



REPORT FIR-2014-004

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Josh Shepherd, Deputy Fire Chief and
Steve Goode, Fire Chief

DATE: May 26, 2014

SUBJECT: Request for Proposal - Master Fire Plan

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Report FIR 2104-004 regarding the Request for Proposal - Master Fire Plan be received; and

That Council directs staff to proceed with issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to retain a consultant to develop a Master Fire Plan for our community.

DISCUSSION

Purpose

The purpose of this Report is to recommend that Council hire an outside specialized consultant to assist in the development of a Township of Puslinch Master Fire Plan.

Once the MFP has been created, it will then be a living document, which will change through periodic revision based on the changes taking place throughout and around our community.

However, the development of the initial MFP version is an arduous task that lends itself to outside, non-biased, and specialized expertise; one who is practised in the procedures, legalities and risk analysis' of townships and communities.

Background

Over the last 46 years of providing excellent fire protection service to the Township of Puslinch, the fire department has maintained a very high level of expertise, service and safety for our community. Part of this service has been the continual re-assessment of the risks and needs of our township as a whole and adaptations to equipment and training were made accordingly. There have been outside agencies, such as the Ontario Fire Marshall, which have audited our preparedness in various areas and given recommendations as to changes we might make to better protect our customers. These recommendations have been integrated where possible and where deemed appropriate to benefit the overall level of service to our community.

Fueled by growth and change in our township, it has been decided to develop a Master Fire Plan (MFP) to newly and fully identify the potential risks and needs our community contains and the responses they require. This MFP will be a measure and a guide to changes, improvements and services provided by Puslinch Fire and Rescue Services in the years to come. Financially, it will also help us forecast costs, both capital and operational, throughout the forthcoming years by having set goals in place.

The OFM or Office of the Fire Marshal of Ontario developed the “Comprehensive Fire Effectiveness Model” to assist communities. In this model, three lines of defence are identified to be utilized in responding to local community needs, and include:

- Public education and prevention;
- Fire safety standards and enforcement; and
- Emergency response.

Using the Comprehensive Fire Effectiveness Model as a guide, the development of a Fire Master Plan is recognised as an appropriate strategy to assess the potential circumstances and needs for a specific area or community. Furthermore, the Fire Master Plan assists in development of the overall fire protection strategy by the local municipal Council.

The pursuit of the establishment of a Master Fire Plan for the Township of Puslinch has been identified by Puslinch Fire and Rescue Service as a priority in the 2014 budget year. Puslinch Township Council passed a resolution #3 on November 21, 2012 “The Council for the Township of Puslinch does hereby authorize Puslinch Fire and Rescue to formulate a Master Fire Plan for the Puslinch Fire and Rescue Department”.

The Fire and Rescue Committee (“Committee”) at its meeting held on May 21, 2014, passed recommendation to proceed with hiring a consultant to begin the Master Fire Plan creation process. The Committee passed Recommendation No. FIR-2014-08, requesting council approve the strategy of a consultant so that the RFP process could begin.

In order to be non-influenced by wants or opinions verses risks and needs, bringing in an outside expert to assist in this process will allow for the most comprehensive and accurate development of the FMP document. Additionally, an outside opinion can help to recognize certain risks that may not be obvious to those working within the community on a daily basis.

Financial Implications

The Township’s development charges study is currently undergoing review. The draft development charges study is reflecting a capital cost of approximately \$44,000 to retain an outside expert consultant to assist in the development of the Fire Master Plan for the Township of Puslinch with \$29,700 recoverable through development charges. The remaining \$14,300 is funded through taxation levy as indicated in the 2014 Capital Budget approved by Council. .

Alternatively, we could attempt to create the Fire Master Plan in-house, using our combined knowledge and expertise contained within the fire department and township offices. The approximate cost of this option is \$7,000. Costs in excess of \$7,000 may be incurred if experts are required to be retained for opinion or assistance.

Also recall that a local government is to spend DC monies, and interest earned on them, for the specific projects and services for which they were originally collected. ^(OMMA)

The 2014 Capital Budget includes \$41,196 for the development of the Master Fire Plan. However, upon further review through the Development Charges Study, this amount has been estimated at \$44,000.

Applicable Legislation

Relevant legislation for the operation of a fire department within the Province of Ontario can be found within the FPPA or Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997. This Act states clearly that,

"every municipality shall, establish a program in the municipality which must include public education with respect to fire safety and certain components of fire

prevention; and provide such other fire protection services as it determines may be necessary in accordance with its needs and circumstances.” (FPPA)

Related Requirements: Public Fire Safety Guidelines (PFSG)

The OFM uses the PFSG as a tool to facilitate proper local preparedness. One section of this is important for consideration regarding the development of a Master Fire Plan:

“The Fire Protection and Prevention Act places new responsibilities on municipalities. The Office of the Fire Marshal has a mandate to assist municipalities to fulfill these responsibilities by providing information which will enable municipalities to make informed choices based on an objective analysis. Municipalities are compelled to establish a program in the municipality which must include public education with respect to fire safety and certain components of fire prevention.

The act also states that municipalities are responsible for arranging such other fire protection services as they determine may be necessary according to their own needs and circumstances. The relationship between the province and municipalities is based on the principle that municipalities are responsible for arranging fire protection services according to their own needs and circumstances.

The primary roles of the province are to provide leadership and support to municipalities in the exercise of this responsibility, and to ensure public safety is not compromised. Guidelines, developed by the Office of the Fire Marshal in consultation with municipalities, the fire service and others, will be a key vehicle for fulfilling the provincial role to support municipalities.

This consultation process will continue on an ongoing basis to ensure the guidelines change and evolve to reflect trends, changing circumstances and new technology. To be useful, the guidelines must remain current, and must have the support and acceptance of municipalities. The province will retain an interest in the development of guidelines and monitoring of their application. However, day-to-day management and delivery will be municipal responsibilities” (PFSG)

References

FPPA, Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 - Part II, Responsibility for Fire Protection Services. Retrieved from http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_97f04_e.htm

OMMA, Development Charges. Retrieved from <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page9839.aspx>

PSFG, Framework For Setting Guidelines Within A Provincial-Municipal Relationship. Retrieved from <http://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/firemarshal/fireserviceresources/publicfiresafetyguidelines/00-00-01.html>

Township of Uxbridge – Fire Department Master Fire Plan

Halton Hills Fire Department - Master Fire Service Plan