

Municipality Of Chatham-Kent
Infrastructure and Engineering Services
Public Works

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Ryan Brown, Director of Public Works
Date: January 2, 2020
Subject: Public Works – Downtown Service Level Standardization

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. \$50,000 be approved for transfer from the “Together CK” program annually to increase Public Works operating budgets for the support of Community and Special Events initiatives.
2. The Public Works Beautification Support Process be approved which entails:
 - Community groups keep Public Works administration informed of new contact information.
 - Annual meetings of community groups with Road Supervisors.
 - Community Initiative Request Form must be submitted for any proposed changes or purchases (at a minimum of 60 days prior to event or purchase of new items).
 - Public Works upper management reviews and approves new requests or new scope of works.

Background

At the Jun 24, 2019 Council Meeting, the following Notice of Motion was approved:

“Be it resolved that administration provide a report to council identifying the current levels of service for support of beautification initiatives provided to communities for services such as flower basket hanging and holiday streetlight decorations, and that this report recommend processes, or policies (new or existing) to improve the scheduling and/or equalize the service levels across CK, along with the budget implications associated with those recommendations...”

Comments

Currently, the Public Works division assists various community groups such as BIA's, Horticultural Societies, and Royal Canadian Legions across the Municipality with seasonal installation and removal of Christmas decorations, advertising banners, hanging flowers, and installation of benches and garbage receptacles in downtown areas. The current service levels for beautification initiatives are summarized in the table below:

Community	Christmas Decorations	Advertisement/ Remembrance Day Banners	Hanging Flowers	Garbage Cans/ Bench Installations
Chatham	PW	PW	PW	PW
Wallaceburg	PW	PW	PW	PW
Dresden	Entegrus & PW	Private Volunteers	Private Volunteers	PW
Thamesville	Private Volunteers	Private Volunteers	N/A	PW
Bothwell	Entegrus & PW	Contracted out by PW	N/A	PW
Ridgetown	Contracted out by BIA	Contracted out by BIA	Contracted out by BIA	Private volunteers
Tilbury	PW	Private Volunteers	Private Volunteers	PW
Wheatley	Entegrus & PW	Private Volunteers	*Contracted out by PW	Private volunteers
Merlin	PW	PW	N/A	Private volunteers
Blenheim	Contracted out by PW	Contracted out by PW	N/A	PW
Erieau	Contracted out by PW	Private Volunteers	N/A	Parks and Rec

* 2019 was first year for PW to fund this activity

A five year average of Public Works costs to support community and special events according the table above is approximately \$77,197. This is consistently insufficient funding for the current service levels based on the approved 2019 budget of \$73,488. Insufficient budget, historical practices, and more active groups in some communities have led to this level of service, which is not equal across all communities.

Public Works receives many positive comments and feedback on these activities, but has had several challenges with the current program:

- Timing of some installations in the past has been delayed due to conflicting priorities with operational requirements.
- Public Works is regularly contacted by community groups and individuals with new requests to expand the scope of work of activities within current budget allowance.
- Public Works is challenged with standardization, and needs to have input into product selection with the groups before purchases are made. For example, if Christmas banners are a different size than Remembrance Day banners, the staff or contractor must adjust or replace the banner brackets on the poles for each event, adding to the length of time it takes and increasing costs required for installation.
- BIA and community groups have also expressed frustration over who to contact, timing and the disproportionate treatment between communities.

To address concerns of timing, communication and standardization, Public Works has created a new “Community Initiative Request Form” (attached as Appendix A). The intent of the form is to streamline communication and ensure that requests are received in a timely manner by Public Works for review and feedback. Submission of the forms to Public Works administration will help with equalization of service levels across communities. Once approved, the community groups can then work directly with the area Road Supervisor to address operations and logistics.

In the event that a request includes the intent to expand or alter the existing infrastructure (for example, new poles) to accommodate increased beautification initiatives, the BIA or community group shall be provided with information necessary to enter into an encroachment agreement with the Municipality. Public safety will be the number one priority when reviewing requests.

To address insufficient budgets and service level standardization, Public Works is proposing to provide support for five events per year per downtown area, consisting of Christmas, Remembrance Day, installation of hanging flowers, placement of benches/garbage receptacles, and one additional summer/special event advertisement. The total Public Works budget is divided by public works garage, proportionate to the infrastructure located in downtown areas in each of their communities. To accomplish this standardization, Public Works is requesting \$50,000 from the “Together CK” program to be transferred annually to the Public Works operating budget. Any unused funds for the year will be returned to the Together CK fund for utilization the following year.

Communities may have special events or “one-off” years above and beyond the normal scope of work (for example, a 100th anniversary). If the annual Public Works funding has been exhausted, these initiatives will need to be subsidized through:

1. Private funding, or
2. A successful application to the “Together CK” program

In either case, a “Community Initiative Request Form” must be completed, and communication will be initiated for discussion between the community group and Public Works senior management. The required use of this form will begin in 2020. Consideration for the potential integration into the Special Event process will be examined in future years.

In an effort to facilitate communication, community groups should endeavor to keep Public Works administration informed of current contact information. At a minimum, BIA’s or community groups are requested to meet with the area Road Supervisor annually to discuss proposed activities for the upcoming year. Road Supervisor contact information will be provided by calling the Public Works administrative staff at 519-360-1998 ext. 3691 or by emailing ckpw@chatham-kent.ca.

Public Works ongoing support of safety and emergency events must be prioritized first prior to supporting community events. Therefore, delays in supporting community events are possible. With this additional funding, Public Works will be able to utilize contractors whenever possible to ensure safety and allow employees to focus on core responsibilities.

Public Works Beautification Support Process

Public Works is proposing that the following process be approved by Council:

1. Community groups keep Public Works administration informed of new contact information.
2. Annual meetings of community groups with Road Supervisors.
3. Community Initiative Request Form must be submitted for any proposed changes or purchases (at a minimum of 60 days prior to event or purchase of new items).
4. Public Works upper management reviews and approves new requests or new scope of works.

Areas of Strategic Focus and Critical Success Factors

The recommendations in this report support the following areas of strategic focus:

Economic Prosperity:

Chatham-Kent is an innovative and thriving community with a diversified economy

A Healthy and Safe Community:

Chatham-Kent is a healthy and safe community with sustainable population growth

People and Culture:

Chatham-Kent is recognized as a culturally vibrant, dynamic, and creative community

Environmental Sustainability:

Chatham-Kent is a community that is environmentally sustainable and promotes stewardship of our natural resources

The recommendations in this report support the following critical success factors:

Financial Sustainability:

The Corporation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent is financially sustainable

Open, Transparent and Effective Governance:

The Corporation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent is open, transparent and effectively governed with efficient and bold, visionary leadership

Has the potential to support all areas of strategic focus & critical success factors

Neutral issues (does not support negatively or positively)

Consultation

The Manager of Corporate Initiatives was consulted in relation to the “Together CK” fund.

Various BIA and Horticulture Societies provided feedback on current practices and opportunities for improvement.

Public Works Road Supervisors were consulted for current practices.

Financial Implications

The additional \$50,000 requested be funded through a transfer from the “Together CK” fund. Any unused funds will be returned to “Together CK” to be encumbered annually for use in future years. With this approval, the new budget will be \$123,488.

Prepared by:

Ryan Brown, P.Eng.
Director, Public Works

Reviewed by:

Thomas Kelly, P.Eng., MBA
General Manager
Infrastructure and Engineering Services

Attachment: Appendix A – “Public Works Beautification Initiative” Form

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Level Of Service.Docx

A site map must be included with your application. Please indicate exactly where you would like to place your project.

Project Requirements
<p>Submissions for permanent structures such as signs, benches, flower boxes, etc. will require additional information for review and approval. Please keep in mind that the Municipality of Chatham-Kent may have specific standards regarding the purchase and installation of certain assets (e.g. benches, waste receptacles). Please contact Municipal staff to discuss any permanent amenities you would like to install on Municipal property prior to purchasing.</p>

Please list all items required to complete your project below. **Specifications (e.g. dimensions, building materials, drawings or photos must be attached).**

Description of Item(s)	Approved (office use)

Consent
<p>By signing this application, you are acknowledging that you have read and fully understand all terms and conditions of this permit application. Before signing this document, verify that the content you are submitting is correct to the best of your knowledge.</p> <p>Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____</p>