



STAFF REPORT
Chief Administrative Officer

Title: Joint Services Initiative Committee 2023 Update
Report Number: CAO2024-013
Author: Michelle Lee
Council Date: March 4, 2024
File: [\[File\]](#)
Attachments: [\[Attachments\]](#)
Ward No.: All Wards

Recommendations:

That Council receive CAO2024-013 for information.

A. Executive Summary

The Cities of Waterloo and Kitchener have a longstanding history of collaboration in the delivery of programs and services. Formal collaborations are identified and tracked by a Joint Services Initiatives Committee (JSIC) comprised of CAOs and senior leaders from each of the two Cities. The JSIC also identifies informal opportunities for collaboration that may also include additional partners. Collaboration on initiatives helps the Cities to coordinate service delivery and communication, make efficient use of resources and share knowledge and best practices. More than 80 joint initiatives have been undertaken since the JSIC was established in 2006.

This report provides a status update of the formal joint initiatives and informal collaborations between Waterloo and Kitchener, including those that were completed in 2023 and those that are underway in 2024.

B. Financial Implications

None

C. Technology Implications

None

D. Link to Strategic Plan

(Strategic Priorities: Reconciliation, Equity, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion; Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action; Complete Community; Infrastructure and Transportation Systems; Innovation and Future-Ready)

(Guiding Principles: Equity and Inclusion; Sustainability; Integrity; Workplace Wellbeing; Community-centred; Operational Excellence)

The work of the JSIC supports the Guiding Principle of Operational Excellence as it aims to make efficient use of resources, provide consistent and clear communication for similar services provided in both cities, and ensure continuous improvement for better service delivery.

E. Previous Reports on this Topic



**Joint Services Initiative Committee 2023 Update
CAO2024-013**

1.0 Background

Waterloo and Kitchener have a longstanding history of collaboration to coordinate service delivery and communication, make efficient use of resources and share knowledge and best practices. Formal collaborations are identified and tracked by a Joint Services Initiatives Committee (JSIC) comprised of CAOs and senior leaders from each of the two Cities. The JSIC also identifies informal opportunities for collaboration that may also include additional partners. More than 80 joint initiatives have been undertaken since the JSIC was established in 2006.

The JSIC meets annually to review completed and ongoing initiatives and identify potential new formal and informal collaboration opportunities. Staff track progress of the initiatives, including service improvements, efficiencies and cost savings achieved, which are reported to Council each year. This report summarizes the 2023 initiatives that have been completed and describes continuing and new initiatives that will carry forward into 2024.

2.0 Completed Joint Service Initiatives

Two initiatives were successfully completed and two will continue into 2024; key accomplishments and progress updates are highlighted below.

Affordable Housing Strategy: Completed, with collaboration to continue as part of ongoing operations and core service delivery.

- This initiative began in 2022 and focused on collaborating on program development and implementation to address housing challenges in the community, building on Kitchener's Housing For All Strategy and sharing best practices to inform development of Waterloo's first Affordable Housing Strategy.
- Collaboration included information-sharing through regular forums including housing and homelessness municipal leads, refugee housing working group, and municipal affordable housing incentives working group.
- Reports, resources and fact sheets related to housing incentives were shared or co-developed, some in partnership with the Region, creating efficiencies and reducing workloads.

- Once Waterloo completed its Affordable Housing Strategy in March, this formal joint initiative was concluded; ongoing collaboration will continue informally between the Cities and other local partners.

Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS) Expansion: Completed, with collaboration to continue as part of ongoing operations and core service delivery.

- This initiative expanded on the Cities' common AMPS which moves adjudication of parking tickets out of the provincial court system, to include provincial offence notices for other offences including noise, backyard fires, dumping, and dogs off leash.
- The scope was expanded to include Cambridge, and an external consultant with local knowledge was retained for a cost-effective approach that ensured consistent by-law language between the municipalities.
- Bylaws were drafted for each Council's approval, with supporting processes and system improvements put in place; Waterloo launched the expanded program in mid-2023 and Kitchener will launch in spring 2024.
- Cost savings, while difficult to measure, will be seen through a reduction of staff time and overtime appearing in court through a more efficient process – which is also more efficient for residents.

3.0 Continuing Joint Service Initiatives

Inclusionary Zoning – Affordable Housing: Continuing into 2024.

- This multi-year initiative is assessing, through a coordinated approach, the impact and opportunity of legislation requiring inclusion of affordable housing units in new residential developments, and the option for municipalities to implement such zoning.
- Work in 2023 focused on engaging Councils on a policy and program discussion paper, retaining an external consultant to update a financial analysis, and drafting implementation guidelines and Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments.
- Continued collaboration in 2024 will include finalizing detailed policy and program development, with a target to complete the project in Q1 2024
- Estimated cost savings of \$100,000 (based on each City's share) through joint funding of consultants, peer review work and communications materials.

Vision Zero: Continuing into 2024.

- Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all; this joint initiative is about adopting the philosophy of Vision Zero and implementing strategies focused on engineering, evaluation and education.

- Waterloo, Kitchener and other partners released two street safety videos as a part of shared public education campaign, relaunched the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program with Waterloo Regional Police, and launched targeted street safety improvements at locations identified through a network screening tool developed with the University of Waterloo.
- Continued collaboration in 2024 will see both Cities continue implementing, installing and posting neighbourhood/reduced speed limits as approved by each Council; as well as additional educational campaigns and ongoing project meetings with key stakeholders.
- Over \$100,000 in savings are anticipated over the life of the initiative through cost sharing on research and educational campaigns/videos, and through grant contributions.

4.0 New Joint Services Initiatives (Starting 2024)

In addition to the two continuing initiatives, JSIC added two new initiatives to the formal program; updates will be provided in the next annual report.

Official Plans Comprehensive Review

The Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo are both undertaking comprehensive reviews and updates to their respective Official Plans. These key enabling land use planning strategies will guide future growth and development across the communities and there is an opportunity to pursue them in a coordinated manner and toward consistent frameworks and outputs. The work will include addressing anticipated downloading of planning responsibilities from the Region, approval processes, creating a clear planning framework for developers; and will focus on priorities such as Bill 23 impacts, zoning and other key policies identified as priorities for alignment between the two Cities.

Sport and Recreation Joint Service Committee

Waterloo and Kitchener both liaise with a variety of community, sport and recreation groups and organizations to deliver programming and services to residents. During the Covid-19 pandemic several positive practices were implemented which allowed for alignment between the municipalities in managing protocols to ensure a dependable level of service delivery for community groups. There is an opportunity to bring consistency to the approach of sport and recreation service delivery through information sharing, understanding best practices, joint training and development, and maximizing resources with the potential for the initiative to expand beyond the two Cities to include other local municipalities; staff leads will scope this out once the initiative is underway.

5.0 Broader Collaboration

Outside of the formal JSIC program, both municipalities collaborate informally with one another and with other area municipalities and the Region of Waterloo as project partners. Recent examples of local municipal collaboration outside the formal annual JSIC program include:

- Information-sharing on area municipal **Strategic Plan development** including community engagement approaches, aligning around key goal areas, and approaches to implementation and monitoring.
- Participation in the **Reconciliation Action Partnership**, a collaborative group of municipal representatives working to coordinate efforts to support Indigenous-centred initiatives across Waterloo Region.
- **Collaboration on housing and homelessness** to address challenges and identify locations for service providers to keep members of our vulnerable population safe.
- Harmonized approach to **green development standards** for all urban-area municipalities in the region, in partnership with a wide range of local stakeholders.
- Developing standard **municipal facility accessibility guidelines** for design and renovation of City buildings, providing common expectations to architects, designers and contractors (also includes Cambridge).
- **Review of cricket** facilities and programming to respond to growing local interest and participation in this sport (also includes Cambridge).
- Consistent **public safety communication** content and timing to local residents for, e.g., severe weather event declarations and emergency preparedness week.
- Development of guidelines for **honoraria and compensation** for advisory and quasi-judicial committees.
- **Government relations and advocacy** on a number of projects including delegation meetings at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario Annual Conference and continued advocacy to the Province on legislative priorities.
- **Area municipal CAOs** identify broader collaboration opportunities to improve service effectiveness and efficiency for citizens, with an emphasis on enhanced collaboration between the Region and local municipalities.
- Department **Best Management Practice groups**, ongoing collaboration of the department heads to identify area specific challenges and opportunities to align effective and efficient service delivery improvements. Examples include the IMTS Directors, Area Public Works Dept Heads, Utilities Directors, Planning Heads and Area Treasurers.