A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.19.255, entitled “Municipal Modernization Program”; AND THAT Council directs staff to submit an Expression of Interest to the Municipal Modernization Program Intake 1 for a review of service delivery and modernization opportunities; AND THAT Council supports the Provincial investment in municipalities to undertake municipal service delivery expenditures by an independent third-party for the purpose of finding savings and efficiencies.

B. Overview

The Blue Mountains received notification of the Municipal Modernization Program on November 12th. The deadline to submit an expression of interest is December 6th. This report is coming directly to Council as it is time sensitive.

C. Background

On November 12th, staff received notification of Intake 1 of the Municipal Modernization Program. This program is to help municipalities become more efficient and modernize service delivery while protecting front line jobs.

To be eligible under Intake 1, a project must:

- Be a review of a municipal service delivery expenditures by an independent third-party reviewer for the purpose of finding savings and efficiencies. The review project could take a number of forms including:
  a. A line by line review of the municipality’s entire budget; or
  b. A review of service delivery and modernization opportunities; or
  c. A review of administrative processes to reduce costs.
• Result in a report by the independent third-party reviewer that provides specific and actionable recommendations for cost savings and improved efficiencies.
• Begin field work no earlier than November 1, 2019 with a draft report completed by June 15, 2020 and the final report posted publically by June 30, 2020.

This program will not cover review projects where:

• The goal is to identify opportunities for revenue generation or reductions in front line services; or
• The review does not result in a formal report prepared by a third party; or
• The object of the review extends beyond municipal accountability.

The ministry will advise municipalities of the outcomes of their application by mid-January. If approved, a transfer agreement will need to be signed.

D. Analysis

With the tight timeline of confirming acceptance of the application and the requirement of having a draft report by June 15, 2020, staff will recommend contracting with the Town’s external auditors who have experience in the organization and operations of municipalities. The consultant will be engaged to conduct a review of expenditures with a specific focus on providing an evaluation of the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the municipality's operations.

The consultant will provide an analysis of the key operations of the municipality's departments and their services and programs, examining trends over time and contrasting to comparator municipalities of similar size and service levels. This comparison will identify opportunities for improvement that will achieve greater efficiency in municipal operations, reduce operating costs and establish long term sustainability. The review will be conducted through a process that is factual, analytical and transparent.

The consultant would undertake a comparative review of municipal services based on (i) analysis of service levels and best practices; and (ii) benchmarking of financial indicators with other comparable municipalities.

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

Goal #4: Promote a Culture of Organizational and Operational Excellence
Objective #4: To Be a Financially Responsible Organization
Objective #5: Constantly Identify Opportunities to Improve Efficiencies and Effectiveness

F. Environmental Impacts

N/A
G. Financial Impact

The Town is submitting an expression of interest in an amount of $40,000 for third party consultants to complete the review.

H. In consultation with

Shawn Everitt, CAO
Sam Dinsmore, Deputy Treasurer/Manager of Accounting and Budgets

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been subject to a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. Comments regarding this report should be submitted to Ruth Prince at directorfit@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

None.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth Prince
Director of Finance and IT Services

For more information, please contact:
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