

### **BUDGET COMMITTEE REFERRAL:**

That staff report back on the use of apps to further access Oakville programs, services and information.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the report entitled Use of Mobile Apps to Further Access Oakville Programs, Information and Services, from the Strategic Initiatives and Communications department, be received.

### **KEY FACTS:**

- The Town of Oakville and the Oakville Public Library currently offer five service-specific mobile apps:
  - Oakville Transit allows customers to track buses in real-time, find nearby bus stops, set up arrival alerts at their favourite bus stops and view service bulletins.
  - Amble enables transit care-A-van and Home to Hub customers to book trips outside of office hours.
  - MagnusCards, used by the OPL and Oakville Transit, guides those with autism and cognitive special needs through step-by-step instructions on riding an Oakville Transit bus or using OPL services.
  - OPL to Go allows users to easily discover new titles, place holds, renew items, access branch information and other library services, and manage their account.
  - HonkMobile offers citizens the ability to pay for parking at select town parking lots and on-street Pay-by-Plate machines from their mobile device.
- The town previously introduced an information based app, from 2015-2017, that allowed select oakville.ca content and services to be accessed from a mobile device.
- This app was discontinued in 2017 due to the vendor filing for bankruptcy. The public, council and staff were notified with minimal public complaints upon its removal.
- In 2017, the town launched its mobile-friendly website.
- When the town began the oakville.ca rebuild project, the first phase focused on extensive staff and public engagement, website assessments and competitive analysis of leading government sites.
- Over 1,000 participants provided feedback through in-person and online consultations.

- While feedback pointed to the desire to access services online, no feedback referenced the desire for a mobile app.

**COMMENTS/OPTIONS:**

- The customer experience is constantly evolving and staff is committed to build on the engagement efforts completed by ForwardVu in 2019 through continued consultation with the public, staff and Council to understand how our online users prefer to access Oakville programs, services and information.
- Staff will explore suitable mobile app possibilities through third-party tools and technologies based on a balance of any identified trending desire from online users and meeting town business needs.