



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	November 5, 2020
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Hamilton Fire Department Service Delivery Plan (2019 - 2028) Progress Update (HSC19026(a)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not Applicable

INFORMATION

The Hamilton Fire Department Service Delivery Plan (2019 – 2028) was approved by Council in June 2019 (Report HSC19026). The Plan was developed to provide direction for the delivery of optimal fire protection and rescue services presently and into the future. The Plan serves as a road map for the Hamilton Fire Department (HFD) to navigate through challenges and capitalize on opportunities. It outlines the critical initiatives the HFD will implement in the coming years to achieve its 12 objectives that support the Plan's four Guiding Principles:

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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Optimized Service Delivery	Exceptional People and Performance	Robust Collaboration and Integration	Reduced Risk for a Safer Community
Innovative and effective use of technology	Skilled and diverse workforce	Coordination with City Departments/ Divisions/HFD	Community Risk Assessment response
Revenue generation opportunities	Healthy, inclusive and engaged workplace culture	Collaboration with external partners	Resourcing community growth demands
Existing resources efficiently utilized to maximum potential	Professional development opportunities		Code Red response
Enhanced customer value proposition			

The Plan is essential for addressing challenges faced by the HFD related to significant growth that has occurred and continues to occur in rural/suburban areas specifically Waterdown, Binbrook, Upper and Lower Stoney Creek. Furthermore, the Plan outlines how to manage Hamilton’s complex risk profile which comprises of high-density residential areas, industrial occupancies and a topography of bodies of water, waterfalls, heavily wooded areas and the escarpment.

The Plan also includes initiatives for building and cultivating meaningful partnerships within the City and outside of the organization, promoting employee development and engagement, enhancing performance metrics and strengthening preventive measure to reduce risks to the community.

This Report provides an update on the status of implementing the initiatives identified in the Plan for 2019/2020. Also included in this Report is the data indicating operational performance of the HFD in 2020. This information is provided in lieu of the HFD Annual Report and henceforth this data will be included in an annual progress update of the Plan.

Major Accomplishments

Much was accomplished over the past 15 months by optimizing current resources with little or no financial impact. Highlights of achievements made for each of the Plan’s objectives since June 2019 include:

Innovative and Effective Use of Technology

- Commenced a pilot project for updated mobile navigation application
- Acquired a drone to support firefighting search and rescue efforts

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- Implemented virtual technology to support sharing of information and communication during large scale emergency responses through Emergency Operations Center pandemic response
- Launched an online portal to enable residents to apply for and purchase burn permits
- Implemented “I Am Responding” a secondary incident notification for Volunteer response

Revenue Generation Opportunities

- Obtained grant from Firehouse Subs to support drone program
- Received Enbridge Project Zero donation of Carbon Monoxide (CO)/Smoke alarms
- Implemented three new approved Fire Prevention user fees

Existing Resources Efficiently Utilized to Maximum Potential

- Replaced three Rescue Units in urban areas with multipurpose firefighting and rescue apparatus
- Redeployed three Rescue Units to volunteer response areas

Enhanced Customer Value Proposition

- Developed performance dashboards for each HFD division with key metrics to inform decision-making
- Launched the “Strong for You” show on Cable 14 to demonstrate the value HFD provides the community through a range of services

Skilled and Diverse Workforce

- Advanced Leadership Team succession plans by revolving portfolio assignments providing opportunities to gain knowledge and strengthen collective understanding of all areas of HFD
- Continuous improvements on firefighter recruitment process to enable efficiencies and enhancements within shortened timelines

Healthy, Inclusive and Engaged Workplace Culture

- Mandatory training for all personnel facilitated through Human Resources on respectful and supportive workplace f underway
- Established a number of employee working groups to obtain input into new initiatives related to:
 - Internal communications portal
 - Youth camp to expand on Camp FFIT (Female Firefighters in Training) concept
 - Apparatus continuous improvements
 - Nature trail response vehicle

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- Tactics for fireground operations, techniques and equipment
- Tri-service Water Rescue Unit planning
- Ice water rescue
- Development is underway of a communication portal that can be accessed across all devices and computers to increase employee engagement, accessibility and timely communication and collaboration

Professional Development Opportunities

- Recruited five classes of Career firefighters in 2019 and 2020 and two classes of Volunteer firefighters in 2019
- Provided a variety of development opportunities for personnel (e.g. drone operators, medical instructors, recruit instructors, shift instructors, HAZMAT (Hazardous Materials) response instructors, firefighter survival instructors, live fire instructors, orientation and operation of apparatus instructor, vehicle rescue curriculum development, Safety/Accountability Officers)
- Initiated discussions with the Ontario Fire College surrounding National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) Standards training delivery

Coordination with City Departments/Divisions/HFD

- Participation in the Healthy and Safe Communities Department Information Technology Advisory Board to support technological integration and initiatives
- HFD firefighter recruitment process improvements in collaboration with Human Resources
- Successful corporate trunk radio contract negotiation with Information Technology Division (IT), Hamilton Police Service and Public Works
- Completed transition of resources and systems to IT through IT Centralization
- Distribution of alarms and pamphlets to Healthy and Safe Communities Department programs through Children's Services and Neighbourhood Development, Recreation, Ontario Works and Housing Services divisions

Collaboration with External Partners

- Work with targeted local businesses to develop individualized Business Continuity Plans with long term care facilities
- Joint initiative with Hamilton Police Service for development of a new combined station in Waterdown
- CityLab projects underway in collaboration with McMaster University
- Ongoing collaborations with Hamilton Police Service and Hamilton Beach Rescue for Tri-Service Water Rescue Unit
- COVID measures facilitated through Ontario Fire Marshall office

Community Risk Assessment Response

- Established partnerships with a variety of organizations to develop and/or disseminate information to the public about fire safety including presentations to Keith and Sherman neighbourhood hubs (identified through Code Red) and Ontario Federation of Union Retirees (OFUR) Seniors Fire Safety Symposium
- Collaboration with Healthy and Safe Communities Department divisions for distribution of alarms and pamphlets through existing programs and services
- Enhanced presence on Twitter to increase awareness of public safety information and knowledge of HFD programs and services available to residents
- Implementation of updated response plans to ensure appropriate resources are dispatched based on risk, including utilizing an Effective Firefighting and Rescue Force (EFRF)
- Implemented closest unit dispatch response capabilities
- Establishment of Ice Water Rescue Unit with Hamilton Police Service and Hamilton Beach Rescue Unit to be implemented in January 2021

Resourcing Community Growth Demands

- Revised response levels from Volunteer fire service delivery to Composite fire service delivery within four urban/suburban areas of the city to address the growth and increasing risk profile
- Obtained approval for ten Full time equivalents (FTE) to establish two day crews to transition to a composite model in two Volunteer stations (Upper Stoney Creek and Waterdown)
- Obtained approval for four multi-functional Firefighter Safety/Accountability Officer FTE positions to ensure on-scene safety and provide shift training
- Established a joint initiative with Hamilton Police Service to share accommodations in a new Waterdown station to mitigate the increased risk due to the area's significant and ongoing growth

Investments in Apparatus

- Introduced three new urban design pumper apparatus in the lower city (John Street Station 1, Barton and Wentworth Station 6, Kenilworth Station 9)
- Deployed three new 103-foot ladder apparatus (lower Stoney Creek Station 12, Nebo and Stone Church Station 5 and Garner Road Station 20)
- Replaced volunteer ladder apparatus 15 with a multipurpose pumper at Arvin Avenue Station 15
- Replaced both a new rural pumper and tanker apparatus at Binbrook Station 18
- Replaced both a new rural pumper and tanker apparatus at Mount Hope Station 19
- Replaced a new rural pumper apparatus at Lynden Station 26
- Replaced a new rural pumper apparatus at Greensville Station 25

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Although many initiatives have progressed since the Plan was approved in June 2019, the onset of COVID-19 in March 2020 resulted in some others being delayed as City wide resources were redirected to pandemic-related issues. The attached workplan indicates the status on each of initiative identified on the Plan as commencing in 2019 or 2020 (attached as Appendix “A” to Report HSC19026(a)).

Response Times

The pandemic has created some unique challenges for the HFD resulting in the need to modify a number of practices and processes. Despite the upheaval caused by this virus, the HFD’s resiliency has enabled the focus to remain on delivering optimal services to reduce risks for a safer community. As shown below, most HFD response times in 2020 have improved on the 90th percentile target times identified in the Plan.

Response time according to the first unit on the scene of a non-medical call is as follows:

Response Type	Non-Medical Call 90th Percentile Target Time (mins)	2020 Q1-Q3 Non-Medical 90th Percentile Response Time (mins)	Difference from Target Time (secs)
Overall HFD	9:34	9:27	-0:07
Career	7:57	7:54	-0:03
Volunteer	16:25	16:41	+0:16

Response time based on the first unit on scene to medical calls is as follows:

Response Type	Medical Call 90th Percentile Target Time (mins)	2020 Q1-Q3 Medical Calls 90th Percentile Response Time (mins)	Difference from Target Time (secs)
Overall HFD	7:37	7:21	-0:16
Career	6:52	6:42	-0:10
Volunteer	14:56	15:08	+0:12

Effective Firefighting and Rescue Force (EFRF) consists of a minimum four four-person apparatus which is required to efficiently and safely conduct initial fire suppression and/or rescue operations. The response times for a convergence of an EFRF in 2020 is as follows:

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Response Type	EFRF 90th Percentile Target Time (mins)	2020 Q1-Q3 EFRF 90th Percentile Response Time (mins)	Difference from Target Time (mins, secs)
Career	10:54	10:37	-0:17
Composite	18:51	13:26	-5:25
Volunteer	20:45	20:31	-0:14

In 2020, the HFD outperformed the defined target times for all responses except the Volunteer response for non-medical and medical calls which was slightly slower than the target time by 16 seconds and 12 seconds, respectively. Robust Volunteer Firefighter recruitment planning for 2021 is in progress after efforts in 2020 were paused due to pandemic response limitations.

It is anticipated response times and the HFD ability to assemble effective firefighting and rescue force will continue to improve with fully operational updated response plans, closest unit dispatch and the dedicated resource investments made to date. As committed in the Plan, initiatives will continue to be evaluated for bona fide need prior to proceeding with further action plans and/or budgetary requests.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" to Report HSC19026(a): HFD Service Delivery Plan (2019-2028)
Action Plan Status September 2020