

Methodology

SECTION 6—METHODOLOGY

6.1 Kickoff Meeting

The project launch is typically a very short but important phase of the project to ensure that project objectives, roles and responsibilities, and timelines are clear. A start-up meeting will be scheduled with the Project Lead and the EMG consulting team to review the project objectives, scope, and approach and start the planning process for the consultation meetings. We will also use this opportunity to immediately start the information gathering component by requesting pertinent data, reports, and documentation.

An engagement and stakeholder communication plan and schedule will be submitted within two (2) weeks of this project kick-off meeting.

6.2 Research & Information Gathering

The objective of this phase is to build upon our existing understanding of the current operations and service delivery of the HKFES.

This review will involve gathering documentation, statistics, and other data to gain a better understanding of operations, organizational structure, technology, performance measures, and the business context of emergency response. We will also identify the drivers, issues, and challenges that are affecting the Department (e.g., population changes, budgetary containment, infrastructure, potential of a DGR, etc.,) and provision of services. Through the collection of data, we will analyze all aspects of the Department including Administration, Community Risk Reduction, Fire Operations, Training and Professional Development, Apparatus and Equipment, and Emergency Planning.

In this task, we will:

- Review the Establishing & Regulating By-law, By-law to Regulate and Control Open Air Burning, and Emergency Management By-law.
- Review applicable municipal, provincial, and federal legislations (including the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act*, Section 21 Guidance notes, *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, and National Fire Protection Association Standards).
- Review the Township's Strategic Plan.

- Review the Simplified Risk Assessment, Council's strategic priorities, and other pertinent documents.
- Review the Community Risk Profile including community building stock, industry, care occupancies, transportation networks, etc.
- Review planning department documents regarding community and areas of jurisdiction growth projections over the next ten (10) years.
- Review changes or enhancements that would be required to any mutual aid agreements
- Gather information on operational requirements including past and current response statistics (call volumes/response times/call locations) to analyze for trends, staff availability/ needs and response capabilities, etc.
- Gather data on demographics, occupancy rates, population density, etc.
- Review service administration including staffing, organizational structure, policies and procedures, administrative support, record keeping and information management/ technology, purchasing and inventory control, public and media relations, and customer service.
- Examine continuous improvement to the communications systems (including dispatch, paging, telephone, and radio systems) maintenance program and non-suppression services.
- Review the three (3) fire stations conducting a location/response analysis.
- Examine fire vehicles, apparatus, and equipment including the maintenance program, ensuring effective and efficient delivery of suppression services.
- Review Fire Service policies, procedures and emergency response operational guidelines, training programs, and records.
- Collect information on the Fire Prevention Program including education programs, inspection reports/ data, enforcement data, and investigations.
- Review current job descriptions, staff recruitment and retention practices for volunteer members.
- Examine strategies for promotional policy, succession planning, for full-time staff members.
- Explore and assess opportunities to adjust and revise the Fire Department's structure.
- Assess and ensure appropriate safe equipment and adequate staffing is available 24/7.
- Implement cost efficiencies, savings, and cost avoidance.

- Identify and compare industry best practices relating to fire and emergency services performance measurement.
- Review the operational and capital budgets along with reserves and current revenue generation programs within the fire department and the Township e.g., development fees).
- Review of current and emerging technologies that may be utilized to improve services.
- Examine the possible alignment of services and resources.

This Fire Services Strategic Plan will be based upon (but not limited to) key performance indicators that have been identified in national standards and safety regulations such as:

- Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management's (OFMEM) Public Fire Safety Guidelines.
- Optimizing Public Fire Safety Model
- *The Fire Prevention and Protection Act* and its subordinate regulations, including the Ontario Fire Code O. Reg. 213/07, Mandatory Assessment of Complaints and Requests for Approval O. Reg. 365/13, and Mandatory Inspection – Fire Drill in Vulnerable Occupancy O. Reg 364/13, and O. Reg. 378/18 Community Risk Assessment.
- Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management's (OFMEM) Integrated Risk Management program.
- The Comprehensive Fire Safety Effectiveness Model developed by the OFMEM
- The *Ontario Health and Safety Act*, with reference to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).
- Ontario Fire Service – Section 21 Guidelines:
 - The Section 21 Committee is based on Section 21 of the *Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA). This committee is charged with reviewing industry safety concerns and developing recommended guidelines to reduce injuries for the worker.
- The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards:
 - NFPA 1001 – Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications
 - NFPA 1002 – Standard for Fire Apparatus Driver/ Operator Professional Qualifications
 - NFPA 1021 – Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications
 - NFPA 1031 – Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner

- NFPA 1033 – Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator
- NFPA 1035 – Standard on Fire and Life Safety Educator, Public Information Officer, Youth Fire Setter Intervention Specialist and Youth Fire Setter Program Manager Professional Qualifications
- NFPA 1041 – Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications
- NFPA 1072 – Standard for Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Emergency Response Personnel Professional Qualifications
- NFPA 1201 – Standard for Providing Fire and Emergency Services to the Public
- NFPA 1221—Standard for Emergency Services Communication
- NFPA 1500 – Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety, Health, and Wellness Program
- NFPA 1521 – Standard for Fire Department Safety Officer Professional Qualifications
- NFPA 1710 – Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments
- NFPA 1720 – Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments
- NFPA 1730 – Standard on Organization and Deployment of Fire Prevention Inspection and Code Enforcement, Plan Review, Investigation, and Public Education Operations
- NFPA 1901 – Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus
- NFPA 1911 – Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Emergency Vehicles
- The Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI), a program that promotes fire service excellence by evaluating a fire department based on related NFPA standards, local legislation, and industry best practices (the parent organization for CFAI is the Centre for Public Safety Excellence).
 - This program has been adopted by many fire departments in Canada as a measure of best practices. Within Ontario, Guelph, Kitchener, Toronto, and Ottawa are just a few fire departments that have obtained accreditation from the CFAI.
- Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) technical documents

6.3 Stakeholder Consultation

Consultations will be utilized to gain a better understanding of operations, organizational structure, technology, performance measures, and the business context of emergency response. We will also identify the drivers, issues, and challenges that are affecting the Service (e.g., community growth, budgetary containment, etc.). Consultations ensure that the stakeholders feel engaged in the review process.

This task will involve interviews and facilitated working sessions including:

- Mayor and Council
- Chief Administration Officer
- Fire Chief
- Deputy Chief
- Fire Department Staff (online survey)
- Fire Prevention Division
- Training Division
- Information Technology, Public Works, Communication, Finance stakeholders
- Administrative/ support staff
- Senior Municipal Staff and key department managers (e.g., Planning and Development, Finance)
- Other stakeholders identified
- Community (online survey)



This in depth needs analysis and review of the current environment. Through interviews with the above-mentioned stakeholders, they will reflect best business, operational and emergency response practice for the Fire Department and how to best integrate existing and new services and support for other municipal departments, local emergency services, and the community. EMG predicts an amount of ten (10) meetings to successfully conduct this needs analysis. Any additional meetings the municipality requests will be an additional charge.

Online surveys for the firefighters, fire department staff and community members give all staff in the department and residents of the Township the opportunity to offer their comments without the pressure of a meeting setting.

The stakeholder meetings will provide the opportunity to:

- Obtain input, suggestions, and experiences
- Identify issues/concerns
- Ensure transparency and consistent messages
- Present the data collected to selected stakeholder groups to ensure comprehensiveness and accuracy
- Evaluate the validity of our assessments
- Create ongoing stakeholder engagement

While stakeholder meetings are critical to the successful outcome of the project, they will not be the only method of obtaining stakeholder input. Ongoing communications, both receiving and providing information through telephone conferences and ongoing email communications, will keep the Fire Department Project Team engaged in the project, building on their expertise and local knowledge.

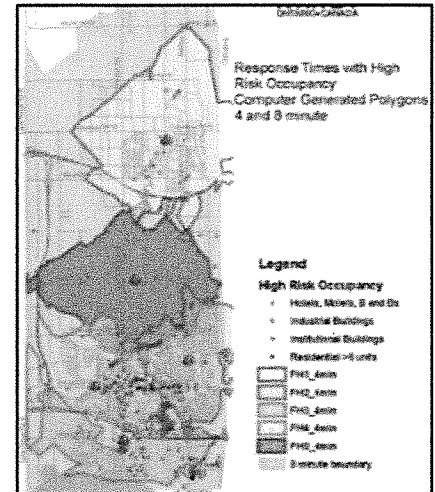
6.4 Analysis & Recommendations

In this task, we will review the information that has been collected in previous tasks to accomplish the following objectives:

- Determine the effects of mutual aid/automatic aid agreements and contract services with neighbouring communities including costs/fees and opportunities.
- Assess Human Resource issues including the needs for each role (Suppression, Prevention, Administration) as well as job descriptions, organizational chart, staffing adequacy, succession planning, and recruitment and retention.

- Assess the capacity of existing facilities location and plan for future needs. A review of training facilities, fleet and facility maintenance and storage requirements, Fire Prevention, Administrative space, decontamination and hygiene provisions, Training, Suppression, and emergency management.
- Assess and review recommendations involving a station location study
- Ensure the current apparatus and equipment are meeting the needs of the Department, providing recommendations for replacement schedules, and plans relative to existing and expected service demands, budget process and preventative maintenance requirements, and sustainability.
- Analyze current operations in comparison to the best practices identified in NFPA Professional Standards on Risk Management and Developing a Fire Service, NFPA 1710 and NFPA 1720 standards, accreditation standards, and municipal by-laws.
- Assess current operations in comparison to OFMEM Public Fire Safety Guidelines including the OFM review for administrative processes, workflow, and management practices.
- Examine potential revenue generation opportunities.
- Assess the Fire Prevention Program including public education, inspections, enforcement, and investigations.
- Assess the Training Program to determine any gaps in meeting the needs including Administration, Prevention, and Suppression.
- Occupational safety assessment including cancer protection protocols and firefighter wellness programs.
- Review and analyze timelines and operational/capital/reserve budget forecasts associated with the implementation of the various recommendations.
- Evaluate the ability of the firefighter staffing to meet the response requirements including capabilities and skills, time/performance and coverage, budget vs. demand for service, etc.
- Consider the projected community growth over the next ten (10) years and its impact on long-term Fire Service delivery, operations, and capital infrastructure (stations, apparatus) using key performance indicators for the growth strategy factoring in potential for a DRG nuclear waste storage facility in the immediate area

- Using our GIS software, analyze the current fire station locations and opportunities to best meet the population demographics/dispersion, Community Risk Profile, and response time standards.
- Identify strengths and challenges faced by the Department and complete a gap analysis with regards to the future goals of the service.
- Assess service delivery with regards to firefighter and resident safety, provincial and federal legislation/regulations, and risk assessments.
- Assess making recommendations regarding the Departments involvement in the Community Emergency Management Program.
- Analyze past recommendations and develop new recommendations that will allow the Department to meet its goals for the future.



During the data analysis process, we will engage key personnel to assess the validity of our assessments.

6.5 Draft Fire Services Strategic Plan

In this task, we will take the information gathered, completed analysis, and stakeholder input to draft the report. The review will include high-level analysis, long-term planning, and recommendations, where appropriate, on the following key areas:

- Governance including municipal by-laws, policies, procedures, provincial and federal legislation.
- Administration including organization, policies and procedures, customer service, administrative support, record keeping, purchasing, etc.
- Service delivery – consider current and future service delivery expectations and needs.
- Performance measures and outputs
- Current state analysis and needs assessment
- Emergency response including call volume and trends, adequate staffing and deployment, as well as mutual aid, automatic aid, and fire protection agreements.
- Fire Suppression and Rescue operations.

- Fire Prevention Program including inspections, enforcement, and investigations.
- Public Education Program including presentations, events, demographics, website, etc.
- Training and education for all divisions.
- Firefighter safety, health, and wellness including Section 21 Guidance notes
- Station facility and locations including existing condition and functionality, location and timeline for the construction of a new fire station, as well as legislative compliance and response and cover mapping.
- Apparatus and equipment including replacement cycles, utilization, and suitability.
- Maintenance and safety program for apparatus, vehicles, and equipment.
- Emergency Management Program and Emergency Operations Centre.
- Human Resources/leadership including staffing, organizational chart, job descriptions, workload, recruitment and retention, succession planning, promotional processes, etc.
- Reporting structure and requirements.
- Recommendations for any identified risks, gaps, unmet needs, obstacles, or vulnerabilities.
- Finance/budget, including operational, capital, and reserve budgets, and potential revenue generation strategies.
- Opportunities for innovative solutions that require immediate mitigation.

We will create an implementation plan and matrix of the priority list including key steps with key indicators to achieve the objectives of the plan. It will also include approximate financial implications.

The draft recommendations, implications, and implementation will be provided and presented to the Project Lead and key stakeholders prior to the final plan being produced, to be reviewed for input and further recommendations. Continual communications throughout the project will ensure that there will be no surprises.

6.6 Final Fire Services Strategic Plan

The final report will be produced no later than November 30th, 2022, taking into consideration the input from the Project Lead and Fire Department Staff and the ongoing input from key stakeholders.

Recommendations that are supported with the comparison of other fire departments with similar complexities and that are similar in size.

- Prioritize projects and estimate implementation costs and time estimates for recommended changes for the next ten (10) years.
- Solutions for risks that require immediate mitigation.
- Recommendations will be made about vision, strategy, and any other fundamental elements.
- Updated procedure and policies.
- Solutions for any identified risks, gaps, pain points or vulnerabilities.
- Opportunities to serve unmet needs.
- Metrics for measuring fire service performance.

EMG will create an implementation plan for public and Council review and presentation. EMG has budgeted for one (1) presentation to Council; if the Township requires additional presentations an added cost will apply.

6.7 Project Team Communication

For the purposes of documentation, Project Team Communications has been listed as a specific task, however, it is an ongoing process throughout the project including meetings, conference calls, emails, and status reviews with the Township of Huron-Kinloss, the Project Lead and identified key stakeholders.

6.8 Township Involvement

To successfully complete this project, there will be a requirement for some Fire Department and Township involvement. This involvement would include Fire Department Staff providing guidance and support to the EMG consulting team.

This would include such things as:

- Responding to questions and information inquiries from the EMG team.
- Providing a copy of:

- Statistical reports 2017-2021 including call volumes, response times, type, and the locations of the calls (latitude/ longitude), 80th percentile response times
- Operational guidelines, policies, and procedures for all divisions
- Fire Service Business/Strategic plans
- Current Township Strategic Plan
- MFPIS and GIS information
- Current Community Risk Assessment and/or Simplified Risk Assessment
- Fire Prevention statistics, reports
- Training programs and records
- Vehicle/equipment inventory along with current replacement plans
- Organizational chart, job descriptions, hiring processes, and other HR information
- Operational, capital and reserve budgets, along with current revenue generation programs
- Automatic response and mutual aid agreements
- Previous reports including any inquest recommendations
- Other pertinent and available documents
- Providing meeting locations and coordination for stakeholder meetings
- Public communications for the community survey and an open house forum
- Posting of a community survey on the Township website and other means of advertising
- Providing an independent perspective on information gathered
- Vetting draft recommendations
- Participating in regular conference calls and e-mail communications to discuss the project

SECTION 7—WORKPLAN

The below proposed schedule is one that has extreme flexibility to meet the timelines the Township of Huron-Kinloss purposes upon award.

