

## **COMMUNICATION 131025**

Received From: Pascal Meunier, Director of Protective Services  
Addressed To: Committee of the Whole  
Date: February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Topic: Approval of the 2019-2024 Fire Master Plan

### **SUMMARY**

The Ocean Wave Fire Company (OWFC) 2019-2024 Master Fire Plan supports the Fire Department's ongoing efforts to increase fire safety and fire prevention through education and prevention mechanisms and to provide high quality, efficient, and effective emergency response such that life safety outcomes are improved for all residents across the Town.

### **BACKGROUND**

To facilitate successful sustained and continuous improvement, this plan has been prepared with the active participation of the OWFC's firefighters and officers. We are confident that the recommendations are supported, can be implemented and will result in a continuation of our tradition of service excellence.

This Master Fire Plan provides strategic direction for the OWFC and outlines the critical initiatives that the OWFC will implement over the next five years in order to achieve its strategic objectives. The Plan is meant to offer a foundational and adaptable toolkit such that OWFC has the means to navigate through ongoing challenges and capitalize on opportunities. It is meant to be a living document that is continuously evolving and improving as new information is gathered and analyzed.

### **DISCUSSION**

The Fire Master Plan is essentially a strategic plan for the Fire Department. Historically, Fire Master Plans identified fire hazards in the community and provided recommendations regarding an appropriate suppression response. Today, fire departments are expected to respond to a variety of emergency situations including medical incidents, hazardous materials incidents and rescue operations including farm and motor vehicle accidents.

Further, fire prevention and public education are considered to be of primary importance in preventing fires in the first place. With early detection, improved building design, code compliance, automatic suppression (sprinklers) and escape planning, the loss of life and property due to fires can be significantly reduced.

Thus, the Fire Master Plan needs to provide a comprehensive community hazard and risk assessment as well as document specific objectives, plans, required financial support, and human resource issues as required. A Fire Master Plan provides a framework for annual operational plans and typically covers a planning period of five (5) years.

The scope of the Fire Master Plan project included:

- Review of the Fire Department's operations.
- Development of a comprehensive Fire Services Master Plan including recommendations for service level standards, staffing, apparatus requirements, station facility requirements and location, fire prevention, inspection and public education.
- Provision of strategic priorities complete with action plans.

The key components of the Study included:

1. Assessed the impacts of existing conditions and future growth patterns and projected the anticipated fire and emergency service needs as well as non-growth-related needs;
2. Developed a comprehensive community risk assessment as the basis for determining the appropriate level of emergency response deployment to meet the Town's legislative responsibilities;
3. Identified options for optimization of the "Three Lines of Defence" as described by the Office of the Fire Marshal;
4. Reviewed current legislation, best practices and industry standards;
5. Assessed the station, staffing and apparatus implications of NFPA standards and that of the Ontario Fire Marshal's public fire safety guidelines;
6. Considered the growth in population and development over the next 10 years and the potential impact to service delivery, and operations of the Fire Department;
7. Considered all areas of the provision of service including staffing, station location, facilities, vehicles and apparatus (new and replacement cycles), vehicle and apparatus maintenance, other equipment, administration, training, mechanical, fire prevention, emergency planning and public education and efficient utilization of municipal resources. This included a trend analysis of issues and best practices on the delivery of emergency services and community risk assessment using current provincial and national guidelines and standards;
8. Provided recommendations and approximate financial implications and an implementation plan including a timetable; and
9. Considered the effects of mutual aid and fire service agreements with neighbouring municipalities as part of the total plan.

### The Methodology used to Develop the Fire Master Plan

A great strategic plan is more than the production of a report. For the document to truly 'live and breathe', it needs to be inspiring and there needs to be "buy in" by both fire fighters, departmental leadership, Council and the community.

A key objective is to build enthusiasm for a positive future (vision) and a shared sense of purpose (mission). It is also critical to define expected behaviours (how we do things) by defining shared values.

Thus, the process to develop the Fire Master Plan was designed to:

- Be inclusive, consultative and collaborative;
- Involve Firefighters, Senior Municipal Leadership as well as Department Officers in its evolution. The objective was to build consensus and 'buy in' so there was enthusiasm, commitment and energy in the implementation of the plan;
- Not only to lead to a robust Plan, but also assist firefighters, Council and the community to better understand and support the Department's role and priorities;
- Be more than a technical review of operations. The process was designed to address cultural, morale, and other 'hidden' issues that can have a profound effect on organizational performance.

In addition to incorporating perspectives and aspirations of the firefighters and officers, the process incorporated external information including directions, guidelines, standards and recognized 'best practices'.

The process of developing the Fire Master Plan was led by a Steering Committee consisting of the Department's senior officers as well as firefighter representatives.

The community hazard and risk assessment was developed from key planning information including demographics, call nature and volume, previous studies, current mission, vision, values, known hazards, and historic and current Department budgets.

To understand the strengths, opportunities, and challenges faced by the Department, key stakeholders including firefighters, officers and senior Town administrative staff were invited to attend a series of interviews and focus groups.

A key part of the process to achieve the above objectives was a series of interviews which focused on five key questions:

- *What is working well today?*
- *What do you see as the key issues facing the Department?*
- *What would you like to see changed?*
- *What would you like to stay the same?*
- *Any other advice or comments?*

Following completion of the background studies and five-question interviews, a Planning Day was held with the firefighters and officers to identify and develop priorities as well as to develop consensus regarding the recommendations of the Plan.

A draft report was subsequently forwarded to the Steering Committee and firefighters for review. Changes and modifications resulted in numerous drafts with the intent that the final draft to be presented to Council would reflect broad consensus and support. There are a number of recommendations that are addressed in this attached plan and that form the basis of the work to be carried out over the fire (5) year term of the plan.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There will be no financial implications tied to the approval of this Master Fire Plan. This Plan will help to inform annual budget requests which will be considered separately through the capital and operating budget process.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

THAT Council approve the 2019-2024 Master Fire Plan.