

Is There a Business Case for Consolidating Richmond Hill Fire & Emergency Services and Central York Fire Services?

Scope of Work

May 13, 2016

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Richmond Hill is seeking the professional services of a consultant to determine whether there is a business case for considering the consolidation of Richmond Hill Fire and Emergency Services and Central York Fire Services. The Towns of Aurora and Newmarket, who consolidated their fire and emergency services to form Central York Fire Services in 2002, will be participating in the study.

BACKGROUND

The Town of Richmond Hill provides Fire and Emergency Services for its population of approximately 207,000 residents and 4,500 businesses. This includes fire prevention, suppression and other emergency services such as medical assistance, rescue, auto extrication, public assistance, spills and release of materials hazardous to the environment, inspections and public education.

Central York Fire Services provides Fire and Emergency Services to a total of 144,000 residents of the Town of Newmarket and The Town of Aurora. In the combined service area for the two communities there are 4,279 businesses and 44,000 residential occupancies. Central York provides primary fire protection services to three neighbouring communities, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Township of King and East Gwillimbury. This service generates revenue which is reflected in the annual budgetary process. Key services include: fire prevention and public education; Fire Code enforcement & the administration of safety standards; and emergency protective services including fire suppression, medical assistance, motor vehicle collisions, ice/water rescue and hazardous material response.

Fire Services within the Municipality of York Region provide Mutual Aid to each other.

In May 2016, Richmond Hill received correspondence from the Mayors of Newmarket and Aurora to determine if there is interest in consolidating the Central York Fire Services with Richmond Hill's Fire and Emergency Services. At Richmond Hill's Council meeting on June 9, 2015 the correspondence was received and referred to the Mayor to form a team comprising of three members of Council and appropriate staff to investigate the request and report back to Council in the Fall of 2015.

The Chief Administrative Officers from Richmond Hill, Newmarket and Aurora have determined that a study should be undertaken to explore consolidation of fire and emergency services.

SCOPE OF WORK

The successful proponent will review fire and emergency services provided by the Town of Richmond Hill and Central York Fire Services to determine whether there is a business case for considering the consolidation of the two fire service organizations. This work will be conducted in two phases.

Phase 1: Develop an understanding of the Fire Services provided by Richmond Hill and Central York Fire Services

Using existing available information, the consultant will be required to compile, review and complete a comparative analysis of the two fire services, taking into account the Fire Master Plans for each organization and other relevant information, including:

- Profile of the communities, including information regarding future growth
- Organizational structure
- Operating and Capital Budgets for Richmond Hill
- Fire prevention and public education
- Fire fighter staffing and service levels
- Emergency response levels
- Training
- Communication and technology
- Facilities, apparatus and equipment
- Community risk
- Relevant legislation and regulations

Governance and collective agreements (impact operationally and financially on both fire services) will be addressed through separate consulting contracts.

Data collection will include interviews with the following:

Richmond Hill

Chief Administrative Officer
Commissioner of Community Services
Fire and Emergency Services Management (one meeting)
Fire Fighters Union Association Representatives (one meeting)

Central York Fire Services

Chief Administrative Officer for Newmarket
Chief Administrative Officer for Aurora
Fire Services Management (one meeting)
Fire Fighters Union Association Representatives (one meeting)

Phase 2: Develop a Key Findings and Directions Report

The consultant will undertake the following activities to develop a Key Findings and Directions Report:

- Determine what aspects of the CYFS consolidation could be transferable to another consolidation and which aspects are not applicable
- Identify lessons learned from the consolidation
- Identify lessons learned from comparable fire and emergency services consolidations in other local municipalities
- Demonstrate an understanding of the two fire service organizations
- Identify future growth and corresponding needs in both communities

- Benchmark fire services in key GTA comparator municipalities (including Oakville, Burlington, Markham) against both Richmond Hill and Central York Fire Services
- Conduct additional research that may be relevant
- Determine what benefits and opportunities, including efficiencies and cost avoidance, could be achieved through consolidation of the two fire services
- Determine financial and other impacts for both fire services of a consolidation
- Determine what pre-requisites would need to be in place for a Richmond Hill and Central York Fire Service consolidation to be successful
- Determine whether there are other options other than consolidation that could achieve efficiencies
- Develop a Key Findings and Directions Report that includes the results of the research activities and findings as well as determining whether there is a business case for consolidation
- If a business case is identified, identify next steps for a consolidation including the process and key issues to be addressed
- Present the Key Findings and Directions Report to the Steering Committee

LEADERSHIP AND STEERING COMMITTEE

This project will be managed by the Director, Strategic Initiatives, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Richmond Hill. The Project Sponsor will be the Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Richmond Hill. A Steering Committee comprised of the following will provide advice and guidance on the project, and will consist of the following:

- Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Richmond Hill
- Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Newmarket
- Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Aurora

PROJECT MILESTONES

The following project milestones are for information purposes only and are subject to change at the discretion of the Town:

Opening meeting (June 2016)
 Draft Key Findings and Directions Report (September 2016)
 Steering Committee Meeting (September 2016)
 Final Key Findings and Directions Report (October 2016)
 Steering Committee Meeting (October 2016)