_Organization_Charts.pdf (page 2)

Example #7: City of Sudbury

- https://www.greatersudbury.ca/city-hall/departments-and-services/ (Office of the CAO)

6.1.5.4.4 Information Technology

Example #1 – District of Muskoka

The District of Muskoka provides Information Technology services to its lower-tier municipalities:

- Town of Bracebridge
- Town of Gravenhurst
- Township of Muskoka Lakes

Through an MOU, core services being provided by IT are:

- A common Enterprise System (financial),
- A common authentication (password and security management),
- Archival administration and business continuity plan,
- Common technology and email standards,
- Help Desk Services and Network Support
- Centralized technology purchasing and license and vendor management

IT currently supports more than 57 physical locations, including Public Works Yards, Fire Halls, Arenas, Landfills sites, and water/sewer plants.

The MOU executed in 2011 outlines:

- IT services to be provided
- Core services and non-core services
- Priorities and matrix solution
- Scope and methodology for shared service changes
- Ownership of hardware and software licenses
- Cost allocation
- Performance Indicators
- Role and responsibilities of participating municipalities and District of Muskoka
- Participation and decision making through the IT Steering Committee (CAO's from participating municipalities)

There is clear economic benefit to all participating municipalities under the MOU with respect to sharing IT infrastructure, technical skills, training, and implementation of software. Furthermore, the implementation of the IT Steering Committee ensures appropriate decision making for all participants.

<u>Example #2 – Middlesex County</u>

Middlesex County provides a shared service delivery model for Information Technology services portfolio to:

- Municipality of Adelaide Metcalfe;
- Township of Lucan Biddulph;
- Municipality of Middlesex Centre;
- Municipality of North Middlesex;
- Municipality of Southwest Middlesex;
- Municipality of Thames Centre; and,
- Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc,

This includes traditional network and security services, digital transformation and business process improvements, and GIS services. Previously, the IT service delivery framework was based on a 'pay-per-use' model given the attraction of local municipalities who only wanted to access certain services. Once there was a higher rate of service adoption by local municipalities, the County identified the following challenges of the 'pay-per-use' model:

- Unpredictable revenue model
- Unpredictable service consumption

- Unpredictable budgeting
- Difficult to provide dynamic service consultation by demand

As a result, a shared service agreement was implemented with local municipalities. The shared service agreement enabled the local municipalities to have access to a higher level of service and support, thereby realizing efficiencies and cost savings.

Financial Implications

Shared services provide economies of scale for the purchase, training, and implementation of major applications and software. The implementation of such applications requires a significant investment of technical training and staff resources, which many present challenges for smaller organizations. For example, selecting a shared application can reduce costs for evaluation, implementation and reduce resource costs in the event of staff turnover, all of which result in economies of scale.

6.1.5.5   External Services

Online research consisted of the Optimus SBR team reviewing publicly available information posted online for each Municipality, to determine how other similar municipalities have collaborated to collectively deliver internal services. As described above, internal services are those that are provided to the Corporation. This includes:

- Communications/Marketing/Tourism
- Emergency Management
- Fire and Emergency Services
- Engineering
- Building Services
- Land Use Planning

Leading practices for the above internal services are outlined within this section of the report.

6.1.5.5.1 Emergency Management

Example #1 – Perth County

Perth County is responsible for the Emergency Management program at the county-level as well as for its four member municipalities:

- Municipality of North Perth
- Municipality of West Perth
- Township of Perth East
- Township of Perth South

The shared service agreement outlines that each member municipality will appoint its own primary coordinator, as well as an alternative CEMC. During an emergency, the County's CEMC will be responsible for assisting the member municipal counterparts in providing necessary services and allocating resources.

Outside of an active emergency, the County CEMC is responsible for:

- Coordinating training
- Compiling municipal emergency plans into one document
- Coordinate annual meetings with municipal CEMCs
- Acting as the administrator for the Municipal 511 system
- Develop community risk profiles.

The agreement is a five-year term, which is reviewed annually by all CAOs, to ensure the shared service agreement continues to reach each municipalities' needs.

<u>Example #2 – Middlesex Centre</u>

Middlesex Centre is located within Middlesex County. Middlesex County is comprised of eight neighboring municipalities, and through its tiered governance structure can provide resources and supplies to the municipalities under its jurisdiction. This is further demonstrated by the collaborative approach undertake to provide emergency management.

Most of the responsibilities are administrated at the County level, including the role of the CEMC for all eight municipalities (Note: each Municipality has a designated alternate CEMC). This structure was implemented due to the benefits of having the County oversee emergency management in small municipalities, and specifically those with limited resources and funds for an effective recovery process. Benefits of this structure were noted by Middlesex Centre to include:

- Dedicated focus on emergency planning
- Quick mobilization in the event of an emergency situation
- Develop pro-active strategies to effectively mitigate hazards

It was also noted that if not properly implemented, there are several challenges that can occur because of this structure:

- Unclear jurisdictional authority
- Unclear communications during an emergency

6.1.5.5.2 Fire and Emergency Services

<u>Example #1: Central York Fire Services</u>

In 2002, the Cities of Aurora and Newmarket consolidated their Fire Departments into a single Central York Service. Amalgamation of the departments has supported:

- Training – more dedicated training resources than are available in two smaller departments; less duplication of specialized training and equipment; more opportunities for staff to gain expertise in areas of interest; all firefighters trained to a consistent level/standard
- Prevention – more dedicated prevention officers available; consistent application of codes and regulations over two neighboring municipalities
- Suppression service levels – more resources are available seamlessly to respond to major incidents; better positioned to deal with growth across the municipalities
- Equipment – common equipment and training across the entire department
- Station location – ability to more efficiently cover communities based on geographic basis

- Policies and procedures – creation of a single set of policies and procedures, with more resources to prepare and oversee
- Staffing – increased job opportunities; ability to dedicate support resources to the department (i.e., HR)
- Management – increased management capacity facilitates more department leadership and visioning; ability to diversify skillsets of leadership; improved ability for mentorship and succession planning
- Efficiencies and financial advantages – reduced capital duplication (e.g., equipment overlaps); volume discounts

Newmarket acts as the single employer of the Fire and Emergency Service (Central York Fire Department), with services provided to Aurora on a purchase of service arrangement. The department is governed by a Joint Council Committee (JCC) that oversees the terms of the Service Agreement. The JCC is a six-member committee with three members from teach of the Town Councils. Budgets are approved by each Municipality's Council.

6.1.5.5.3 Building Services/Planning Services/Engineering Services/Fleet Management

Example #1: Town of Pelham

The Town of Pelham and participating municipalities:

- City of Port Colborne
- Township of Wainfleet
- Township of West Lincoln

Recently undertook a shared service review of building services and municipal drainage services. The purpose of this study was to identify opportunities to share the delivery of these services with the goal of increasing efficiencies, improving customer services, and offering service enhancements. A high-level overview of the model is highlighted below:

Building Services – Shared Business Model	

People	• Governance Structure:
	    ○ Chief Building Officer (appointed by each Municipality)
	    ○ Deputy Chief Building Officer (appointed by each Municipality)
	    ○ Inspectors (4)
	    ○ Admin Clerk (10
	    ○ Intake Clerk (independent of shared model and dedicated to each Municipality))

Process	• Agreement:
	    ○ Shared Services
	    ○ Staff are employed by a prime municipality, and services are extended to other municipalities at a set fee
	• Location:
	    ○ shared central location was recommended

Technology	• Align software for each Municipality

It was recommended that Building Services become a fully shared building services model given the following outcomes

- Long term cost-efficiency
- Opportunities to standardize service delivery across the four jurisdictions
- Enhance customer service
- Reduce organizational risk associated with vacancies in critical roles
- Increase staff retention and investments for training and onboarding

Additional Examples:

1. Township of Lake of Bays shares a CBO/Inspector with Town Huntsville and Township of Perry

2. Municipality of Bluewater implemented sharing agreements with South Huron and Township of Perth South to share CBOs and inspectors
   o Each Municipality has its own independent building services department
3. Township of West Grey and Township of Chatsworth share a CBO and Inspector
   o Staff are employed by West Grey, and Chatsworth pays a fee for services based on a percentage of total building permits

Additional Examples – Planning Departments:

1. The Parry Sound Area Planning Board ("PSAPD") is comprised of two members each from the Town of Parry Sound, and the Townships of Carling, McDougall, McKellar and Whitestone. Plans of Subdivision, Condominium Descriptions, Consent/Severance Applications, Rights-of-way / Easements and Part Lot Control are all reviewed for approval by the PSAPB. Planning documentation to decisions are provided by a shared third-party planning resource for all municipalities involved.

2. Bruce County provides centralized planning advice, assistance, and land use planning functions across the county by dividing the eight municipalities within it into three Planning and Development groups – namely Lakeshore Hub (serves Kincardine and Saugeen Shores), Inland Hub (serves South Bruce, Brockton, and Huron-Kinloss), and Peninsula Hub (serves North and South Bruce Peninsula, and Arran-Elderslie). The Bruce County Planning Department is stated as the "Planning and Development" reference for the Townships, with the Towns of Kincardine and Saugeen Shores providing a set of services provided by the Town, and other services provided by the County (i.e., Minor Variances and Severances).

6.1.5.6   Conclusion

A key theme identified in the research was the concept of sharing resources and/or services across municipalities, specifically rural or smaller municipalities. These shared service structures aim to address gaps, inefficiencies, and cost savings by bringing together resources, functions, processes, and skills. When implemented correctly, shared services can crease economies of scale, increase standardization, and pool skillsets, among other benefits.

Where appropriate, this will act as a key consideration when developing recommendations for the North Simcoe Municipalities.

6.2 List of In-Scope Services

No.	Service	Framework Focus Area(s)	Reason(s) for Selecting Service	Objective(s) of Service Review	Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Engagement
NS1	Human Resources / Health and Safety	Governance; Resources; Process; Technology	• Potential opportunity to improve capacity through shared service • Limited sharing of best practices / specialized knowledge	• Identify shared service delivery models to improve service outcomes including Health and Safety • Identify opportunities to mitigate costs through shared services • Explore opportunities to formalize knowledge sharing/ best practices	• Identify existing HR services (including Health and Safety) that each Municipality currently operates independently or provides via contract services • Understand existing shared services arrangements (formal or informal), policy agreements, processes, etc.

No.	Service	Framework Focus Area(s)	Reason(s) for Selecting Service	Objective(s) of Service Review	Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Engagement
NS2	Procurement	Process; Service Levels; Resources; Governance	• Explore use of shared/joint procurement mentality (collective purchasing) • May be requirements to review and update existing Procurement Policy • Duplication of procurement activities across Municipalities • Some capacity constraints in terms of expertise	• Modernize procurement practices through a clear understanding of all options available • Explore new/additional options for procurement of services and products (e.g., shared Vendor of Record) • Identify opportunities for potential cost savings through innovative/improved procurement processes • Identify opportunities for increased effectiveness through pooling resources	• Document current strengths and gaps associated with the current Procurement Policies, including compliance with public sector procurement requirements (i.e. Trade Agreements, etc.) • Understand current group procurement activities undertaken by the North Simcoe Municipalities (and other neighboring municipalities/County)

No.	Service	Framework Focus Area(s)	Reason(s) for Selecting Service	Objective(s) of Service Review	Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Engagement
NS3	Communication, Marketing, & Tourism	Governance; Service Levels	• Multiple groups appear to be involved in services, • May not be clarity on service goals or method for achieving them	• Improve clarity on goals of Marketing and Tourism activities in North Simcoe • Establish Service Level objectives • Create an inventory of marketing activities that staff, Council, and residents want for the future	• Understand current Marketing, Communication, and Tourism activities and focuses • Understand relationship(s) with external marketing/tourism partners • Understand public requirements and preferences for communication
NS4	Information Technology	Technology; Cost	• Commonalities exist in applications, services, and security • Specialized services require high level of expertise best provided across the municipalities	• Identify opportunities to pool internal and/or third-party resources to provide improved technology coverage for all municipalities • Identify opportunities to standardize technology where efficiencies and increased service levels can be attained	• Understand existing IT services and resources within each Municipality (either by in-house staff or via outsourcing) • Understand level and preferred use of technology by residents in each Municipality

No.	Service	Framework Focus Area(s)	Reason(s) for Selecting Service	Objective(s) of Service Review	Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Engagement
NS5	Legal Services	Resources; Cost	• Potential duplication of service • Outsourcing of 'regular/ administrative' functions	• Identify opportunities to pool resources including potential use of in-house resource	• Understand need and requirements for legal expertise for each Municipality
NS6	Land Use Planning	Resources; Cost; Technology; Process	• Staffing capacity constraints; • Address possible impacts from updated Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)	• Identify opportunities for sharing of specialist staff resources	• Understand key similarities, differences, and gaps across Municipalities' planning efforts • Identify duplication, gaps, and discrepancies for resident/customer processes • Understand state of Official Plans and Zoning By-Laws for municipalities • Examine number and complexity of variances and amendments

No.	Service	Framework Focus Area(s)	Reason(s) for Selecting Service	Objective(s) of Service Review	Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Engagement
NS7	Building Services	Resources; Process; Technology; Costs	• Resource (staff time) intensive service • Opportunity to improve service planning and delivery using technology to reduce/limit increase of costs	• Identify opportunities for a more coordinated approach to streamline resources and processes • Identify opportunities for technology improvements	• Document current examples of shared service delivery • Understand key similarities, differences, and gaps across Municipalities • Understand volumes, timing and complexities for services currently provided in the municipalities
NS8	Emergency Management	Governance; Process;	• Review and explore opportunities for shared Emergency Management planning, coordination, etc. • Review opportunities for coordinating training/ preparedness and response drills	• Identify opportunities to improve coordination of Emergency Management across municipalities • Identify opportunities for resource/role sharing	• Understand existing Emergency Management roles and responsibilities • Review existing policies and procedures associated with Emergency Management

No.	Service	Framework Focus Area(s)	Reason(s) for Selecting Service	Objective(s) of Service Review	Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Engagement
NS9	Fire & Emergency Services	Governance; Service Levels; Process; Costs; Resources;	• Significant cost associated with providing service (high budget item) • Procurement and training not coordinated between Fire Departments	• Identify opportunities for cost-savings from shared procurement • Consider additional opportunities for shared training • Explore opportunities for shared resources and/or staff	• Understand current examples of shared service delivery/resources for Fire and Emergency Management • Understand service levels and KPIs associated with each Municipality's Fire and Emergency Services
NS10	Engineering Services	Resources; Costs; Service Levels	• Requires specialized / technical skillsets • Already engage same third-parties in many cases;	• Potential opportunity to rationalize use of third-party services • Potential opportunity to increase contract value/project size to attract additional vendors for third-party services	• Understand current processes, including for the use of third-party service providers • Understand existing staff capacity constraints • Understand current use of technology, including Asset Management, in municipalities

No.	Service	Framework Focus Area(s)	Reason(s) for Selecting Service	Objective(s) of Service Review	Focus of Stakeholder Engagement for Current State Engagement
NS11	Fleet Management	Service Levels; Costs; Resources; Governance	• Significant costs associated with Fleet Management; • Municipalities may 'compete' against each other for resources • Duplicated services associated with maintenance work • Opportunity to review technology used to support service delivery • Limited coordination in fleet purchases or sharing	• Quantify potential opportunities for joint fleet planning/ procurement • Identify potential efficiencies through shared service provision or technology resources	• Understand staffing and resources (including technology) available in each Municipality for Fleet Management • Identify capacity/utilization of staff involved in Fleet Management • Document procurement policies related to fleet management

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