



Subject: Meeting the Customer Service Needs of Our Community

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Department: Corporate Services

Date: September 5, 2017

In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any Member of Council may request that this Information Report be placed on an upcoming General Committee or Council meeting agenda for discussion.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Council regarding the customer service strategy.

- Access Aurora has experienced various trends and challenges in customer service including availability and timing of services, requests for service enhancements, access to information and language barriers
- Changes to Access Aurora hours at Town Hall and an expansion of Access Aurora to the Joint Operations Centre will create a better customer experience
- Access Aurora continues to expand the use of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool to client departments
- Access Aurora will facilitate new resident information sessions and several Pop Up Town Halls at community special events

Background

Access Aurora launched the Town Hall centralized Customer Service model of We Can Help in November 2013. During the past four (4) years, Access Aurora has become the Town hub for corporate customer service for municipal residents and visitors.

Access Aurora provides various municipal services, including: call centre, general inquiries, triaging corporate mail and courier, processing of road closure permits, burial permits, cashiering, commissioning, pet tags, lottery/raffle licenses, marriage licenses,

civil ceremonies and the sale or replacement of recycling/compost bins and provides a centralized public pick up and drop off location for various stakeholders.

Analysis

Access Aurora has experienced various trends and challenges in customer service including availability of services, access to information and language barriers

Over the years growth has significantly changed the demographics and fabric of Aurora.

Some of the trends identified have included:

- Requests for additional online services to transact municipal services
- Requests for paperless billing and ability to view bills via e-billing
- Extended hours beyond regular daytime business hours
- Increase in emergency afterhours activity (requests after 4:30pm)
- Accommodating multiple activity and transactions related to new residents
- Longer transaction time with customers

In order to improve customer service and address the changing needs of the Town's customers several service enhancements are being implemented to increase value added customer experience and increase ease of access to information and the timing of services.

For language barriers, Access Aurora has been approached to provide general information in various languages to help with resident communication. The language barrier will be addressed on an ad hoc basis by using a professional but economical translation service. To date, some Town information has been made available electronically in basic Chinese and Mandarin.

Changes of hours and an expansion of Access Aurora to the Joint Operation Centre will create a better customer experience

Currently Access Aurora is open for business, 8:00am to 5:00pm, while the majority of Town Hall business hours is 8:30am to 4:30pm. In September 2017, Access Aurora will re-align their hours of operation with other departmental Town Hall hours of 8:30am - 4:30pm and will remain open every Tuesday night until 8:30pm providing a full suite of services. This will provide flexibility for residents who are unable to attend Town Hall

during the day due to other commitments. The extended hours will be covered by existing Access Aurora staff with the addition of a single 1:30pm-8:30pm shift once a week and staff will take turns accommodating these extended hours.

The creation of an Access Aurora mini-hub at the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) is also planned for Fall 2017. The mini-hub will offer services currently offered by Access Aurora at Town Hall including cashiering for tax and water payments, green/blue bin replacement, parking ticket payments, commissioning, CRM service tickets, civil ceremony bookings, etc. The staff member working at the JOC location will be logged into the current call centre technology and will continue to answer calls coming in from the call centre switchboard. The hub at JOC will also be covered by existing staff, with no new hires and will be rotated among the current Access Aurora team.

The JOC location already has the call centre technology available (was built in as part of the design) and will be activated by the CSR logging in/out of this location. Access Aurora will occupy one desk at the main JOC front counter and will provide cashiering at this location. Currently there is no cashiering available at JOC. This hub arrangement will benefit our residents by providing an additional and convenient location to transact with the Town. The hub also provides CSR staff an opportunity to work outside of their usual Town Hall environment doing the same work, but have the ability to work closer with their colleagues in IES and Parks to further develop corporate collaboration. This hub arrangement will also add extra support and benefit both customers and staff during periodic incidents such as inclement weather, snow events, waste events, etc.

Access Aurora has expanded the use of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) to additional client departments

For less than two (2) years, Access Aurora has been using a Microsoft Dynamics CRM tool to track customer complaints/inquiries.

The Customer Service Manager has been working with other department managers to determine which municipal issues could be tracked in CRM. Complaints or inquiries are documented and assigned a high, medium or low priority and referred to a pre-determined subject matter expert in Town departments. CRM cases can range from an incident of vandalism/graffiti in a park to an electric vehicle charger inquiry.

CRM has provided us data, corporate knowledge and an opportunity to improve how we conduct business. It has helped us establish better process, consistency and accountability. It has helped to identify where challenges occur within our corporation.

To date CRM has:

- Ability to track 81 different types of municipal complaints/inquiries
- Ability to provide departments a dashboard of their most common issues
- Ability in some cases to determine root cause, so resources can be addressed or evaluated (I.e. types of complaints related to services provided by vendor)
- 3916 resident contact cards have been populated in the system
- 3564 cases have been opened and 3320 successfully closed. (244 remaining cases are open and active)
- Ability to comply to new legislation to protect personal information collected by the municipality to assist residents in conducting municipal services

Town of Aurora currently has over 14 CRM licensed users across the corporation. Employees from economic development and legal services are currently being added to the CRM tool with the intent to add other staff to grow the CRM tool corporately

Access Aurora will be facilitating Information Sessions and Pop-up Town Halls at special events (Municipal and Non-Municipal)

New Resident Information Sessions will be conducted on a quarterly basis to assist new residents with navigating municipal services. Areas of information covered will include an overview of Town services and Regional services, bylaw information, water/sewer bills and consumption concerns, waste/recycling procedures, and tax payment options as well as address any trends that are being observed. The sessions will also provide time for questions and answers and refer residents to other staff as needed. Existing Town of Aurora print resources will be used for these sessions.

Pop-Up Town Halls are a new best practice in the municipal world. They provide an opportunity to create an “Ask Access Aurora” experience. Pop-Up Town Halls may occur at Town run special events, in addition to school or community events, large sports tournaments, and the Farmer’s Market. This allows individuals to ask Access Aurora their questions in a one on one personal nature with a goal to provide answers or direct them to the right person or resource. Access Aurora staff did have a presence at several events including the Aurora Home Show, Chamber of Commerce Longest Street Sale, Eco-festival and 150 Canadian Songbook and was successful in engaging with our community members.

Advisory Committee Review

None

Financial Implications

There will be some costs associated with Access Aurora enhancements for the JOC setup in addition to some marketing materials for events and translation services as required. These costs will be drawn from existing funds in the Capital and Operating budgets.

Communications Considerations

Communications is also working with Access Aurora to create a short video showcasing the one-stop-shopping services available through our Customer Service Department and will highlight how we meet the needs of our community.

In addition, Corporate Communications will support Customer Service in developing branded materials for pop-up Town Halls. This may include banners, table clothes and marketing materials.

Corporate Communications will also be required to design material for the New Resident Information Sessions.

Link to Strategic Plan

Meeting the Customer Service needs of our community supports the Strategic Goal of **Supporting an Exceptional Quality of Life for All** through its accomplishments in satisfying requirements in the key objective **Strengthening the fabric of our community**.

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

N/A

Conclusions

In response to trends and challenges observed since the launch of Access Aurora staff is recommending we expand and enhance our level of customer service. This includes changing our hours of operation to re-align with other departments, expanding Access Aurora location to a mini hub at JOC and facilitating and attending various events that will elevate community engagement and the customer experience.

Attachments

None

Previous Reports

None

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on August 18, 2017

Departmental Approval



for
Techa van Leeuwen
Director
Corporate Services

Approved for Agenda



for
Doug Nadorozny
Chief Administrative Officer