



STAFF REPORT
Chief Administrative Officer

Title: Joint Services Initiatives Committee 2021 Update
Report Number: CAO2021-021
Author: Sandy Little
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Recommendations:

That Council receives CAO2021-021 as information.

A. Executive Summary

The Cities of Waterloo and Kitchener have a longstanding history of collaboration on a number of initiatives. A formalized approach to joint initiatives through the Kitchener-Waterloo Joint Services Initiatives Committee (JSIC) has been in place since 2006. Through this initiative, the two cities work together to identify common services and ways to streamline them to benefit residents in both communities. In addition, the JSIC also aims to maximize resources and learn best practices. More than 75 joint initiatives have been undertaken to date by both cities. Many of the formal initiatives have proceeded to completion while others remain ongoing. Furthermore, the JSIC also supports informal collaboration opportunities that arise throughout the year that include additional partners.

An annual program of joint projects is identified in the fall for the upcoming year. These joint projects are reviewed by the JSIC and certain projects are identified for inclusion in the formal program.

This report provides Council with an update on recently completed and ongoing initiatives as well as initiatives that will be included as part of the JSIC program in 2022 between Waterloo and Kitchener.

B. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this update report.

C. Technology Implications

None.

D. Link to Strategic Plan

(Strategic Objectives: Equity, Inclusion and a Sense of Belonging; Sustainability and the Environment; Safe, Sustainable Transportation; Healthy Community & Resilient Neighbourhoods; Infrastructure Renewal; Economic Growth & Development)

(Guiding Principles: Equity and Inclusion; Sustainability; Fiscal Responsibility; Healthy and Safe Workplace; Effective Engagement; Personal Leadership; Service Excellence)

The work of the JSIC supports the Guiding Principle of Service Excellence as it aims for continuous improvement of customer service through the alignment and collaboration initiatives between Waterloo and Kitchener.

E. Previous Reports on this Topic

N/A



Joint Services Initiatives Committee 2021 Update CAO2021-021

1.0 Background

Both Waterloo and Kitchener have a longstanding history of collaboration on a number and variety of initiatives. A formalized approach to joint initiatives through the Kitchener-Waterloo Joint Services Initiatives Committee (JSIC) has been in place for more than 15 years. Through this initiative, the two cities work together to identify common services and ways to streamline them to benefit residents in both communities. In addition, the JSIC also aims to maximize resources and learn best practices.

More than 75 joint initiatives have been undertaken since the creation of the JSIC in 2006. Many of these formal initiatives have proceeded to completion with great success. Some other initiatives carry forward into subsequent years until they are completed. Only a small number of initiatives are cancelled and do not proceed. In addition to the formal initiatives that are included in the JSIC program, there are also other collaboration opportunities that comprise the informal program. These informal opportunities allow our two municipalities as well as other partners to work together to the benefit of our residents.

Every fall the JSIC, which consists of the CAOs and senior leadership teams of Waterloo and Kitchener, meet to discuss highlights of the year's initiatives, completed projects, ongoing projects, and potential new formal and informal collaboration opportunities. The JSIC then reviews and decides what new initiatives to proceed with over the upcoming year. As a result of the pandemic and the associated challenges, it was decided that in fall 2020, five of the initiatives from 2020 would carry over into 2021 with no new initiatives identified for the upcoming year. Below is a summary of the five ongoing initiatives in 2021 and their current status, new initiatives for 2022, and informal collaborations that took place throughout 2021.

2.0 Completed JSIC Initiative

One initiative was successfully completed in 2021 and the key accomplishments related to that initiative are highlighted below:

Speed Limit Review

Both Cities, along with other regional partners, are undertaking a review of the uniform speed limit of 50km/hour. This review will evaluate benefit and feasibility of reducing the uniform speed limit to 40km/hour in an effort to enhance roadway safety.

- Waterloo completed three pilots and Kitchener carried out two pilots and added a third as a component of the Deer Ridge Drive traffic calming review. The Cities shared best practices as well as before and after data for the pilots through ongoing communication.
- Waterloo and Kitchener collaborated on the scope of work for the related University of Waterloo research project on Vision Zero, using both cities' data. This work will continue with the Vision Zero project identified below.
- Waterloo will develop a public engagement project for the option to reduce posted speed limits to 30km/h on all class 4 and 5 residential roads as per Council direction that will become part of the Speed Management Plan.
- Kitchener will implement Council direction on city-wide speed limits aligned to the Vision Zero initiative, focused on speed reduction from 50 km/h to 40 km/h in all residential neighbourhoods and further reduced to 30km/h in vulnerable road user areas.

Although this joint initiative will conclude later this year, Waterloo staff will continue independently with this project into 2022.

3.0 Continuing JSIC Initiatives

A total of three initiatives were extended into 2021 and will carry forward into 2022. These initiatives are complex and therefore, require additional time to complete.

Investigation of New Stormwater Incentives Program – Private Stormwater Enhancement

The purpose of this initiative was to investigate the potential for new stormwater incentives to enable private property owners to enhance stormwater management on their properties therefore, reducing runoff to municipal systems.

- Waterloo presented the Stormwater Management Master Plan to Council, including options for a market-based incentive program which will be consistent with Kitchener's approach.
- Waterloo staff initiated a two-year partnership with Reep Green Solutions to extend their backyard tree planting program to Waterloo. The partnership focused on working with homeowners to plant the right tree for the right place in their yards, educational tree stewardship workshops, and increasing urban tree canopy cover in areas where the City cannot plant. As of the end of the third quarter of 2021, the City received 38 applications from residents which resulted in 30 tree plantings.
- Kitchener developed and received Council approval on a 3-phase roadmap for the development and implementation of a Market Incentive Program.
- Kitchener procured a consultant to accomplish the following: undertake a market analysis of five priority sub-watersheds and assess homeowner demographics to generate criteria to structure incentives; analyze potential third-party service providers, products, and strategies for implementation; and, complete initial screening of viable options for program administration and delivery.

Inclusionary Zoning – Affordable Housing

The purpose of this joint initiative is to assess the impact of Provincial legislation requiring the inclusion of affordable housing units in new residential development projects in identified areas and the option for municipalities to implement such zoning. The assessment is intended to include the exploration of opportunities to combine resources to conduct a study and implement Inclusionary Zoning (IZ), since based on staff's understanding of the enacted legislation, significant staff capacity is required to generate data and prepare a municipal assessment report as a precursor to implementing IZ. Pending possible changes to the legislation, long-term resource/cost sharing may be required to develop, implement, and report on new zoning provisions.

- A peer review of the fiscal impact assessment was completed; financial modeling was updated to reflect market and legislative changes, impact of community benefit charges, parkland dedication, and updated development charges; and, recommendations were updated to reflect current conditions.
- Background research, financial impact assessment, and the peer review were considered at Waterloo, Kitchener, and Cambridge City Councils.
- Next steps include broad community consultation on IZ policy and program and continued consultation with Waterloo Region Homebuilders' IZ ad hoc working group.
- Continued and steady progress will be made in all three Cities through collaboration on policy and program design to align with Regional Official Plan amendments that will enable inclusionary zoning.

'Getting Around' App

The goal of this initiative was to explore the cost and risks to implement an app providing residents with real-time access to information including progress on winter maintenance during a full plow snow event.

- Waterloo will share key learnings and updates through ongoing communication.
- Waterloo will adopt best practices, tools, and communications based on Kitchener's experience and will be dependent on our GPS provider's capabilities.
- Kitchener piloted and tested a solution internally over winter 2020/2021. The solution was modified in response to several rounds of internal staff and external volunteer citizen focus group feedback.
- Kitchener implemented a wider pilot with all Operations staff in fall 2021, with a target to go live during the first winter 2021/2022 snow event. They are supporting communications and a promotion plan is being developed.

4.0 Discontinued JSIC Initiative

There was only one JSIC initiative that did not proceed with future progress dependent on a framework from the Region of Waterloo.

Stormwater Management (SWM) Facilities Risk Assessment

The purpose of this initiative was to undertake a SWM facilities risk assessment to mitigate chlorides entering our drinking water, through a partnership between the Cities of Waterloo and Kitchener and the Region.

- The Region has not yet finalized Source Protection Policy boundaries and framework for municipalities to follow when conducting SWM facility risk assessments, and as such, a formal joint initiative cannot proceed at this time.
- Waterloo completed a pilot study through external grant funding which established a methodology to identify risks to source drinking water protection areas from SWM facilities.
- The Cities will review the Waterloo results and methodologies and continue collaboration outside of the JSIC program, with openness to revisit a formal joint initiative in the future once the Regional framework is provided.

5.0 New JSIC Initiatives

In addition to the ongoing initiatives discussed in Section 3.0 above, the JSIC determined that three new initiatives would be added to the formal program in 2022.

Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS)

Waterloo and Kitchener already share a common AMPS to move adjudication of parking tickets out of the provincial court system. This 2022 joint service initiative will look at expanding the program beyond parking tickets to include provincial offence notices for other offences including but not limited to noise, backyard fires, dumping, and dogs off leash.

Vision Zero

“Vision Zero” refers to a strategy to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. The strategy can be achieved through different approaches that include the Safe Systems Approach, the “E”s of Traffic Safety, a Complete Streets Framework, and the Public Health Approach. Having collaborated on speed limit reductions in residential neighbourhoods, Waterloo and Kitchener will work together on a joint services initiative to adopt the philosophy and implementation of Vision Zero, with a specific focus on shared strategies for engineering, evaluation, and education.

Affordable Housing Strategy Development

Waterloo staff is already working to develop its first Affordable Housing Strategy while the City of Kitchener has an approved Affordable Housing Strategy and has started implementation. Although work on this initiative is well underway for both municipalities, this work will be formalized as a JSIC initiative in 2022 and will include close collaboration between both municipalities in terms of program development and implementation to address housing challenges in our community.

6.0 Broader 2021 Collaboration Opportunities

Outside of the formal JSIC program, there are many other opportunities for both municipalities to collaborate in addition to working with other area municipalities as project partners. In some cases, initiatives overlap with the Region. Recent examples of successful local and local-regional initiatives include:

- Coordinated pandemic response and recovery/reopening planning including approaches, processes, and templates to ensure consistency in communication.
- Work toward a proposed hydro merger of Kitchener-Wilmot Hydro and Waterloo North Hydro that will provide reliable service, invest in new technologies, generate cost savings through operational efficiencies, and keep local jobs in our communities.
- Waterloo and Kitchener in addition to the Region and its member municipalities were all part of Climate Action Waterloo Region which is the collaborative responsible for the development of Transform Waterloo Region, our community climate action plan. This work will continue into 2022 and beyond as we move to implementation of the strategy.
- Waterloo and Kitchener are part of a pilot project with the World Council on City Data (WCCD) and Infrastructure Canada as part of the ISO 37120 Sustainable Cities and Communities reporting framework. Both municipalities are participating as part of year 3 of the project.
- Government relations and advocacy continues on a number of projects including delegation meetings at the 2021 AMO Conference and continued advocacy with other Ontario municipalities to the Province on the proposed changes to R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 565: Public Pools in an effort to reduce red tape while balancing patron safety and municipal risk.
- Collaboration on housing and homelessness is ongoing with the Region and local service providers as they continue to address social distancing requirements during the pandemic to keep members of our vulnerable population safe.
- Area municipal CAOs continue to identify broader collaboration opportunities to improve service effectiveness and efficiency for citizens, with an emphasis on enhanced collaboration between the Region and local municipalities.

7.0 Conclusion

Although no new initiatives were identified as part of the formal JSIC program in 2021, staff continued to work on existing initiatives and make progress on those projects. Some of those projects will continue into 2022 in addition to three new initiatives. Staff will move forward with exploring new initiatives throughout the course of 2022 to ensure we continue to deliver services that benefit the residents of our community.