



Agenda
Corporate Services Committee

October 9, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers

The public can attend meetings in person. Meetings will also be livestreamed on the City's Council and Committee webpage. If there are technical issues with the livestream that can't be fixed within 15 minutes, the meeting will continue, and a recording will be available later, on the webpage or by contacting the City Clerk. People who can't attend the meeting in person for Public Forum, should send their comments to the Recording Secretary one business day before the meeting. These comments will be shared with members and included in the updated agenda.

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1. CALL TO ORDER	
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There are no deputations or presentations.	
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There are no correspondence items being presented for consideration.	
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8.e	Clerks None.	
8.f	Corporate and Facility Services None.	
8.g	Fire None.	
8.h	Parking and By-law Enforcement None.	
8.i	Taxes and Revenue None.	
9.	MATTERS POSTPONED There are no matters postponed.	
10.	MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN There are no motions for which notice was previously given.	
11.	CORRESPONDENCE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION There are no correspondence items being presented for information.	
12.	DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS	
13.	NOTICES OF MOTION	
14.	ADJOURNMENT	



Minutes

Corporate Services Committee

September 11, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Melanie Middlebro'
Member Kelly Carmichael
Deputy Mayor Scott Greig
Member Neil McCutcheon (via video)
Councillor Brock Hamley
David Crane

MEMBERS

ABSENT/REGRETS: Vice Chair Travis Dodd
Member Meghan Robertson

STAFF PRESENT: Phil Eagleson, Fire Chief
Bradey Carbert, Manager of Corporate Services
Christine Gilbert, Deputy Treasurer
Lauren Stewart, Purchasing and Claims Coordinator
Christina McLean, Committee and Executive Support
Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Middlebro' called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.a Minutes of the Corporate Services Committee meeting held on July 10, 2025

"THAT the Corporate Services Committee approves the minutes of the meeting held on July 10, 2025."

Carried.

5. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

There were no deputations or presentations.

6. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no questions or comments from the public.

7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION IS REQUIRED

There were no correspondence items presented for consideration.

8. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF

8.a Fire

8.a.1 Report CR-25-124 from the Fire Chief Re: Fire Marque Inc. Update

The Fire Chief provided an overview of the report.

In response to a question from Committee, Mr. Eagleson clarified that the 30% service charge is not included in the revenue numbers provided in the report as it is collected before the funds are received by the City.

In response to a question from Committee, Mr. Eagleson noted that unsuccessful claims are either cases without insurance, or without sufficient fire department costs listed in their policy.

CR-250911-002

Moved by Deputy Mayor Greig

"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-114 respecting Fire Marque Inc. Update, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes."

Carried.

8.b Corporate and Facility Services

8.b.1 Report CR-25-121 from the Purchasing and Claims Coordinator Re: Bi-Annual Summary of Awarded Purchases between \$50,000 and \$249,000 from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025

The Purchasing and Claims Coordinator provided an overview of the report.

"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-121 respecting Bi-Annual Summary of Awarded Purchases between \$50,000 and \$249,999 from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes."

Carried.

8.c Taxes and Revenue

8.c.1 Report CR-25-111 from the Tax Collector Re: MPAC's Revised Role for s.357 Applications - Cancellation, Reduction or Refund of Property Taxes

The Deputy Treasurer provided an overview of the report.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Gilbert noted that one of the rationales of the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) changing these regulations was to provide increased flexibility to municipalities. She added that the threshold percentages as presented are in line with other municipalities that have already put thresholds in place.

In response to a question from Committee, Mr. Eagleson clarified that properties would not receive insurance monies for instances such as loss due to fire without a receipt from paying the property taxes, so there isn't a risk for "double dipping". Ms. Gilbert added that a fulsome application process built into the procedure could also aid in this.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Gilbert noted that there is between approximately 5-15 applications under section 357 annually.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Gilbert clarified that this program is only applicable within the year of loss. She added that under 357(1)(g), the amounts are prorated for only the time in which renovations were actively taking place. Ms. Gilbert noted that any additional assessment value created from completed renovations are still added onto the assessment role, just not to today's value, and are added in 2016 dollars to be relative to the latest assessment.

"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-111 respecting MPACs revised role for s.357's – Cancellation, Reduction or Refund of Property Taxes, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council:

- 1. Direct staff to bring forward a policy and procedure for administering applications under Section 357 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, including:
 - a. A case-by-case approach for applications made under subsection 357(1)(d)(ii) (substantially unusable buildings), where thresholds for tax relief will be established through the forthcoming policy, and will guide the amount of tax relief provided;**
 - b. A standardized approach under subsection 357(1)(g) (repairs/renovations), where property tax relief will be determined using a percentage reduction capped at 25%, based on the vacant portion's notional value and deemed unusable square footage returned provided by MPAC; and**
 - c. Maintaining existing processes for all other subsections of Section 357;****
- 2. Approve the two current Section 357 applications as outlined in the report (Rockview Apartments and Parkway Plaza); and**
- 3. Direct staff to bring forward a by-law to amend the Delegation of Authority By-law to delegate authority to the Treasurer, or designate, to administer and approve future applications consistent with the finalized Section 357 Policy."**

Carried.

8.d Accounting

None.

8.e Clerks

None.

8.f Information Technology

None.

8.g Human Resources

None.

8.h Parking and By-law Enforcement

None.

9. MATTERS POSTPONED

There were no matters postponed.

10. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN

There were no motions for which notice was previously given.

11. CORRESPONDENCE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION

There were no correspondence items presented for information.

12. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Chair Middlebro' adjourned the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Carly McArthur, Communications Advisor
Meeting Date: October 9, 2025
Report Code: CM-25-025
Subject: External Communications Strategy Project Plan

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CM-25-025 respecting External Communications Strategy Project Plan, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes.

Highlights:

- The City's first External Communications Strategy will provide clear communication goals and directions, build trust, and mutually benefit the community, City staff, and elected officials.
- Public Engagement will commence later this month.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: Clear Direction.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Previous Report/Authority:

N/A

Background:

Council approved the Community Engagement Policy in 2023. Within the spectrum of engagement, “Inform” is one component. The City of Owen Sound does not currently have a coordinated plan or documented goals for external communications. The absence of a formal strategy or plan results in reactive communications, which may lead to inconsistencies in the information shared with the community.

An External Communications Strategy (the Strategy) will be a guiding document that sets strategic direction around how the municipality shares information with residents, businesses, community groups, media, and other stakeholders. This includes overarching communication goals for Owen Sound, as well as outlining tactics and ways to achieve these goals. It’s essentially a playbook for how, what and when the City communicates with the public.

Analysis:

The purpose of creating an External Communications Strategy is to provide a guiding document grounded in communications best practices and aligned with existing City policies, including the Community Engagement Policy. The Strategy will enable the future development and implementation of communications-related procedures and provide overall strategic communications direction and tactics.

Scope:

The Strategy will focus on corporate communications of the City as a whole, communicating about core programs and services as well as projects or initiatives that affect most residents and taxpayers. This Strategy will not include specific marketing plans or communications guidelines for groups with separate boards, such as the Owen Sound Police, Library, and the River District.

How to Accomplish This:

The project plan includes milestones to review a current state analysis of communication tactics, gather internal and external engagement to identify key themes, gaps, desired outcomes and potential actions, and then draft a strategy with goals and ways to reach the goals.

In addition to incorporating identified findings and recommendations from other City projects, such as the 2021 Citizen Satisfaction Survey, this project will include dedicated public engagement later this month.

The Value This Will Add:

The expected value of this External Communications Strategy includes providing overarching communications direction and goals that are mutually beneficial for city staff and elected officials, as well as residents, community groups, media outlets, and others.

The Strategy is intended to help improve trust, provide consistency and increase staff effectiveness. It will support already-established policies while streamlining staff efforts and increasing staff confidence when addressing public inquiries, supported by timely access to the information staff need.

Key results for this Strategy will include the Strategy's completion, implemented actions within the first year of the launch (staff using, following and referencing the Strategy), and the results of the 2027 Citizen Satisfaction Survey.

Ask of Committee Members:

We are asking Committee members to support the development of the City's External Communications Strategy by actively participating in the upcoming public engagement opportunities. This includes completing the survey, sharing it within your networks, promoting participation, and providing valuable feedback. Your involvement will help shape a Strategy that reflects community needs and strengthens how the City connects with residents.

Financial Implications:

The strategy is being completed in-house by staff within the existing operating budget.

Communication Strategy:

Public engagement for this Strategy will include a promotional campaign through a media release, social media posts, and offline messaging in high-traffic areas. There will also be a dedicated page on the OurCity online engagement platform, a survey, and an in-person engagement at the City's Open House in October.

Consultation:

Senior Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Operational Effectiveness
Communications Advisor

Attachments:

N/A

Recommended by:

Carly McArthur, Communications Advisor
Kate Mosher, Communications Advisor

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Carly McArthur at cmcarthur@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1211.

Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Mark Giberson, Manager of Information Technology
Meeting Date: October 9, 2025
Report Code: CR-25-129
Subject: Electronic Signature Policy (AF011)

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-129 respecting Electronic Signature Policy (AF011), the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council direct staff to bring forward a by-law to adopt Electronic Signatures Policy AF011 as presented in the report.

Highlights:

- Improves efficiency, reduces paper use, enhances customer service, and ensures compliance.
- Supports the use of electronic signatures in place of handwritten signatures when legally appropriate.
- Advances modernization of municipal services and aligns with best practices across Ontario municipalities.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: This report supports the delivery of Core Service by improving accessibility and effectiveness in service delivery for residents, businesses and staff as well as advancing modernization of municipal services by reducing paper-based processes.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Previous Report/Authority:

[Information Technology Needs Assessment Project Update – CR-22-009](#)

Background:

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent remote work requirements highlighted the inefficiencies of paper-based approvals. Documents often required printing, wet signing, scanning, and uploading to SharePoint, creating delays and administrative burden. An electronic signature (e-signature) is a digital method of indicating consent or approval on a document, comparable to a handwritten signature but completed through secure electronic means. By eliminating the need for printing and scanning, e-signatures streamline workflows, reduce administrative overhead, and accelerate approval processes while maintaining legal validity. Municipalities across Ontario (e.g., Clearview, Windsor, Waterloo) have adopted digital signature policies since 2020, aligning with the Electronic Commerce Act, 2000. Owen Sound's adoption of AF011 follows this best practice and addresses identified IT policy gaps.

Analysis:

The approval of an electronic signature policy will directly improve the City's ability to provide timely, efficient, and accessible services. By streamlining document approvals and reducing delays associated with paper-based processes, staff will be able to focus more on service delivery rather than administrative tasks. Faster processing times, enhanced support for remote work, and reduced reliance on physical paperwork will not only benefit internal operations but also result in more responsive and citizen-focused municipal services. While the City currently makes use of electronic signatures, their adoption has been hampered by the absence of a formal policy. The approval of this policy will not only formalize their use but also provide clear direction on how and when electronic signatures should be applied, ensuring consistency, compliance, and accountability across all departments.

Industry Adoption

- Between 60% and 80% of organizations have implemented e-signature capabilities, with 95% either already using or planning adoption.

- Financial services and human resources are leading adopters, reducing turnaround times and using e-signatures for contracts, onboarding, and compliance.

Efficiency and Productivity Gains

- Up to 80% reduction in document turnaround time, with agreements finalized in hours rather than days.
- Estimated savings of CAD \$38 per document when moving away from paper-based workflows.
- During the pandemic, adoption grew by 50%, and 69% of users intend to continue using e-signatures post-pandemic.

Implications for Owen Sound

Formalizing Policy AF011 enables the City to:

- Align with industry and municipal best practices.
- Leverage existing platforms such as Xplor Recreation, CloudPermit, and SharePoint.
- Provide staff and residents with modernized, efficient, and accessible service delivery.

Financial Implications:

No significant direct costs are anticipated, as the City will leverage existing software platforms. If additional signature software is required, costs will be reviewed and brought forward in future budgets.

Communication Strategy:

Following Policy approval, the policy will be circulated to all staff, Council, and volunteers.

The IT Division will develop user guidance and FAQs clarifying when to use electronic signatures versus wet signatures.

Department managers will ensure that employees receive training and understand their responsibilities.

Consultation:

- Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services
- Briana Bloomfield, City Clerk
- Kristen Van Alphen, Manager of Legislative Services

- City staff across departments participated in review to ensure clarity, practicality, and ease of use.

Attachments:

Policy AF011 – Electronic Signatures

Recommended by:

Mark Giberson, Manager of Information Technology

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Mark Giberson, Manager of Information Technology at mgiberson@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1284.

Policy Statement

1. The City of Owen Sound supports the use of electronic signatures in place of handwritten (wet) signatures when legally appropriate. Electronic signatures have the same legal effect as wet signatures unless specific legislation or other City policies require a physical signature.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this policy is to:
 - a. improve efficiency in City operations;
 - b. reduce paper use and support sustainability;
 - c. improve customer service and accessibility;
 - d. streamline how information is collected, shared and stored; and
 - e. ensure legal validity, reliability, and security of electronic signatures.

Scope

3. This policy applies to all City staff, Council members, contractors, and volunteers when using signatures for official City business, both internally and externally.

Definitions

4. For the purposes of this policy,
 - “City” means the City of Owen Sound, and a reference to the City is a reference to the geographical area or The Corporation of the City of Owen Sound as the context requires;
 - “electronic record” is any document created, sent, or stored electronically;
 - “electronic signature” is a digital mark used to sign a document;
 - “Director” means the City Manager, the Director of Community Services, the Director of Corporate Services, the Director of Public Works & Engineering, the Fire Chief, or any one of the above, and any designates thereof;
 - “employee” means City of Owen Sound full-time employees, part-time employees, students, volunteers, members of Council and Committee;

“manager” means an employee who is responsible for a City division and includes employees who supervise and manage other employees;

“person” means an individual, business, government, or other entity participating in a transaction with the City;

“record” means information created, received, and maintained as evidence of a transaction or legal obligation;

“vital records” means a record essential for the City to continue operations in an emergency; and

“wet signature” means a physical, handwritten signature using ink on paper.

Policy

Recognition of Electronic Signatures and Exceptions

5. The City recognizes that electronic signatures are not to be denied legal effects, validity, or enforceability merely because they are in electronic form. At the same time, this policy does not affect the City’s ability to conduct transactions using wet signatures.
6. The City will not allow for the use and acceptance of an electronic signature, where the applicable legislation or the City’s policies prescribe the use of a wet signature.

Exceptions

7. Electronic signatures may not be used when:
 - a. legislation requires a physical signature (e.g. certain land titles or statutory declarations); or
 - b. City policies specifically prohibit electronic signing for a particular document type.
8. Employees must consult with their immediate supervisor or the Manager of Information Technology when unsure whether an electronic signature is appropriate.

Authority to Sign Electronically

9. Employees may use an electronic signature only if:
 - a. they have delegated authority to sign documents on behalf of the City;
 - b. the document being signed falls within the scope of their duties; and
 - c. the electronic signature method meets the requirements outlined in this policy.

10. Employees must consult their immediate supervisor when unsure about their signing authority.

Consent

11. The use of an electronic signature requires the consent of all parties involved, including the City, in accordance with this policy and applicable procedures. The City will not mandate the use of an electronic signature without the individual's consent. If a wet signature is requested, the City will accommodate this preference.

Approved Tools and Technology

12. No specific electronic signature software is mandated under this policy.
13. Any software or tool used must be reviewed and approved by the Manager of Information Technology.
14. Software must meet the functional and security requirements described in section 14.

Minimum Functional Requirements

15. Electronic signature technology or processes must ensure that:
 - a. the signer consents to sign the document;
 - b. the signature is unique to the signer;
 - c. the signing method is under the signer's sole control;
 - d. the method can reliably identify the signer.
 - e. the signature is linked to the document so changes after signing are detectable;
 - f. the integrity of the record is preserved after signing;
 - g. the record is accessible, retainable, and readable for its full retention period; and
 - h. metadata such as date/time, signer identity, and origin/destination is captured.

Acceptable Uses

16. Electronic signatures may be used for:
 - a. internal approvals, forms and authorizations;
 - b. contracts, agreements and external communications;
 - c. resident and business-facing processes (e.g., permits, submissions); and

- d. any other transaction approved by a Director or the City Manager.

Record Management

- 17. All electronically signed documents must be stored and disposed of in accordance with the City's Records and Information Management Policy (AF002).
- 18. Records must remain secure, accessible, and change-proof for the full retention period.

Compliance and Enforcement

- 19. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contract.
- 20. The City reserves the right to audit and review the use of electronic signatures to ensure compliance with applicable legislation and policy.
Employees must report misuse or unauthorized signing immediately to their immediate supervisor or the Manager of Information Technology.

Policy review

- 21. The Manager of Information Technology will review this policy:
 - a. every five (5) years to ensure effectiveness and compliance with current business processes; or
 - a. sooner, if required, based on legislative changes.
- 22. The Manager of Information Technology is authorized to make such administrative changes to this policy as appropriate to keep the policy current. Any revision to the policy's intent must be presented to the City Manager for consideration.

Related Information and Resources

Internal

- 23. [AF002 Records and Information Management Policy](#)
- 24. [Delegation of Powers and Duties By-law](#)

External

- a. [Electronic Commerce Act, 2000, SO 2000, c. 17](#)
- b. [CAN/CGSB-72.34-2017 Electronic Records as Documentary Evidence \(The National Standard of Canada\)](#)

Appendices

- 25. N/A

Revision History

Authority	Date	Approval	Description of Amendment
City Manager	Click or tap to enter a date.	CM	New policy
Choose an item.	Click or tap to enter a date.	Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	Click or tap to enter a date.	Choose an item.	

Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services
Meeting Date: October 9, 2025
Report Code: CR-25-126
Subject: 2025 T2 Financial Update

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-126 respecting 2025 T2 Financial Update, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes.

Highlights:

- The City is forecasting a modest year-end surplus, largely due to one-time revenues and continued staff gapping.
- Operational recovery efforts from the winter and spring remain a key cost driver.
- The WSIB rebate is confirmed and may be considered for future risk management initiatives.
- Labour relations remain stable in 2025, providing temporary budget relief.
- Tax base health is showing early signs of stress, which may influence the 2026 Mayor's budget.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: This report supports the delivery of Core Service.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

The financial results for 2025, especially in relation to winter control and spring recovery efforts, clearly illustrate how climate-related variability directly affects the City's financial sustainability. While total snowfall was not historically unprecedented, the frequency, severity, and compression of snow and ice events placed significant and sustained pressure on resources. These patterns are increasingly difficult to predict and underscore the importance of embedding climate resilience and operational adaptability into both short- and long-term financial planning.

Previous Report/Authority:

[CR-25-057 2025 T1 Financial Update](#)

Background:

The City of Owen Sound operates on a calendar year budget cycle. This report summarizes the City's financial position for the first eight months of the fiscal year (January to August 2025) and provides a forecast through year-end.

Forecasting methodology remains consistent:

- Year-to-date actuals are compared to budget.
- Year-end projections for September to December are developed using prior-year trends and known adjustments.

This update excludes financial information from the Owen Sound Police Board and the Union Public Library. Updates from both organizations will continue to be reported to Council through their respective governance structures.

Analysis:

1. Operational Risk and Cost Pressures

The financial strain resulting from the compressed winter season and extended spring recovery has become more pronounced since the T1 update. While total snowfall volumes remained within historical norms, the frequency and intensity of snow and ice events over a short period created sustained pressure on winter control operations. Additionally, costs associated with

spring clean-up, late-season storm debris, and facility restoration are now more fully recognized in the City's accounts.

As of the end of August, the total net variance associated with winter control and spring recovery is estimated at \$699,000, a further increase from the \$600,000 estimate reported at T1. These impacts were concentrated in snow and ice materials, overtime, contracted services, and follow-up infrastructure repair.

This reinforces the need for continued investment in resilient operations and financial flexibility to address climate-driven volatility and further supports the use of non-recurring revenue (such as the WSIB rebate) to address similar unanticipated risk-based cost drivers.

2. Risk Management Surplus – WSIB Rebate and Future Allocation

In March 2025, the City received a confirmed WSIB surplus rebate and program refund totaling \$570,000, including:

- The base surplus rebate for premiums paid in 2023
- Additional incentive funds through the WSIB Excellence Program

This refund reflects the City's strong track record in risk mitigation, including injury prevention, claim management, and compliance, and should be viewed as a return of premiums, not recurring revenue.

Staff are recommending that Council consider earmarking a portion of these funds for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) remediation. Like WSIB, EAB represents a public safety and liability risk, particularly around urban trails, roadways, and parks. Leveraging the rebate to address this emerging risk is consistent with the principles of reinvesting in prevention and would avoid additional pressure on the tax base.

3. Labour Relations – Budget Relief in a Transition Year

The temporary standstill in Fire arbitration has contributed to a forecasted surplus in HR-related legal costs. With no major contracts under negotiation in 2025, labour relations have remained stable.

Looking ahead:

- Fire arbitration is expected to resume in 2026.
- The Inside CUPE agreement expires December 31, 2026.
Preparatory work is expected to begin late next year.

This window of labour stability offers short-term budget relief, but staff caution against assuming long-term savings, especially in light of broader inflationary trends in the municipal sector and ongoing negotiations in comparator municipalities.

4. Penalty Revenue and Tax Base Health

Penalty and interest on taxes is forecast at \$566,000, approximately 30% above budget. While this provides additional revenue, it also reflects a higher incidence of late or deferred payments than in prior years.

More notable is the increase in taxes receivable as a percentage of the total levy, moving from the historical range of 5% to closer to 10% in 2025. Staff will continue to monitor this trend over time and assess its potential impact on the City's finances.

5. Gapping and Staff Vacancy Savings

Wage-related gapping is forecast at approximately \$180,000, more than double the \$85,000 included in the original budget. These savings are due to recruitment delays and temporary vacancies across multiple divisions.

While beneficial in the short term, staff note that prolonged gapping can result in delayed service delivery, reduced capacity, and increased burnout risk. Strategic workforce planning will continue to be important heading into 2026.

6. Police Forecast – Early Signs Positive

The Owen Sound Police Service has provided preliminary indications that a year-end surplus of approximately \$250,000 may be possible. However, no formal financial update has been received from the Police Board at the time of this report, and no adjustment has been made to the City's consolidated forecast.

Financial Implications:

The City is currently forecasting a year-end surplus of approximately \$650,000, prior to consideration of any unbudgeted in-year allocations. This forecast incorporates one-time positive variances such as the \$570,000 WSIB rebate, higher-than-anticipated investment income, and savings from wage-related gapping.

However, the financial picture continues to reflect notable operational pressure. The total winter control and spring recovery variance has increased to \$699,000, driven by overtime, contracted snow services, and additional spring clean-up costs across roads, facilities, and parks.

Staff caution that while the projected surplus provides a measure of short-term flexibility, it does not represent structural or recurring capacity. Any surplus persistent to year end will be recommended to be transferred to the tax stabilization reserve in line with the reserve and reserve fund policy.

A final year-end report and recommendation for allocation of any remaining surplus will be brought forward to Council in spring 2026.

Communication Strategy:

Financial reports are available on the City's website.

Consultation:

City Staff

Attachments:

None

Recommended by:

Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services at kallan@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1238.

Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Courtney McDonald, Human Resources Specialist
Meeting Date: October 9, 2025
Report Code: CR-25-127
Subject: Joining the Canadian Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-127 respecting Joining the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council endorse the resolution attached to the report.

Highlights:

- The Inclusion Strategy seeks to explore external partnerships with the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities.
- Joining the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities will improve external partnerships and collaboration with municipalities on diversity, equity and inclusion matters.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: This report supports the delivery of Safe City.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Previous Report/Authority:

[CR-23-048: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy](#)

Background:

In 2021, City Council approved a Strategic Plan Refresh that prioritizes and recognizes the investment in the City's diversity, equity and inclusion. On May 11, 2023, City Council approved report CR-23-048: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy. The strategy was originally titled the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy. However, through consultations with staff and external stakeholders, the theme of Inclusion consistently emerged as a central focus. As a result, the strategy was renamed the Inclusion Strategy to better reflect this shared priority. An objective of the strategy is to raise awareness and communicate both internally and externally effectively about diversity, equity and inclusion. To achieve the objective, one of the action items identified was to explore partnerships for inclusion with external organizations, such as the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, established in 2004.

Analysis:

In Canada, approximately 121 cities are members of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities. Members of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities advance various initiatives including:

- Improving practices to promote social inclusion
- Establish policies to eradicate racism and discrimination
- Promote human rights and diversity

The City of Owen Sound will benefit from membership in the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities by:

1. Developing and implementing a comprehensive framework to address racism and various forms of discrimination within their communities.
2. Exchanging best practices and resources with other municipalities across Canada, fostering a collaborative approach to inclusivity.
3. Accessing support and guidance to cultivate a welcoming and inclusive environment, ensuring all residents can actively participate in every aspect of community life.

By joining the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, municipalities commit to dedicating time and resources to foster more welcoming and inclusive communities. As part of this network, the City of Owen Sound will work

collaboratively to enhance policies aimed at combating racism, discrimination, exclusion, and intolerance.

As part of the 2026 workplan, the Human Resources team will leverage the resources provided by the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities to develop a comprehensive Plan of Action aligned with the Coalition's 10 Common Commitments. Initial priorities will include reviewing and updating existing policies, as well as implementing staff training initiatives focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Financial Implications:

None.

Communication Strategy:

All communication materials will be developed in collaboration with the Communications Division and distributed to staff as appropriate.

Consultation:

Coalition of the Inclusive Municipalities

Attachments:

Declaration to Join the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities

Recommended by:

Courtney McDonald, Human Resources Specialist
Janet Ashfield, Manager of Human Resource
Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Courtney McDonald, Human Resource Specialist at cmcdonald@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1273.

Declaration to Join the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities

Given that:

1. The Canadian Commission for UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is calling on municipalities to join a Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities and to be part of UNESCO's international Coalition launched in 2004; and
2. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) endorses the Call for a Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities and encourages its members to join; and

Whereas:

3. Municipal governments in Canada, along with other levels of government, have responsibilities under Canada's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as well as federal, provincial and territorial human rights codes, and therefore have an important role to play in combating racism and discrimination and fostering equality and respect for all citizens;

Be it resolved that:

4. The **Corporation of The City of Owen** agrees to join the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities and, in joining the Coalition, endorses the Common Commitments and agrees to develop or adapt its own unique Plan of Action accordingly.
5. These Common Commitments and the Municipality's unique Plan of Action will be an integral part of the Municipality's vision, strategies and policies.
6. In developing or adapting and implementing its own unique Plan of Action toward progressive realization of the Common Commitments, the Municipality will cooperate with other organizations and jurisdictions, including other levels of government, Indigenous peoples, public and private sector institutions, and civil society organizations, all of whom have responsibilities in the area of human rights.
7. The Municipality will set its priorities, actions and timelines and allocate resources according to its unique circumstances, and within its means and jurisdiction. The Municipality will exchange its expertise and share best practices with other municipalities involved in the Coalition and will report publicly on an annual basis on actions undertaken toward the realization of these Common Commitments.

City of Owen Sound, insert date (month day, year)

His/Her Worship **Ian Boddy**

SIGNATURE OF THE MAYOR



Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Janet Ashfield, Manager of Human Resources
Meeting Date: October 9, 2025
Report Code: CR-25-046
Subject: Pay and Compensation Compliance

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-046 respecting Pay and Compensation Compliance, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes.

Highlights:

- The City is regulated under the Employments Standards Act and the Pay Equity Act regarding standards of pay.
- To ensure attraction and retention of staff, it is important to consider equity with comparators who may be hiring staff similar to those the City is recruiting for – otherwise known as External Equity.
- A component of pay equity, when expanded to all jobs is the comparability of jobs determined through a formal job evaluation program, i.e., Internal Equity.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: Service Excellence. The pay structures and rates paid to staff need to be considered in accordance with the City's obligations in accordance with legislation, but also in terms of attraction, retention and engagement of staff who do the work.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Previous Report/Authority:

Service Review Ad-Hoc Committee, Closed Session CR-24-094 Projects 1c2, 1c3 and 1c4 – HR Market Reviews Update October 9, 2024

Background:

During the Service Review project related to HR Market Reviews (1c2, 1c3 and 1c4), a request was made to bring forward a report that provided clarity about the City's obligations regarding Internal Equity, External Equity and Pay Equity.

Analysis:

The amount the City pays its employees is governed by two pieces of legislation. One is the *Employment Standards Act* which sets out the minimum hourly rates that must be paid to employees and mandates the principle of Equal Pay for Equal Work, requiring that employees performing identical tasks receive the same compensation.

The second is the *Pay Equity Act*. The *Pay Equity Act* exists to ensure gender pay parity by stipulating that women are compensated equally to men for work of comparable value. Comparable work is assessed based on the skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions of a job typically measured through a job evaluation system. This system classifies jobs into categories, ensuring female job classes are compensated equally or better than male job classes of similar value. Guidelines differentiate between male, female, and gender-neutral job classes, considering incumbency trends and societal norms. For example, a nurse has typically been considered a female job class, while a public works job has typically been considered a male job class. This legislation was implemented to close the gender wage gap.

Many organizations extend the principles of Pay Equity into broader frameworks of Internal Equity. Internal Equity uses a gender-neutral evaluation system that groups jobs by similar value across the four Pay Equity factors. It establishes salary bands where all positions within a band receive equivalent compensation. The implementation of Internal Equity supports Pay Equity through ongoing job evaluations ensuring consistent

compensation across all gender job classes based on their organizational value.

While internal equity is determined through the evaluation and comparison of jobs within the organization, external equity considers the pay that is paid to similar jobs at comparator organizations defined by market competition, organizational size and complexity. It ensures the establishment of competitive pay aligned with market standards to attract and retain talent. External consultants typically gather and analyze this data to provide objective market comparisons based on job responsibilities rather than titles. A pay line, derived through regression analysis, informs necessary adjustments to salary bands and not individual jobs.

In all cases above, staff are considering the job duties and responsibilities and not the performance of the person doing the job.

By addressing both internal and external equity, the City not only meets statutory obligations but also aligns with market standards, thereby enhancing its ability to attract and retain qualified staff. This dual approach ensures that compensation is fair, competitive, and consistent with the value each role brings to the organization.

Financial Implications:

N/A

Communication Strategy:

This report will be shared with Council and staff as appropriate to support the education related to compensation and pay structures.

Consultation:

N/A

Attachments:

N/A

Recommended by:

Janet Ashfield, Manager of Human Resources

Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Janet Ashfield at jashfield@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 extension 1214.

Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Bethany Chandler, HR Specialist
Meeting Date: October 9, 2025
Report Code: CR-25-130
Subject: Human Resources Metrics Analysis

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-130 respecting Human Resources Metrics Analysis, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes.

Highlights:

- An increase in retirements in 2024 highlights the importance of having a robust succession management plan.
- Applications increased by 186 per cent from 2019 to 2024, but the number of declined offers rose, indicating a misalignment with candidate expectations.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

This report supports the delivery of Core Service.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Previous Report/Authority:

[Human Resources Metrics - Recruitment and Retention - CR-24-095.docx](#)

Background:

Human Resources has historically tracked statistics in relation to recruitment and retention efforts at the City. With the implementation of the HR strategy and subsequent service review projects, providing insight into key performance indicators and trends is crucial for maintaining a healthy workforce development and employee engagement. This report highlights data from 2024 and provides a comparison to previous years where possible. This report focuses on metrics from various areas of Human Resources, including recruitment, turnover, absenteeism, and other relevant key performance indicators. Understanding these benchmarks enables the human resources team to assess organizational performance, pinpoint areas for improvement, and align strategies with broader municipal objectives.

Human Resources metrics are more than just numbers—they are strategic tools that provide insight into how well our workforce initiatives align with the broader goals of the City. By tracking key indicators such as recruitment efficiency, employee retention, workforce diversity, and compensation equity, we can ensure that HR practices are not only operationally effective but also strategically aligned with the City's values and long-term objectives.

Key Benefits of HR Metrics:

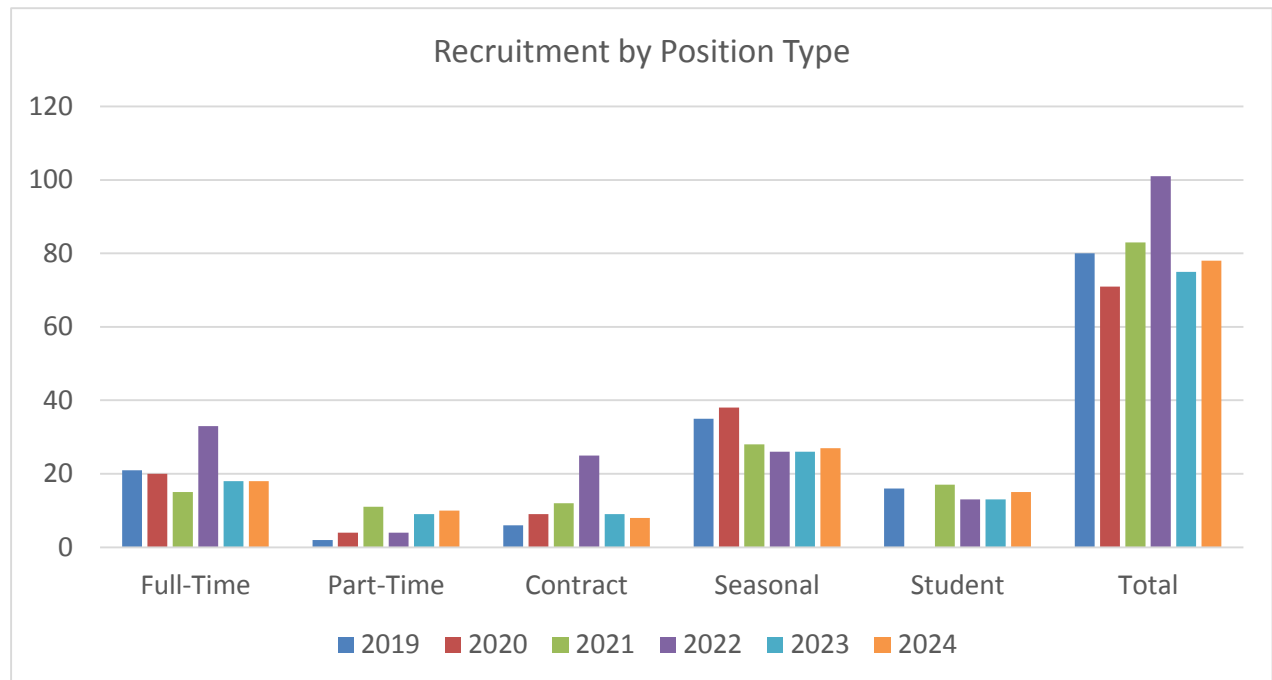
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Metrics provide evidence-based insights that support informed decisions around staffing, budgeting, and policy development.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** Regular reporting on HR performance fosters accountability and demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement and responsible governance.
- **Workforce Planning:** Metrics help anticipate future workforce needs, ensuring we have the right talent in place to deliver essential services to the community.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Tracking diversity and pay equity metrics supports our commitment to a fair and inclusive workplace.
- **Retention and Engagement:** Understanding turnover trends and employee satisfaction helps us create a more resilient and engaged workforce.

By aligning HR metrics with municipal goals, we reinforce the role of Human Resources as a strategic partner in building a responsive, inclusive, and high-performing team.

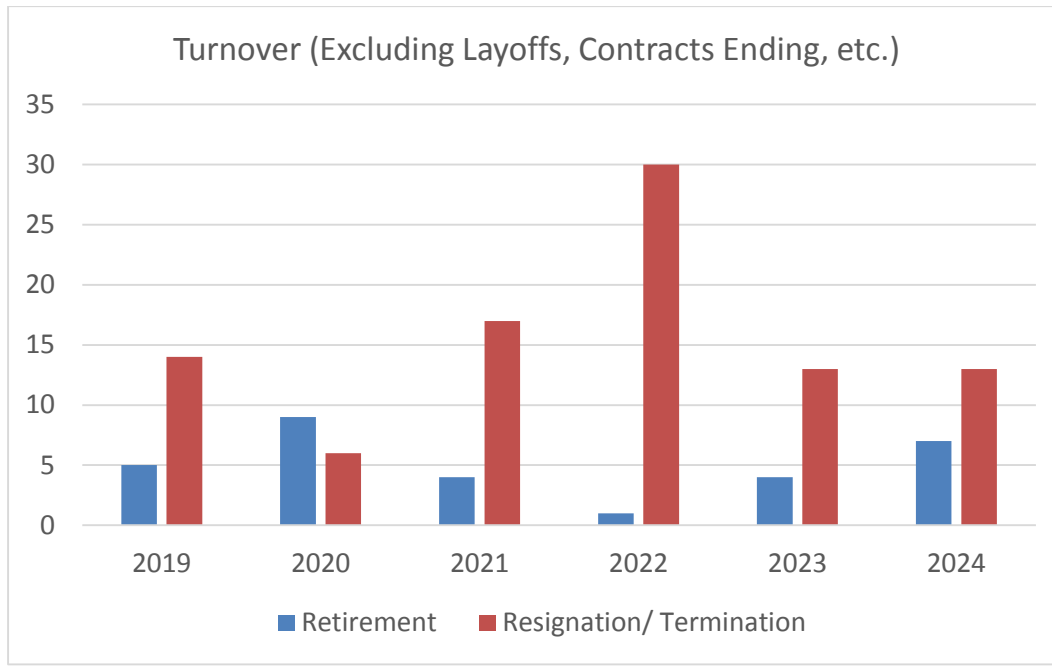
Analysis:

The labour market has shifted significantly in the last few years, and understanding the needs of both our employees and job seekers is imperative to attracting and retaining top talent for our organization.

Key HR Metrics



The spike in contract hires in 2022 reflects temporary staffing needs related to service review projects. Overall, the average number of positions recruited for has remained relatively consistent over the last six years. There has been a noticeable decrease in the number of seasonal positions recruited for since 2020, which can be attributed to the living wage increase in seasonal compensation, allowing us to attract and retain seasonal employees for longer. We have observed an increase in declined offers during the recruitment process, but also a decrease in the number of seasonal employees who begin their employment and resign shortly afterwards.



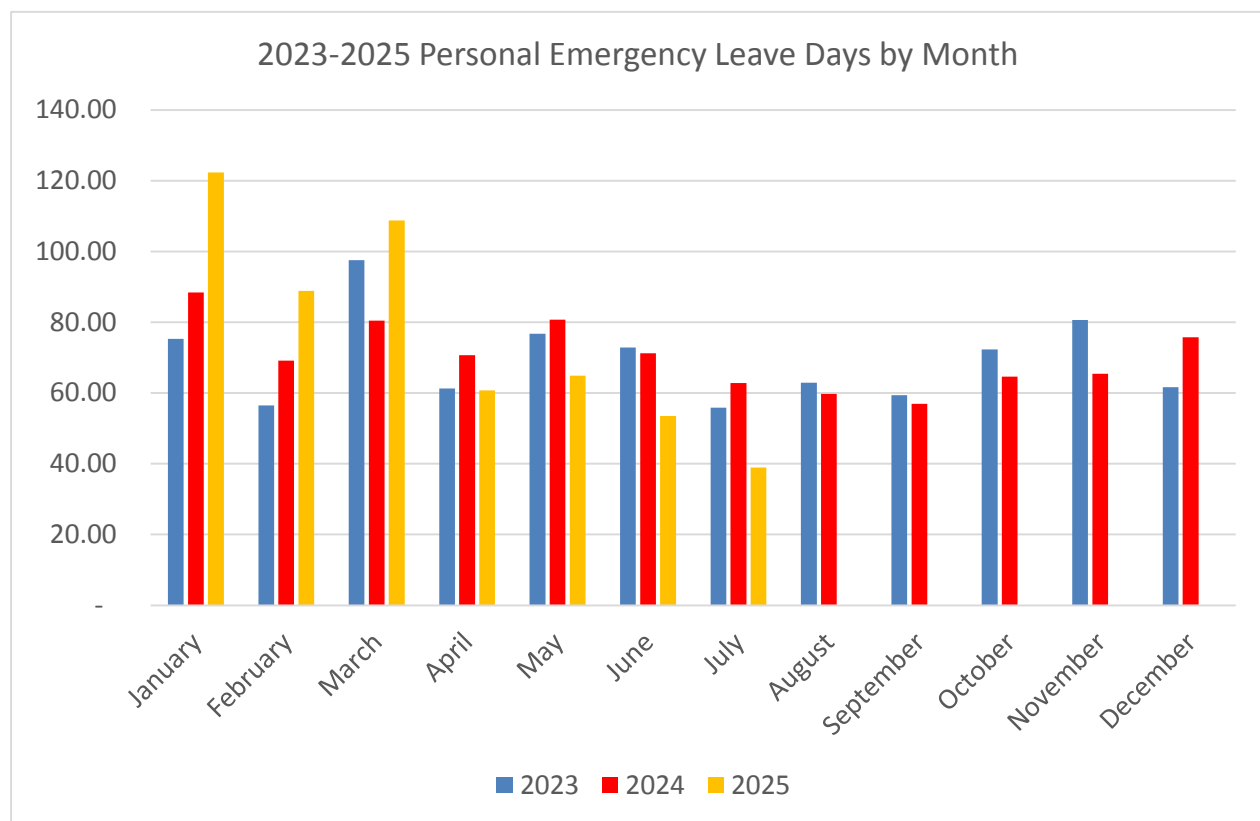
Turnover trends indicate a need for improved retention strategies, particularly in high-demand roles. The reason the turnover breakdown does not match the total recruitment numbers is due to layoffs of seasonal and part-time staff, as well as the expiration of contracts.

An increase in retirements indicates an aging workforce population and the need for a more robust succession management plan, including knowledge transfer, to develop the skills, knowledge, and experience of current staff to be ready to fill these future vacancies. As indicated in the employee engagement sessions, opportunities for advancement have been highlighted as an area for improvement. Through the Service Review Project 1C1, this will be addressed. HR metrics surrounding workforce demographics, learning and development opportunities will be examined.

Recruitment Process Breakdown

Year	Number of Applications Received	Number of Interviews Conducted	The number of offers declined.	Total time invested to offer (in hours)
2019	574	129		225
2020	625	117		221
2021	607	107		208
2022	1558	183		443
2023	1587	131	11	396
2024	1641	156	22	430

The number of applications received has continued to increase year over year, resulting in a corresponding increase in the total time spent by HR and hiring managers on recruitment efforts. However, the introduction of Picsume in the first quarter of 2025 has decreased the administrative burden of the recruitment process and reduced the time to fill roles. There will be more data surrounding this, as well as its impacts, in next year's update. The significant increase in the number of offers declined adds additional time to the recruitment process and highlights the need for a review of our total compensation package, as well as an understanding of what job seekers are looking for in the current labour market. HR will continue to track these statistics to identify potential solutions for reducing the number of declined offers in the future. In speaking with applicants who have declined offers, most cited challenges with attaining housing in the area, compensation, and accepting another opportunity as reasons for not accepting.



When reviewing Personal Emergency Leave (PEL) usage rates over the past three years, there was a significant increase in the number of PEL days used in the first quarter of the year. One possible reason for this is the increase in weather-related school or bus cancellations in the 2024-2025 school year. Unofficial data shows that in Grey Bruce, there were fifteen (15) full school closures and twenty-nine (29) full bus cancellations last winter. Some local

schools and rural bus routes were cancelled in excess of the numbers reported above. As PEL banks were used during the winter months, we should see a decrease in the number of days used for the second half of 2025, but this will be reported in next year's metrics report, given there is a cap on the number that each employee can take.

Strategic Initiatives

While HR metrics provide valuable insights, they also highlight several ongoing challenges that must be addressed to ensure alignment with municipal goals and service delivery expectations. These challenges are complex and often interconnected, requiring strategic attention and cross-departmental collaboration to address effectively. To ensure continued alignment with municipal goals and to proactively address the challenges identified through HR metrics, the following strategic initiatives are currently in progress or planned:

1. Strengthening Talent Attraction and Retention

The City faces increasing competition for skilled talent, particularly in specialized and hard-to-fill roles. Limited geographic mobility, compensation constraints, and evolving candidate expectations around flexibility and work-life balance make it challenging to attract and retain top talent.

With the implementation of Picsume, the Onboarding program, and the HR Strategy, we are continuing to enhance our talent attraction and retention capabilities. As we have seen an increase in declined offers over the past two years, a regular review of our total rewards strategy will be necessary to remain competitive. This includes exploring flexible work arrangements and professional development pathways to attract and retain high-quality candidates. Utilization of Picsume will enable us to track relevant recruitment metrics through the platform and provide a better understanding of the time to fill positions and the decrease in this time since the implementation of the Onboarding program and Picsume. The onboarding program ensures that, once we have made an offer to a candidate, there is ongoing regular interaction to ensure the person is fully engaged with the City prior to their start date.

2. Advancing Workforce Planning and Succession Management

An aging workforce and anticipated retirements pose a significant risk to knowledge continuity and the delivery of services. Proactive succession planning and knowledge transfer strategies are crucial for mitigating this risk and maintaining operational stability.

Through the Service Review Project 1c1 Succession Management Plan, a comprehensive workforce planning framework is being developed to identify critical roles, assess future staffing needs, and implement succession strategies. This will include mentorship programs and knowledge transfer initiatives designed to preserve institutional knowledge.

3. Enhancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

While progress has been made, and the Inclusion Strategy has been implemented, there is still work to be done to ensure that the City's workplaces are inclusive, representative, and equitable. Measuring and addressing gaps in representation, equitable compensation, and inclusive practices remains a priority.

We will continue to embed DEI principles into all HR practices through the four pillars of inclusion as outlined in the City's Inclusion Strategy. These include Education and Training, Inclusive Communication, Inclusive Workforce and Committees, and Policies that support Diversity and address discrimination. Through our Citation Canada platform, new hires and current employees are required to complete DEI and anti-racism training. We continually evaluate training opportunities to promote DEI as part of the City's Inclusion Strategy.

4. Promoting Employee Well-being and Engagement

Sustaining employee morale and engagement in the post-pandemic environment remains a challenge. Burnout, workload pressures, and mental health concerns require ongoing investment in wellness programs and supportive leadership practices.

We have expanded our wellness programming, improved access to mental health resources by switching to the EAP provider, Dialogue, added a Benefits Portal for employees, and implemented regular employee engagement surveys to better understand and respond to employee needs. Leadership development sessions are also being prioritized to foster a supportive and inclusive workplace culture.

5. Adapting to Evolving Workforce Expectations

Employees are increasingly expecting flexible work arrangements, meaningful work, and growth opportunities. Adapting policies and culture to meet these expectations—while maintaining service standards—requires thoughtful change management.

We regularly review and update our HR policies to reflect the evolving expectations of our employees, including hybrid work models, flexible scheduling, and career development opportunities. These changes are implemented with a focus on maintaining service excellence while maximizing engagement.

6. Investing in HR Technology and Analytics

Accessing timely, accurate, and integrated HR data remains a challenge at the City, particularly in the absence of a comprehensive HRIS System. Enhancing data systems and analytical capacity is crucial for supporting evidence-based decision-making and strategic workforce planning.

To improve data-driven decision-making, we have invested in HR systems that enhance reporting capabilities, streamline processes, and support real-time workforce analytics. As we continue to work with Citation Canada and Picsume, we will improve our reporting capabilities, enabling more agile and strategic responses to emerging workforce trends.

Conclusions

The analysis of recruitment and retention metrics from 2019 to 2024 reveals several key trends and challenges:

- **Recruitment volumes** have remained relatively stable, but the time and effort required to fill positions has increased, indicating a more competitive labour market.
- **Turnover rates**, particularly voluntary resignations, peaked in 2022 and remain a concern, emphasizing the need for stronger retention strategies.
- **Application volumes** have grown significantly, yet the number of declined offers has also increased, suggesting a mismatch between candidate expectations and organizational offerings.
- **Workforce demographics** point to an aging employee base, reinforcing the urgency of succession planning.
- **Employee engagement and well-being** remain critical areas for investment, especially evolving workforce expectations.

These findings underscore the importance of aligning HR strategies with the City's goals and values to ensure a resilient, inclusive, and high-performing workforce.

Next Steps

To address the identified challenges and support strategic workforce development, HR will continue to expand the list of tracked metrics, enabling us to proactively implement frameworks and initiatives that address trends both internally and within the broader labour market.

Through the HR Strategy, four priority areas were identified that outline ways the City can address the challenges and opportunities that exist today, including Talent Management, Employee Development, Employee Experience, and Human Resources Excellence and Compliance. These strategic initiatives will be reviewed and updated based on data collected and emerging trends.

These initiatives will position Human Resources as a strategic partner in achieving organizational objectives and delivering high-quality public services to members of the community.

Financial Implications:

The Human Resources department has an annual budget that supports many existing programs, albeit at a lower per-employee cost due to inflation. We continue to review the offerings and look for ways to adjust what and how things are offered to ensure that we maximize positive outcomes for staff within the dollars being spent.

Communication Strategy:

Communication through the Corporate Service Committee, and continued HR communication with staff and senior leadership.

Consultation:

Janet Ashfield, Manager of Human Resources

Student Transportation Service Consortium of Grey Bruce

Attachments:

None.

Recommended by:

Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Bethany Chandler, HR Specialist at bchandler@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 x1248.

Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Janet Ashfield, Manager of Human Resources
Meeting Date: October 9, 2025
Report Code: CR-25-118
Subject: Safety in Council Chambers

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-118 respecting Safety in Council Chambers, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes.

Highlights:

- Risk Assessments have been completed.
- Controls related to risks have been identified.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: This report supports the delivery of Core Service. Health and Safety of staff is important to the wellbeing of staff when they are at work.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Previous Report/Authority:

N/A

Background:

On October 7, 2024, Council raised concerns related to the safety of staff with respect to the conduct of the public in Council Chambers. The City Manager advised that staff would meet internally and provide a report back to Council.

Human Resources staff have since met with staff to conduct a Risk Assessment and outline existing and new controls to address the identified risks.

Analysis:

A risk assessment is conducted by identifying all known risks associated with the circumstances, determining the likelihood and consequences of those risks and identifying existing controls and recommending additional controls where necessary.

The risk assessments were conducted by the Human Resources Specialist - Safety Equity and Wellness with input from staff of the Clerks and Facilities divisions. Once finalized, it was reviewed with those staff to determine whether it accurately captured the risks. The risks and recommended controls are now being shared with Council and Committee members.

The identified risks and controls include:

Risk	Controls in Place	Additional Controls
Physical Altercations or Threats	Training (de-escalation, mental health first aid), Policies (Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment), more than 1 staff member on site, panic buttons, first aid training/emergency contact lists, working with police and on-call security, security and broadcasting cameras, lighting, populated area.	Ongoing training on emergency response, procedural discussion with Council, potential Teams messaging system implemented for all attendees.

Public Encounters/ Interruptions	Training (de-escalation, mental health first aid), Policies (Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment), multiple members of staff present, security on-call and available if needed and called ahead if required.	Bollards or barriers being identified to discourage encroachment on staff-only areas. Posting reminders of suitable public conduct outside Chamber and posting on website to include information on public conduct. Procedural discussion with Council on calling audience to order, or brief recess where needed. Security on-call should regularly canvas area.
Large Crowds or Audience at Capacity	Fire department review & clearance (room is set up well under capacity limits), multiple exits, provided seating, overflow space with TV broadcast in Hall.	Encourage overflow in Hall space rather than outskirts of Chamber to avoid crowding. Active review and training on Emergency & Fire Evacuation procedures for all staff and members of Council ongoing for 2024/2025.
Emergency Evacuation	Multiple exits available (front and back of room), clear pathways for barrier free exit and entry in Chambers, panic buttons, fire extinguishers, access to police and on-call security staff.	Active review and training on Emergency & Fire Evacuation procedures for all staff and members of Council ongoing for 2024/2025.

Stress/Strain of Public Environment	EAP, training support for staff, Policies (Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment), multiple employees on premise, supportive work environment, on-call security and policing support available.	Incident debriefing and continued reporting.
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A fire and evacuation drill was conducted at City Hall on September 24th during a Committee meeting and the results will form the basis of additional training requirements for Council and Committee members as well as staff.

Physical barriers will be implemented when the budget is approved for 2026.

Financial Implications:

There is cost to implementing physical barriers, which will be approximately \$1300 for the required materials.

Communication Strategy:

All new staff are advised about the risk assessments that are applicable to them in their role and the risk assessments will be shared with all staff who participate in meetings in Council Chambers. In addition, all Risk Assessments are provided to the relevant Joint Health and Safety Committees for review and comment. Training will be provided to Council and Committee members through Council and Committee orientation and when new members are appointed throughout the term of Council. A review of the risk assessment will be completed when there are any substantial changes within the Council and Committee meeting procedures as well as every three years to ensure that all risks remain relevant and to ensure that all controls are in effect and additional controls are added as appropriate.

Consultation:

Manager of Corporate Services

City Clerk

Attachments:

Risk Assessment – Council Chambers

Recommended by:

Janet Ashfield, Manager of Human Resources

Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Janet Ashfield, Manager of Human Resources at jashfield@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1214.

Consequence	Likelihood				
	Rare (1)	Unlikely (2)	Possible (3)	Very Likely (4)	Almost Certain (5)
Insignificant (1)	1	2	3	4	5
Minor (2)	2	4	6	8	10
Moderate (3)	3	6	9	12	15
Major (4)	4	8	12	16	20
Catastrophic (5)	5	10	15	20	25

Consequence	Likelihood				
	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	2	3	4	5
2	2	4	6	8	10
3	3	6	9	12	15
4	4	8	12	16	20
5	5	10	15	20	25

Consequence	Description of Consequence
Insignificant (1)	No treatment required No loss/cost to repair/replace property damage No business interruption
Minor (2)	Injury requires first aid Costs to repair/replace property damage less than \$5,000 Mild business interruption
Moderate (3)	Injury requires medical treatment or lost time Costs to repair/replace property damage less than \$10,000 Loss of business function for a very short period (less than 2 days), minor consequences for business
Major (4)	Serious injury, specialist, or hospitalization required Costs to repair/replace property damage less than \$25,000 Loss of business function for a short period (less than 1 week), modest consequences for business
Catastrophic (5)	Likely to result in permanent disability or death Costs to repair/replace property damage greater than \$50,000 Loss of business function for an extended period, substantial consequences for business
Likelihood	Description of Likelihood
Rare (1)	Only in exceptional situations (1/10 years; 1/20,000 operations)
Unlikely (2)	Not likely to occur (1/3 years; 1/5,000 operations)
Possible (3)	May occur within the foreseeable future (1/year; 1/1,000 operations)
Very Likely (4)	Likely to occur within the foreseeable future (2-4/year; 1/500 operations)
Almost Certain (5)	Almost certain to occur within the foreseeable future (5+ year; 1/100 operations)

Risk Level	Description of Risk Level	Actions
Low	If an accident were to occur, there would be little likelihood that an injury would result.	Determine whether corrective actions are required or decide to accept the risk.
Medium	If an accident were to occur, there would be some chance that an injury would occur and may require medical attention.	Additional controls are needed. A plan should be developed within a reasonable period of time.
High	If an accident were to occur, it would be likely that an injury would require more serious medical attention, or result in a significant, debilitating injury.	Eliminate the activity or controls will need to be in place before the activity is undertaken. Interim solutions may be required before permanent controls are implemented.

Risk Assessment

Appendix "A" to Risk Assessment Procedure

Date	3-Oct-24
Department	Legislative Services
Location	City Hall - Council Chambers
Reasons for completing risk assessment (circle)	Abnormal task/ new task/ others (please specify): Proximity with Public
Completed by (preferably by both employee and employer representatives)	Hannah M, Bradey C, Briana B, Allison P.

Consequence	Likelihood				
	Rare (1)	Unlikely (2)	Possible (3)	Very Likely (4)	Almost Certain (5)
Insignificant (1)	1	2	3	4	5
Minor (2)	2	4	6	8	10
Moderate (3)	3	6	9	12	15
Major (4)	4	8	12	16	20
Catastrophic (5)	5	10	15	20	25

In order to determine the Consequence, consider the following items:

- What are the possible consequences?
- What is the possible severity of the harm?
- Presence of others: Are other people in the vicinity? (Consider field work, remote locations)
- Awareness: Will others be capable of providing assistance, be aware of the worker's needs?
- Willingness: Is it reasonable to expect others to provide assistance?
- Timeliness: Will assistance be provided within a reasonable time period? (Consider access to first aid and emergency services for remote locations and field work)

In order to determine the Likelihood consider the following items:

- How likely are the consequences to occur?
- Have such incidents occurred in the past?
- Is the incident common in this field of work?
- How frequent is the exposure to the hazard?
- How long are workers exposed to the hazard? The longer the exposure, the higher the risk.
- Is the task repeated many times each shift? The more frequent you do a task, the higher the likelihood to be exposed to the hazard.

Recognize		Assess				Control		Evaluation			
Work Process, Work Area or Job	Hazard Category (Physical, Chemical, Ergonomic, Biological, Psychosocial, Safety)	Potential Risk/Incident Description	Consequence	Likelihood	Risk Rating (Consequence x Likelihood)	Controls in Place for Hazard	Additional Controls Recommended	Person(s) Responsible to Ensure Control is Properly Implemented	Control verified on (date)	Date for Review	Comments
Physical Altercations or Threats	Physical, Safety	Personal injury, physical altercation	3	3	9	Training (de-escalation, mental health first aid), Policies (Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment), more than 1 staff member on site, panic buttons, first aid training/emergency contact lists, working with police and on-call security, security and broadcasting cameras, lighting, populated area.	Ongoing training on emergency response, procedural discussion with Council, potential Teams messaging system implemented for all attendees	ALL		Q4 2024	Physical altercations have not occurred during public meetings, but there is potential, and employer will ensure reasonable measures are in place to protect staff. Discussion with members of Council is suggested to remind them of procedural process for calling order in the Chambers or recess.
Public Encounters/Interruptions	Safety, Psychosocial	Encroachment of public into staff-only areas during meeting proceedings	2	3	6	mental health first aid), Policies (Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment), multiple members of staff present, security on-call and available if needed and called	identified to discourage encroachment on staff-only areas. Posting reminders of suitable public conduct outside Chamber and posting on website to include information on public	ALL		Q4 2024	Quotation for bollard/barrier solutions being looked into. Procedural discussion with Council members as above should be considered.
Large Crowds or Audience at Capacity	Physical, Safety	Personal injury, barrier to evacuate in case of emergency	4	2	8	Fire department review & clearance (room is set up well under capacity limits), multiple exits, provided seating, overflow space with TV broadcast in Hall	Hall space rather than outskirts of Chamber to avoid crowding. Active review and training on Emergency & Fire Evacuation procedures for all staff and members of Council ongoing for	ALL		Q4 2024	Large crowds not always typical, but in instances where this is likely/can be predicted, discussions should occur in advance of meeting to plan for overflow.

Emergency Evacuation	Physical, Safety	Personal injury, evacuation from Chambers in cases of emergency or threat to safety	5	2	10	(front and back of room), clear pathways for barrier free exit and entry in Chambers, panic buttons, fire extinguishers, access to police and on-call security staff	Active review and training on Emergency & Fire Evacuation procedures for all staff and members of Council ongoing for 2024/2025.	H&S	Q4 2024	Workplan will see update to this policy by end of Q4 2024. Training should be considered with Staff, Council & Committees early 2025 to review.
Stress/Strain of Public Environment	Psychosocial	Potential for harrassment, unwanted communication, witnessing inappropriate behaviour	2	3	6	for staff, Policies (Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment), multiple	Incident debriefing and continued reporting	ALL	Q4 2024	

Risk	Controls in Place	Additional Controls
Physical Altercations or Threats	Training (de-escalation, mental health first aid), Policies (Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment), more than 1 staff member on site, panic buttons, first aid training/emergency contact lists, working with police and on-call security, security and broadcasting cameras, lighting, populated area.	Ongoing training on emergency response, procedural discussion with Council, potential Teams messaging system implemented for all attendees
Public Encounters/Interruptions	Training (de-escalation, mental health first aid), Policies (Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment), multiple members of staff present, security on-call and available if needed and called ahead if required.	Bollards or barriers being identified to discourage encroachment on staff-only areas. Posting reminders of suitable public conduct outside
Large Crowds or Audience at Capacity	Fire department review & clearance (room is set up well under capacity limits), multiple exits, provided seating, overflow space with TV broadcast in Hall	rather than outskirts of Chamber to avoid crowding. Active review and training on Emergency & Fire Evacuation procedures for all
Emergency Evacuation	Multiple exits available (front and back of room), clear pathways for barrier free exit and entry in Chambers, panic buttons, fire extinguishers, access to police and on-call security staff	Active review and training on Emergency & Fire Evacuation procedures for all staff and members of Council ongoing for 2024/2025.
Stress/Strain of Public Environment	EAP, training support for staff, Policies (Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment), multiple employees on premise, supportive work environment, on-call security and policing support available	Incident debriefing and continued reporting