



REPORT

Council

Meeting Date: April 29, 2024

FROM: Oakville Fire Department

DATE: April 16, 2024

SUBJECT: Fire Master Plan & Community Risk Assessment

LOCATION: Town of Oakville

WARD: Town-wide

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RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council approve the 2024 Fire Master Plan;
2. That Council receive the Community Risk Assessment;
3. That Council direct the Fire Chief to use the 2024 Fire Master Plan as a reference document to support the delivery of Fire Protection Services over the next 10 years (2024-2033); and,
4. That the financial investments recommended within the 2024 FMP inform the ten-year capital forecast and future update to the development charges background study to ensure growth related costs can be recovered to the fullest extent possible.

KEY FACTS

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- In Ontario, the fire master planning process is intended to provide a strategic planning framework to guide the delivery of fire protection services within a given community over a five-to-ten-year horizon.
- The Community Risk Assessment (CRA) allows for a comprehensive review of an individual municipality and provides a strategic foundation for the creation of the Fire Master Plan.

- The CRA was used as a foundation document to guide decisions and identify priority focus areas for the Oakville Fire Department.
- The framework of the Fire Master Plan (FMP) considers applicable legislation, including the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* (FPPA), *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA), R.S.O. 1990 and the more recently adopted Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 378/18 – Community Risk Assessment and O. Reg. 343/22 – Firefighter Certification and recognized industry best practice standards.
- The FMP focuses strategic efforts in the Three Lines of Defense (TLoD): public education and prevention; fire safety standards and enforcement; and emergency response.
- The TLoD model is established on the premise that steps can be taken to reduce the probability of a fire occurring and the consequence to residents and businesses. All recommendations within the FMP are captured in the specific divisional review area and are consolidated in the implementation plan.

BACKGROUND

The Town of Oakville prepares master plans to support Council's vision to be a vibrant and livable community for all. Master plans build on the goals and priorities in Council's Strategic Plan and the town's Official Plan and define specific medium-range plans, such as fire and emergency services.

The Town's master plans identify objectives, tactics, and actions to be considered over a set time and help inform Council decisions. In addition to providing a set of planned actions, master plans also consider ways to address Council's strategic priority areas of growth management, environmental sustainability, community belonging and accountable government.

In Ontario, the fire master planning process is intended to provide a strategic planning framework to guide the delivery of fire protection services within a given community over a ten-year horizon. The proposed framework presented within this Fire Master Plan (FMP) report has considered the applicable legislation, including the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* (FPPA), *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA), R.S.O. 1990 and the more recently adopted Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 378/18 – Community Risk Assessment and O. Reg. 343/22 – Firefighter Certification. It is understood that some of the recommendations require financial investment. The implementation schedule remains subject to annual operating and

capital budget considerations and prioritization with other corporate priorities allowing for future planning.

To undertake the key action to develop a Fire Master Plan (FMP), the Town of Oakville Fire Department (OFD) issued a Request for Proposal (RFP-31-2021) for consulting services to provide a comprehensive Community Risk Assessment (CRA) and Fire Master Plan (FMP). Through RFP-31-2021, both the CRA and FMP was awarded to Dillon Consulting. The first phase of the project was to complete the CRA, which specifies a comprehensive review for each municipality through legislation and provides the foundation for the creation of the Fire Master Plan. The CRA was used as a reference guiding document for decision making and identified priority focus areas for the OFD. The result is an enhanced process from previous Council approved Fire Master Plans in Oakville. Also included within the RFP scope was for the consultant to complete the CRA and FMP to ensure compatibility with the Centre for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) accreditation process. This allows the fire management team to submit the Standards of Cover and Risk Assessment to CPSE.

The FMP sets out recommended fire strategic goals and direction of the OFD over the next ten years (2024-2033).

Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA)

The *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* (FPPA), S.O. 1997, makes it the responsibility of Ontario municipalities to assess community fire risks and provide '*Fire Protection Services*' to address local '*needs and circumstances*.'

Municipalities fund Fire Protection Services and, as a result, they are responsible for establishing programs and setting outcomes. They are also responsible for policy decisions regarding the delivery of these services and the evaluation of the effectiveness of their programs.

The Municipal responsibility for Fire Protection Services is outlined under Part II of the FPPA, which mandates the following:

2. (1) every municipality shall,
 - a) Establish a program in the municipality which must include public education with respect to fire safety and certain components of fire prevention; and
 - b) Provide such other fire protection services as it determines may be necessary in accordance with its needs and circumstances.

The FPPA definition for 'Fire Protection Services' is provided below.

- a) fire suppression, fire prevention and fire safety education,
- b) mitigation and prevention of the risk created by the presence of unsafe levels of carbon monoxide and safety education related to the presence of those levels,
- c) rescue and emergency services,
- d) communication in respect of anything described in clauses (a) to (c),
- e) training of persons involved in providing anything described in clauses (a) to (d), and
- f) the delivery of any service described in clauses (a) to (e).

While the FPPA doesn't provide a definition for 'needs and circumstance', a general definition is provided below for reference.

- '*need*' is the requirement, necessary duty and/or obligation,
- '*circumstance*' is a condition, detail, part, or attribute, with respect to time, place, manner, agent, etc., that accompanies, determines, or modifies a fact or even; a modifying or influencing factor.

Under the FPPA, the accompanying Ontario Regulations (O. Reg.), further direct Fire Protection Service within the community:

- O. Reg. 213/07 – Fire Code
- O. Reg. 150/13 – Enhancements to the Fire Code (O. Reg. 213/07)
- O. Reg. 364/13 – Mandatory Inspection – Fire Drill in Vulnerable Occupancy
- O. Reg. 365/13 – Mandatory Assessments of Complaints & Requests for Approval
- O. Reg. 378/18 – Community Risk Assessments
- O. Reg. 343/22 – Firefighter Certification

Council Responsibility Under the FPPA

The FPPA authorizes the council of a municipality to establish, maintain and operate a fire department for all, or any part of the municipality, and to pass by-laws regarding Fire Protection Service. Ontario municipal councils are obligated under the FPPA to provide Fire Protection Service, commensurate with its needs and circumstances, and provide fiscal resources for staffing, apparatus, and equipment to support the established level of service. The council approved level of Fire Protection Service is outlined within the Establishing and Regulating (E&R) By-law (2019-071) and added enhancement of Special Response Levels By-law

amendment (2021-048), attached for reference as Appendices. The existing E&R By-law will have a comprehensive review and update by Q4 2025. The CRA and FMP will be used to inform and update the E&R By-law. Any recommended revisions to the E&R By-law will be provided to council within a staff report for review, consideration, and approval.

Office of the Fire Marshal Ontario

The Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) is part of the Public Safety Division of the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Correctional Services. Its primary function is to minimize the loss of life and property from fire by helping municipalities and fire departments improve their Fire Protection Service.

Under the FPPA, Part III Powers of Fire Marshal 9 (1). The Fire Marshal is assigned powers to monitor, review and advise municipalities respecting the provision of fire protection services and to make recommendations to municipal councils for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of those services.

The OFM complies with this requirement through the issuance of Public Fire Safety Guidelines (PFSG), Fire Marshal Directives, Technical Guidelines, Communique's, and other forms of communication, as required.

Responsibility of the Fire Chief

Under the FPPA, Part III Responsibility to Council (3). A Fire Chief is the person who is ultimately responsible to the council of a municipality that appointed him or her for the delivery of the municipal Fire Protection Service.

The Fire Chief complies with this requirement by reporting directly to council with necessary information to make informed decisions for the provision of Fire Protection Services as defined in the Act and municipal by-law(s). The Community Risk Assessment (O. Reg. 378/18) supports the Fire Chief with this requirement to use its risk assessment to inform the provision of its Fire Protection Service to meet current community needs and circumstances.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards

In 2014, the Ontario Office of the Fire Marshal announced it was adopting standards provided by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The NFPA delivers information and knowledge through more than 300 consensus codes and

standards, research, training, education, outreach, and advocacy; are in line with industry best practice performance measures. Following the direction by the OFM, Ontario fire services have been transitioning to NFPA standards to guide Fire Protection Services since the 2014 adoption. NFPA standards are recognized within the fire service as the industry best practice. Where applicable, NFPA standards have been referenced within the 2024 FMP and show performance measurements and planning fire strategic goals for continuous improvements.

Town of Oakville Official Plan

The Official Plan (OP) is a legal document that guides how the town will grow and develop based on provincially mandated population and employment targets. The Official Plan establishes an Urban Structure which defines the areas to accommodate growth and intensification while maintaining the character of existing neighbourhoods and protecting our natural environment.

The planned population and employment growth is to be accommodated by adequate infrastructure and public service facilities. As a result, this plan outlines required infrastructure, associated services, and public service facilities, to support the comprehensive implementation of the Official Plan.

Public service facilities listed in the OP includes fire service facilities. It is recognized that fire public service facilities should be planned for within a neighbourhood and town-wide scale to serve the current and future needs of residents and businesses. It is important that fire public service facilities are considered and planned for as part of future growth and development planning.

The planned growth should establish phased priorities to describe how investment in existing and new infrastructure and public service facilities will be made to support the vision for the Primary Growth Areas. The implementation plan and financial planning, which remains subject to the annual budget process, may have phased strategies that are directly related to planned and actual growth.

The FMP and CRA have been completed with alignment to Council strategic priorities of Growth Management, Community Belonging, Environmental Sustainability, and Accountable Government.

COMMENT/OPTIONS

2024 Fire Master Plan Process

Dillon Consulting was retained to develop a ten-year Fire Master Plan as part of the Town's strategic fire goal planning process to ensure Fire Protection Services align with community growth and change. The recommendations presented within the Fire Master Plan (Appendix C) will be referenced to inform and establish fire strategic goals, supporting effective decision making, sustainability, efficiency, and effectiveness of Fire Protection Services to the community.

Each division currently within the Oakville Fire Department was reviewed, along with emergency response, fire station locations, staffing resourcing, procedures, programs, apparatus and related equipment, legislation, industry standards and best practices, Fire Marshal safety guidelines, and existing service agreements. The FMP process included an assessment of compliance with applicable legislation, review of related reports and plans, current operations, knowledge of industry practices, and a robust public & stakeholder consultation process.

Historically the fire service has focused efforts on fire suppression. This has changed in recent years with more emphasis being placed on the importance and value of preventing a fire and all-hazards public safety. This is important from both an economic and public safety perspective.

Fire Master Plan Goals and Implementation of Recommendations

RFP-31-2021 indicated that the FMP outcome must establish strategic goals and recommendations for actions. The FMP establishes departmental priorities to provide a framework for informed decision-making with respect to the overall delivery of Fire Protection Services.

The proposed department priorities include:

- Prioritize goals and strategies that support the delivery of Fire Protection Services to provide the most effective and efficient level of service resulting in the best value to the community.
- Optimize the first two lines of defense, including public education and prevention, fire safety standards and fire code enforcement as the foundation of providing a comprehensive fire protection program.
- Use Community Risk Assessments (CRA) (O. Reg. 378/18) analysis to inform decisions associated with the delivery of Fire Protection Service.

- Recommend future fire protection needs to meet planned growth and intensification needs.

The FMP outlines detailed recommendations, outlined in Appendix B, along with operational recommendations in each division that are task level completion actions. It is recognized that over the next ten years during the FMP implementation, there may be competing corporate priorities and fiscal constraints. The rate of growth will be monitored to determine the phases of implementation. While some recommendations will have an immediate priority and be incorporated into operating and capital budgets based on prioritization of funding and growth, others will form part of a refined long-term community investment plan. An ongoing review of all recommendations, community needs, and circumstances, evaluation, and prioritization will ensure that requests are brought forward at the applicable time to support Council, corporate and departmental objectives aligned with other corporate priorities.

The FMP provides a recommended Implementation Plan (reference Chapter 11, page 283), which has been further refined by staff as follows:

Timeline

1. Immediate – initiate within the next 18 months (2024 - 2025).
2. Short-term – Initiate within the next two to four years (2026 - 2028).
3. Medium-Term – Initiate within the next five to seven years (2029-2031)
4. Long-Term – initiative within the next eight to ten years or more (2032 – 2033).

The timing of implementation is dependent on the amount and distribution of population growth and annual budget priorities.

Process

Recommendations will be coordinated by the department to align with current legislation, standards, procedures, and continuous improvement initiatives. The OFD will establish a process for ongoing review and evaluation. These will be incorporated into the department work plan to align with corporate and council goals and objectives. Updated information to staff, council and public will be provided as required or requested. Recommendations that require further detailed review and information will be provided to council as part of the annual budget process and may require additional staff reports.

Staff will continue to present FMP recommendations to Council as part of a long-term implementation plan, and the FMP will inform a future multi-year community investment plan, as other plans come to completion.

(A) PUBLIC

The Fire Master Plan guides the delivery of fire protection services to 2033 in support of Council’s Strategic Plan. Public consultation informed the development of the plan.

(B) FINANCIAL

All operating and capital budget items above will need to be considered as part of the Town’s annual budget process before approval.

It is important to note that the summary of costs represented in Table 2 below are shown in 2024 dollars and are preliminary estimates at this time. These are subject to change based on timing, inflation, and other economic and market influences currently being experienced in the capital and labour markets.

As priorities come forward through the budget process, costing will be refined, and in the case of capital requirements, operating budget impacts will also be further detailed.

Table 2: Estimated Operating, Capital Costs, and FTEs

Estimated Impacts	Immediate (18 months)	Short-term (2-4 years)	Medium-term (5-7 years)	Long-term (8-10 years)	Total
Operating	\$2,476,000	\$995,000	\$3,526,000	\$3,500,000	\$10,497,000
Capital	\$30,675,000	\$15,773,000	\$250,000	\$16,660,000	\$63,358,000
Total	\$33,151,000	\$16,768,000	\$3,776,000	\$20,160,000	\$73,855,000
FTEs	18 FTE’s_ 16FFs,EM,TO	6.4 FTE’s 4 DC’s, AA, FPO, 0.4 EVT	25 FTE’s 24FF’s, TO	24 FTE’s 20 FF’s, 4 DC’s	73.4 FTE’s

The estimated operating investment includes human resource salary, benefits, and minor operating capital. The Emergency Services program 2024 budgeted net levy was \$46,313,200.

The estimated capital investment includes potential land purchase needs, fire station facility, apparatus, and specialized equipment. Eligible growth-related capital costs can be funded by development charges, though the Fire DCs are currently in a negative position and remain so for much of the

10-year forecast. As a result, careful prioritization and timing for projects will need to be done. The Fire Master Plan recommendations will be included in both the 2025 capital forecast and the next development charges background study to ensure growth related costs can be recovered to the fullest extent possible. Additional funding opportunities such as Skill Development fund grants and climate action rebates will be explored wherever possible.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

The FMP was developed in consultation with a project team, subject matter experts across multiple town divisions and services, stakeholder, and public consultation. A significant amount of data was collected, research and comparison conducted against leading industry standards, legislation, and Office of the Fire Marshal public safety guidelines. The FMP was also informed from past department fire protection service strategic planning efforts and the new legislative community risk assessment.

Consultation with our corporate and community partners shaped the gathering of information with interviews, surveys, in-person and virtual meetings, and data collection for full engagement. Overall engagement numbers and information gathered significantly eclipsed previous FMP processes and was instrumental in the final product.

Staff will conduct further engagement efforts with town staff, community partners, and the public as the recommendations provided within the FMP are brought forward for councils' consideration.

(D) COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This report addresses Council's strategic priorities of Growth Management, Community Belonging, Environmental Sustainability and Accountable Government.

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

Oakville fire response times have a direct link and impact to the environment. Through effective and efficient response, and on scene tactical efforts, Oakville firefighters work quickly to extinguish a fire, mitigating potential environment impact due to an incident, such as toxins, chemicals, and carcinogens (e.g., asbestos) that are found or occur during/after a fire.

In addition, there are established agreements to support a timely response by third-party provided services to mitigate environmental impacts, where possible, such as a hazardous material calls that would require specialized response and cleanup efforts.

Furthermore, Oakville fire is continually researching, retrofitting and/or procuring available options to support climate actions to mitigate greenhouse gases (GHGs) and reduce energy consumption. Advancements have been made in electrification of equipment and support fleet vehicles and with a continued focus on LEED initiatives for facilities. Personnel Protective Equipment enhancements along with Fluorine free firefighting foams will remain a focus with the health & safety of our Oakville Fire Department team a priority.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommend that Council receive the 2024 Community Risk Assessment (CRA) and approve the Fire Master Plan and direct the Oakville Fire leadership team to provide additional detailed information in future staff reports and enhancements through the annual budget process.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - 2024 Community Risk Assessment (CRA) Final by Dillon Consulting
Appendix B - 2024 Fire Master Plan Executive Summary Final by Dillon Consulting
Appendix C - 2024 Fire Master Plan (FMP) Final by Dillon Consulting
Appendix D - By-law 2019-071
Appendix E - By-law 2021-048

Prepared and Submitted by:
Paul Boissonneault
Fire Chief & CEMC