

February 4, 2014

**COMMUNITY SERVICES – CUSTOMER SERVICES  
INFORMATION REPORT # 2014 - 05**

TO: Mayor Van Bynen  
Members of Council

CC: Operational Leadership Team  
CAO & Commissioners

SUBJECT: Customer Services – Expanded Service Delivery

ORIGIN: Manager, Customer Services

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**COMMENTS**

The purpose of this Information Report is to provide Members of Council with an overview of some important initiatives related to enhanced service delivery occurring across the corporation. These initiatives are as follows:

1. Re-branding and re-alignment of staff working at the Recreation facility counters in order to support the introduction of additional customer service transactions at these counters;
2. Upgrade to Access Newmarket call tracking software to better identify service issues and trends;
3. Rollout of telephone technology at Customer Service counters at Magna Centre and Ray Twinney Complex.

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

**BACKGROUND**

Members of Council will recall the corporate wide review that was conducted in 2010 which resulted in a re-alignment of the three commissions and the CAO's office. As part of this realignment, the Customer Services department joined Recreation & Culture and the Economic Development departments thereby forming the new Community Services Commission. Community Services Information Report 2013-21 explained the background, the process and the outcomes related to this new commission. Responsibilities falling under the Customer Services mandate now include direct responsibility for front line staff in the Customer Service Centre and at our Recreation facility kiosks.

**Community Services  
Customer Services**

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## **Enhanced Service Delivery at Recreation Kiosks**

In 2013 several activities commenced relating to the introduction of additional customer service type functions at the Recreation kiosks. Starting with the Magna Centre and Ray Twinney Recreation Complex, recruitment efforts are taking place as we identify, hire and train candidates with the skill set, attitude and experience to provide exceptional service delivery to visitors at these two recreation counters. These front line staff, under the direction of the Manager, Customer Services, has commenced customer service training related to the roles and responsibilities similar to those in the Customer Service Centre. More specifically, commencing in mid-February customers will be able to access a variety of additional services such as inquiries and payments related to municipal taxes, parking tickets, by-law complaints, missed garbage, purchase of pet tags, and so on. The types of services will expand as staff becomes comfortable with some of the more complex transactions.

The work area for the kiosks has been modified so that there are three windows at the Magna Centre kiosk; two for more involved or lengthy customer interactions and a third for those who wish to quickly swipe their pass in order to access a drop-in program such as swimming, public skating, fitness, or track. Signage has also been added, removing the wording "Reception" and replacing it with "Customer Service". Once staff is ready to commence these transactions and enhanced services, notices will be displayed advising customers that they may now access these services at the counters.

Staff at the Customer Service Recreation counters is being provided enhanced training for customer service skills, use of the software applications, and call handling procedures used by staff in the Customer Service Centre. Interactions will be tracked, complaints or issues will be documented, escalated as appropriate, and trends identified so that gaps can be addressed.

## **Upgrade to Access Newmarket software**

Access Newmarket, our customer tracking software, is also being upgraded in order to provide enhanced reporting as well as easier methods of contacting the Customer Services department through the Town web-site. It will no longer be necessary for customers or Members of Council to create a customer account in order to send an issue or question to the Customer Service Centre. With this upgrade, providing responses to tickets from internal staff will be much more user-friendly, especially for those in the field who rely on their mobile devices to review and respond to customer issues.

Members of Council are encouraged to channel customer issues to staff in the Customer Service Centre through a telephone call, email or the 'my-waste' app. By centralizing as many issues as possible through the Customer Service Centre we are better able to identify trends, understand gaps in service expectations and provide helpful information related to decisions about perceived service gaps and funding recommendations. When directing issues to the attention of the Customer Services staff, Members of Council are assured that we will provide you (and your customer if you wish) with a status update, and follow-up with the appropriate parties until the issue is resolved and the customer is advised.

## **Expansion of Call Centre telephone technology**

The phone system used by those at the Recreation counters is in the process of being upgraded to the same system used in the Customer Service Centre. There are occasions where staff at

the Recreation Customer Service counters are extremely busy and are not able to answer the phones in a timely manner. Once this upgrade is complete, calls that cannot be answered at either the Magna or Ray Twinney counters in a timely manner will automatically be routed to the Customer Service Centre. All Customer Services staff either at Town Hall or at the Recreation kiosks will have access to the same knowledge base and eventually be able to respond to the majority of customer inquiries regardless of the telephone line the call comes through.

With the introduction of this reporting software we will be better able to identify peak periods, our most common issues and biggest opportunity areas in order to further enhance the level of service we provide. A more long term goal is that staff at these two Recreation counters will be prepared and able to handle either overflow calls from the CSC when these volumes peak or the calls that are presented when the call centre is closed and the facilities are open. This expansion of call centre servicing will provide improved service delivery after hours and, eventually potential cost savings.

Future plans for expanded service delivery include the possibility of a Customer Services counter at the Old Town Hall so that many of these same services can be accessed in the downtown area.

### **CONSULTATION**

Staff from the Recreation & Culture and Information Technology departments have been consulted extensively throughout the planning and execution of this strategy and are very strong partners as we recruit, train and develop staff to provide these enhanced services to the community.

### **BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES**

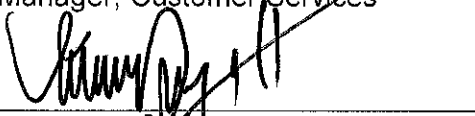
Providing our customers alternative locations for customer service transactions reinforces our commitment to Council's Strategic Priority: Internal Efficiencies and Enhanced Service Delivery.

### **BUDGET IMPACT**

Costs related to the provision of services at the Recreation kiosks have been transferred to the Customer Services department budget from the Recreation & Culture budget, commencing in 2014. There is no anticipated overall increase in costs.



Bonnie G. Munslow  
Manager, Customer Services



Ian McDougall  
Commissioner, Community Services

BGM:bgm