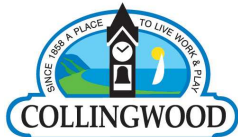


# TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD



## 2006 SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS



TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD  
2006 SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS

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## TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD 2006 SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS

### Introduction

Section 300 of the Municipal Act, 2001 provides that:

- (1) A municipality shall, at least once each year, provide notice to the public of,
  - a) improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of services by the municipality and its local boards; and
  - b) barriers identified by the municipality and its local boards to achieving improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of services by them.

This requirement achieves a number of purposes including:

- Informing the public of service improvements made by the municipality;
- Promoting greater public understanding of the choices that the municipality has made;
- Enhancing the accountability and transparency of municipal operations;
- Assisting in the determination of whether or not its efforts have in fact resulted in service improvements;
- Assisting the municipality in the identification of barriers and set goals to overcome them; and
- Providing information and best practices that may be useful to other municipalities.

Section 300 is a narrative report on service improvements and barriers for the Town of Collingwood. The reporting mechanism is different than that required for the Municipal Performance Measures Program. When the section was first introduced, there were no regulations or prescribed conditions for reporting. Municipalities were asked to establish their own processes for collecting and their own format for reporting the information.

In 2004, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing developed a template for reporting to the Public on Service Improvements and Barriers.

The following is a summary of the various service improvements that have been implemented by the Town of Collingwood departments in 2006.



## TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD 2006 SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS

### Service Improvements – CLERK SERVICES

The Town of Collingwood continues to improve services for its citizens. This report details how we've improved services in the areas of **Reception, By-law and Council Procedures**.

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#### **What we have done differently:**

Clerk Services has incorporated many new and effective practices in its administration. Alternative election methods were passed through by-law and clerk procedures for the 2006 Municipal Election process; a new phone system was implemented providing more lines and a digital messaging system to retrieve and save telephone messages; in-house by-law staff was hired to perform prosecutions for by-law and fire departments; additional staff was delegated to conduct civil marriage ceremonies and commission public documents; a new reception area has been created allowing the receptionist to be located directly within Clerk Services; and a by-law has been proposed to delegate staff the authority to temporarily close highways as a result of construction, events or emergency situations.

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#### **Improvements in efficiency and effectiveness:**

Alternative election methods and procedures were used in the 2006 Municipal Election process with on-line voter list access and software allowing staff to alter and process voter information quickly, efficiently and accurately. Scanning wands were used to process declaration forms as the ballots were returned to the Clerk which enabled the staff to process the declaration forms extremely fast and accurately, providing immediate updates to the voter list. Electronic tabulators to process received ballots on Election Day were used. This allowed the Town of Collingwood to provide fast and accurate tabulation of the ballots, thus being the first municipality in the area to post the final election results.

Council implemented through Clerk Services a trial parking program involving limited two hour free parking within the Downtown as an initiative to bring people into the downtown to shop and explore the great history and architecture of the Downtown buildings. The trial program was a six month venture and is to be evaluated in the new year.

A new phone system was implemented through the Information Technology Department providing more lines and a digital messaging system to retrieve and save telephone messages providing a more efficient system for the public to obtain service via telephone and for staff to be able to retrieve and store voice mail more quickly and efficiently.

A Municipal By-law Enforcement Officer was hired with the skill and ability to undertake the municipal prosecutions for by-law and fire departments, thus decreasing legal costs normally incurred by our contracted legal counsel for prosecutions.

Additional staff was delegated to conduct civil marriage ceremonies and commission public documents, thus creating revenue and increased service and efficiency for the public as they are able to obtain same day service.

A by-law has been proposed to delegate staff the authority to temporarily close highways as a result of construction, special events or emergency situations. This will decrease the wait time for approval of temporary road closures and better serve the health and safety of the travelers of the roadways throughout Collingwood.



## TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD 2006 SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS

Staff are continuously updating their skill sets through enrollment of various educational programs and seminars, allowing them to better utilize software and provide specialized knowledge to be used in decision making, research and administrative processes.

The reception area for Clerk Services has been relocated within the department itself. This allows for enhanced customer service with regard to by-law, parking, human resources, council and general inquiries

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### **What barriers are there to further improvements?**

Although the relocated reception area enhances customer service within the department, it is not located in a desirable location within the building itself as the public must first enter the tax department reception area in order to get to the reception area for Clerk Services. This may cause a certain degree of nuisance and frustration for other departments as they are constantly having to reroute the public. There are also accessibility barriers as the doors into the reception area are not automatic/wheelchair accessible.

Clerk Services is drastically in need of a municipal wide records management system. This will hopefully be an expenditure that will be incorporated into the upcoming municipal budget process. At the present time, it is extremely time consuming to compile records for FOI requests and general inquiries as the records are not currently managed in a central location under one coding system. Records are presently managed differently in each department, and also causes duplication and overlap of records.

The trial parking program may increase the revenue generated through the businesses in the Downtown and promote an attractive tourist location, but it decreases parking revenues and increases cost. A study is presently underway to determine the impact of the trial program.

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## TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD 2006 SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS

### Service Improvements - PLANNING

The Town of Collingwood continues to improve services for its citizens. This report details how we've improved services in the **Site Plan Control**.

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#### **What we have done differently:**

During the past year the Planning Services initiated the creation, review and completion of a Site Plan Control Manual, Application and revised Site Plan Control By-law No. 2006-81. The Site Plan Control Manual sets out the procedures, requirements and development standards for guidance of applicants in the preparation of site plan submissions submitted to the Town for approval under Section 41 of the Planning Act.

During the process of updating the Site Plan Manual it became evident that in addition to the Town's high standard of site plan submission documentation, there is also an expectation that the quality of product being submitted reflects an increasingly high Town standard. The Manual does identify certain interests such as site design, pedestrian accessibility, traffic flow, architectural and landscape matters that provide staff with opportunity to initiate discussion with applicants at pre-consultation. But it is important that a more complete review and consolidated documentation of such matters takes place so that a high standard of development will continue to be consistently applied Town wide creating a community that is attractive, progressive and sustainable.

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#### **Improvement in efficiency:**

Site Plan Control approval is one of our more complicated and frequently applied planning approval processes. With increased development activity over the past few years it became evident that a more effective Site Plan Control Manual would provide for improved client service while assisting Town and external agency staff in applying a consistent standard on the increasingly varied complexity of site plan applications for development.

The Site Plan Control Manual provides applicants with a description of the Town's process procedure for site plan approval together with a complete set of current Town standards and requirements in order to provide for a complete application submission.

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#### **Improvement in effectiveness:**

A complete site plan submission is the most effective tool Applicants have to ensure a timely review and Town approval. A complete submission provides for the application to proceed efficiently through agency review and at the same time provides staff with the necessary documentation to make informed recommendations to Council.

The Site Plan Manual identifies the importance of pre-consultation, and details the Town's development standards and documentation required to support the application. Ensuring the applicant understands the Town's site plan review process procedure increases the effectiveness of staff time on multiple applications.

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#### **What barriers are there to further improvements?**

The Site Plan Manual is a work in progress and will require continual update to reflect the interests of the community and changes in the Planning Act and other legislation. These are not barriers per se but they require time and funds to complete.

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## TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD 2006 SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS

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## TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD 2006 SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS

### Service Improvements - LIBRARY

The Town of Collingwood continues to improve services for its citizens. This report details how we've improved services in the **Public Services Department**.

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#### **What we have done differently:**

We formally established a Public Services Department at the end of August 2006. The objective is to provide an environment that will promote excellent customer service. A key component of this change was to confirm which positions constitute core (four) and support staff (two) in the Public Services Department. The balance of Library staff supply support in emergencies.

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#### **Improvement in efficiency:**

Streamlining operations in this way has improved overall service to patrons. Public Services staff devote the majority of their time to direct customer service functions. The balance of staff are now able to concentrate on developing their areas of responsibility. Previously, the department was not clearly defined and all tasks were shared among staff regardless of suitability to the environment or expertise.

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#### **Improvement in effectiveness:**

Six Training sessions have just been completed to ensure all staff are following the same protocols in dealing with the public. They were:

- Oct 13<sup>th</sup> Brochures Management- Office Equipment
- Oct 20<sup>th</sup> 'Horizon'/Revenue Deposits & Invoice processing
- Oct 27<sup>th</sup> & Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> 'Script' Development
- Nov 10<sup>th</sup> 'Script' Training
- Nov 17<sup>th</sup> 'Horizon'-system failure / Room and Equipment Bookings

A public service policy is under development to ensure consistency of service: Components include:

- scheduling protocol for 'desk' and 'desk support' hours that will best serve our patrons and be fair and equitable for staff.
  - day to day operations that clearly define priority of tasks, distribution of work and responsibilities.
  - interaction guidelines between staff and patrons that reflect our proactive customer service philosophy to improve access to services.
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#### **What barriers are there to further improvements?**

The greatest barriers to further improvement are physical constraints and staffing. Both these will be addressed with the new Library. There is an opportunity to design a 'user friendly' Public Services desk with more people scheduled to staff it.

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## TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD 2006 SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS

### Service Improvements - LIBRARY

The Town of Collingwood continues to improve services for its citizens. This report details how we've improved services in the ***Public Relations and Web Site***.

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#### **What we have done differently:**

Policies were developed in 2006 and approved by the Director and the Board to clarify the flow of final material development and the contribution responsibilities amongst staff.

A framework for branding compliance was also initiated.

The Library's main website was redesigned to reflect a more streamlined appearance and flow in preparation towards a Web 2.0 interface. (Built more on participation than publishing/providing static information).

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#### **Improvement in efficiency:**

Work flow efficiency has been improved by staff adhering to clarified responsibilities detailed in the revised policy.

Brochure management reduced the number of promotional brochures from 6 to 3. Information was consolidated and updated. Significant reductions in paper use, and the costs associated with it, have been realized. The type of paper was also changed to a more cost effective stock.

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#### **Improvement in effectiveness:**

Reader's advisory materials, print advertisements (newspaper and periodical), newsletters, etc. were all converted to a consistent appearance utilizing the SOLS @ your library registered trademark.

The website has incorporated the branding initiative, effectively providing a consistent look in all materials leaving the building.

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#### **What barriers are there to further improvements?**

The website will incorporate the specialized department requirements for other areas of the Library (specifically the Children's Department and Exhibition space), once staffing times allow for it.

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