Minutes – Executive Policy Committee - June 13, 2007

REPORTS

Minute No. 376 Red Tape Report, Recommendation 2 - Towards an Organization Wide Customer Service Mission
File GP-1

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee received as information the administrative report dated May 3, 2007 from the Chief Administrative Officer.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Wyatt,
That the administrative report be received as information.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On March 22, 2006, the Executive Policy Committee directed the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare and forward reports on all remaining recommendations of the Red Tape Commission in an expedited manner, in a manner reflecting a list of priorities.

RE: Red Tape Commission Report: Recommendation 2 – Towards an Organization-Wide Customer Service Mission

FOR SUBMISSION TO: Executive Policy Committee

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED BY: A.L. Stenning, Chief Administrative Officer

REPORT DATE: May 3, 2007

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That this report, confirming the development of a Customer Service Mission as recommended in Recommendation 2 of the Red Tape Commission Report, be received as information.

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Report Summary

Key Issues:

- At its meeting of July 20, 2005, Executive Policy Committee received as information the Final Report of Mayor's Red Tape Commission dated June 28, 2005. Furthermore, EPC referred to the Chief Administrative Officer for review and recommendation a series of first phase recommendations of the Red Tape Commission.

- At its meeting of March 22, 2006, the Executive Policy Committee directed the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare and forward reports on all remaining recommendations of the Red Tape Commission, including Recommendation 2 namely:

  Recommendation 2
  Develop an organization-wide customer service mission. Take steps to infuse the customer service mission everywhere in City government.

  Avoid structures which imply that red tape reduction and better service is the responsibility of "some other department."

- In elaborating on the intent of the recommendation, the Final Report of the Red Tape Commission stated that "Recommendation 2 is designed to spread the focus of customer service improvement" across the organization.

- The intent of Recommendation 2 has been recognized by the CAO who established Citizen & Customer Focus as one of the five key core competencies for all City of Winnipeg Employees.

- Several civic departments have embraced the spirit of enhanced customer service delivery through the development of a number of initiatives.

- The key initiative associated with the development of a customer service mission across the organization will be the implementation of 311 which will serve as the customer service backbone of the organization and will introduce new customer service standards for the City of Winnipeg.

- One of the key outcomes associated with the implementation of 311 and the new service based budget is that the City will be positioned to produce more comprehensive service statistics and performance measures that are consistent with the Service-Stat model and promote accountability.

- The City of Winnipeg is dedicated to developing a Customer Service Mission as defined by the Citizen & Customer Focus core competency and that responds to the drivers of successful customer service as identified in the "Citizen First" initiative:

Knowledge	Staff was knowledgeable
Fairness	The customer was treated fairly
Extra-mile	Staff went the extra mile to assist the customer
Timeliness	The service was delivered in a timely fashion
Outcome	The customer got what they needed
Value	Something useful was received in exchange for a fee
Dependability	The service could be relied upon when required
Effectiveness	The service was done properly

- Guided by the Citizen & Customer Focus core competency and the drivers of successful customer service, an Administrative Directive relating to the Customer Service Mission will be issued in May 2007 to:
    - Respond to Council direction, as expressed through the adoption of the Report of the Red Tape Commission, that quality customer service become the mission of all employees;
    - Promote the City of Winnipeg's commitment to customer service excellence as reflected in Plan Winnipeg's 2020 Vision statement "To be a vibrant and healthy city which places its highest priority on quality of life for all its citizens."
    - Convey the City's commitment to providing quality customer service in the delivery of all public services.
    - Ensure that all employees are aware that providing quality customer service to external and internal customers is considered the key component in performing of their duties.
    - Provide protocols and standards for communicating with internal and external customers.

Implications of the Recommendation(s):

General Implications

( ) None

(**X**) For the organization overall and/or for other departments

(**X**) For the community and/or organizations external to the City

( ) Involves a multi-year contract

Comment(s): The development of an organization-wide customer service mission is intended to improve service delivery to the citizens of Winnipeg.

Policy Implications

( ) No

(**X**) Yes

Comment(s): Several enhanced customer service initiatives (such as 311) will require Council approval.

Regulatory Implications

() None

(X) Eliminates or reduces regulatory impact

( ) Proposes regulatory impact

Comment(s): The development of a Customer Service Mission is designed to streamline and enhance service delivery at the City of Winnipeg.

Environmental Implications

(X) No

() Yes

Comment(s):

Human Resources Implications

(**X**) No

() Yes

Comment(s): There are no immediate human resource implications associated with this report.

Financial Implications

(**X**) Within approved current and/or capital budget

( ) Current and/or capital budget adjustment required

Comment(s): There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Report

REASON FOR THE REPORT:

At its meeting of July 20, 2005, Executive Policy Committee received as information the Final Report of Mayor's Red Tape Commission dated June 28, 2005. Furthermore, EPC referred to the Chief Administrative Officer for review and recommendation a series of first phase recommendations of the Red Tape Commission.

At its meeting of March 22, 2006, the Executive Policy Committee directed the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare and forward reports on all remaining recommendations of the Red Tape Commission, including Recommendation 2 namely:

Recommendation 2
Develop an organization-wide customer service mission. Take steps to infuse the customer service mission everywhere in City government.

Avoid structures which imply that red tape reduction and better service is the responsibility of "some other department."

HISTORY:

On November 23, 2004, the Mayor officially established a Red Tape Commission to review City operations and regulations in order to improve customer service while granting administrators more freedom to innovate.

On June 28, 2005, the Red Tape Commission completed its work and submitted its final report containing 30 general recommendations with numerous more detailed recommendations beneath them.

DISCUSSION:

Building Public Confidence: Developing Service Standards

"Quality service," as the Report of the Red Tape Commission observed, "is the mission of every employee." Whether engaged in public service or private business, the success of any organization ultimately depends upon client (citizen or customer) satisfaction. Indeed, a government that cannot satisfy its citizenry will be no more successful than a business that cannot satisfy its customers and this most basic measure of success can often have significant political and financial consequences.

Though public service, by its very nature, implies a commitment to the well being of the community, the public sector - and local government in particular - has recently begun to develop customer service standards. In part, this is understandable. As a consultant's report (RBosch Consulting) on developing a "Customer Service Strategy" for the City of Oshawa observes, local governments deliver a wide variety of services and because their lines of business often have little in common, administrative departments generally work independently and develop different processes for service delivery. Moreover because public service is primarily a "not for profit" endeavour, the specific needs of individual citizens sometimes placed second to the legitimate need for local government to defend and promote the public interest - be it for public health or safety reasons - even if it took time to deliver the service or required extensive paperwork to complete.

Defending the public interest and ensuring high customer satisfaction are, however, no longer considered to be mutually exclusive. In fact, it has become a basic tenet of public service that the public interest is usually best served by the delivery of quality customer service. For example, by processing a building permit in an efficient and effective manner, local government will not only save the customer time and money, it will also safeguard the public interest (by maintaining building standards), contribute to economic development (by facilitating investment and expanding the tax base), and improve the community's quality of life (through the addition of a new building or the renovation of an existing one).

As the Red Tape Commission itself noted, considerable progress (or "good news" as the report calls it) has recently been made in enhancing customer service in several City departments. The City's own Customer Satisfaction surveys reinforce this point: in 2004 88% of those citizens surveyed expressed satisfaction with City services (which was up from 78% in 1998). Indeed, the Commission cited fire inspections, permits, e-government, and local improvements as just a few of the examples, among many which might have been chosen, to indicate that the "foundation for change [to enhance customer service] is already built."

Perhaps the best example of this strong foundation is the Planning, Property, and Development Department's (PPD) Permits X-Press system which the Red Tape Commission identified "as a City-best practice." Initiated in 2004 and to be phased in over a number of years, Permits X-Press sought to reduce red tape by instituting a number of customer service initiatives including separate customer service areas for homeowners and industry professionals, an appointment system for industry professionals, enhanced staffing during peak construction periods, an enhanced Web site, a better application process for commercial projects, improved application status updates and new payment options for registered contractors.

As the Red Tape Commission report observes the Permit X-Press story is instructive not only because it is an example of the City instituting meaningful customer service standards but that it was undertaken in consultation with the very customers the system

is intended to serve. A key element in this consultation process was the implementation of the Permits X-Press "Report Card" which tracks actions, target dates and implementation status of key initiatives. In addition to several immediate and medium term accomplishments, PPD recently confirmed that a number of long-term customer service enhancements had been made to Permits X-Press including:

- Enhanced professional knowledge of designers, builders and City staff regarding Building Codes and Standards;
- Implemented a series of training sessions on the building code in conjunction with industry, and delivered by Red River College;
- File Manager System (joint City and Industry recommendation)
- Better application process for commercial projects;
- Elimination of permit requirement for decks two feet and under;
- Elimination of permit requirement for temporary tents under 901 square feet;
- Increased threshold for the Building Permit Exemption for non-structural; alterations or repairs from $1,000 to $10,000;
- Implemented Fast Track Permits for electrical and plumbing permits;
- Implemented Fast Track Permit Pilot for Occupy Only.

As the foregoing suggests the key to the Permits X-Press program has not only been a commitment to enhanced customer service but also the utilization of the Permits X-Press Report Card to measure progress and ensure accountability.

A City of Winnipeg Core Competency: Citizen and Customer Focus

What the Red Tape Commission emphasized and what the City itself has learned – as the Permits X-Press example illustrates – is that there is a considerable return on investment for customer service enhancements. This is why, in January 2005, the CAO established Citizen and Customer Focus as one of the five core competencies for all City of Winnipeg employees. The Citizen and Customer Focus competency means that all employees of the City:

- Are dedicated to meeting the expectations and requirements of citizens, internal and external customers;
- Gets first-hand citizen/customer information and uses it for improvements in products and services;
- Acts with citizens/customers in mind;
- Establishes and maintains effective relationships with citizens/customers and gains their trust and respect.

As such, City employees are required to serve "in the best interests of the community" and that "we strive to meet [customer] needs and exceed their expectations."

The Citizen and Customer Focus competency is supported by training offered by Corporate Education. In addition to several courses offered to employees regarding basic customer service issues, Citizen and Customer Focus has also been integrated into the Leadership Learning Path for City managers. In the future, Corporate Education will be incorporating the Citizen and Customer Focus competency into the core path for

all employee educational and training programs. It should also be noted that the Citizen and Customer Focus competency, as well as other relevant competencies, are utilized in the hiring of all new City staff and that the CAO has, and will continue, to use these key core competencies when hiring Directors and senior managers.

Building a Customer Service Culture – Recent Examples

Guided by the Citizen and Customer Focus competency, several customer-centred initiatives have been developed since the Red Tape Commission reported, many of which are in response to recommendations made in the report. This report has already identified the tremendous strides made with respect to Permits X-Press but there are several other "big ticket" initiatives that have dramatically improved customer services. For example, at its meeting in May 2006, Council approved an Easy Pay policy which is designed to allow citizens "to conveniently pay any bills issued by the City of Winnipeg by cash, cheque, debit cards or credit cards." Similarly, the City has launched a "LeisureonLine" program to allow any citizen to register on-line for recreational, sporting, and cultural programs offered by the City.

Complementing these "big ticket" individual initiatives are more comprehensive departmental customer service programs that aim to provide "full service" information for all departmental customer services. A good example of this is the Water and Waste Department's Customer Service program that includes:

- Information sessions for overstrength wastewater customers, for wastewater haulers and applicable business customers;
- Notices distributed to customers on key neighbourhood issues (a water main break, sewer cleaning, or how to use AutoBins);
- Revising the sewer by-law in plain language;
- Easy to find information about drinking water, garbage, recycling, and landfill services;
- Public transparency and participation in departmental initiatives;
- Public education for customers on solid waste by-law requirements through direct contact;
- Customer Service Centre changes including an added voicemail option for customers, easy to remember email addresses, and dedicated customer service representatives for Francophone customers.
- A new water services protocol to minimize the impact on hospitals, personal care facilities, multi-family facilities, schools, office buildings and other multi-person facilities or services.
- A new water meter pilot project where inspectors exchange broken meters to avoid customers from having to make a second appointment.
- A Customer Accounts field appointment scheduler application which eliminates double booking of field staff and improves the level of customer service being offered.

Similarly the Property Assessment Department, through the implementation of an integrated Quality Management System, continues to focus on making improvements to systems and processes that support enhanced customer service. Under the Quality Management System, both internal and external data collection and monitoring, in addition to specific audits, will be used to support exception reporting that identifies the need for improvements. This information will be used to develop action items for improvement.

To emphasize the culture shift toward quality public service currently occurring across the organization, all future references to "the administration" will be replaced with "Winnipeg Public Service" or "public servants" as circumstances require in recognition of the shared role of regulator and facilitator employees have.

Building the Bridge: Towards an Organization-Wide Customer Service Mission

While each of these initiatives is characterized by a "service standard" they do not entirely bridge the departmental divide as envisioned by the Red Tape Commission. It is this notion of an organization-wide service standard that is at the root of the City's intention, pending further Council direction, to implement a 311 customer service model. The City currently has 22 customer service contact points across Winnipeg, each of which use a variety of approaches, methods and technologies when interacting with the public. One of the primary advantages of 311, apart from realizing an economy of scale by consolidating customer service units, is that it embraces the notion of an organization-wide customer service mission by standardizing the process by which the city receives, manages, and responds to citizen requests for information or service delivery. Through the introduction of protocols for customer greetings, call management, response times, recordkeeping, and complaint resolution every citizen will receive a standard response from the City that is characterized by a customer-centred approach to service delivery. Moreover, one of the key outcomes associated with the implementation of 311 and the new service based budget is that the City will be positioned to produce more comprehensive service statistics and performance measures that are consistent with the Service-Stat model and promote accountability.

Citizens First: The Drivers of Successful Public Service Customer Satisfaction

In 1998, an intergovernmental group of senior government officials established the Citizen-Centred Service Network (CCSN) to measure how citizens evaluated public services in Canada. The initial Citizen First survey found that there are five key factors that drive public service customer satisfaction:

Knowledge	Staff were knowledgeable
Fairness	The customer was treated fairly
Extra-mile	Staff went the extra mile to assist the customer
Timeliness	The service was delivered in a timely fashion
Outcome	In the end, the customer got what they needed

Since then, the Citizen First survey (the City was a participant in this initiative) has been updated three times, most recently in 2005, yet the five drivers for citizen satisfaction

have remained constant. The 2005 survey, however, offered insight into two areas of customer service of particular interest to local government: fee-based regulatory services (such as licenses and permits) and indirect "municipal" services (garbage collection, water and sewage treatment and roads maintenance). The Citizen First 4 survey indicated that for fee-based regulatory services - such as obtaining a license or a permit – the drivers remained the same but it was also clear that **Value** emerged as an additional factor to ensuring customer satisfaction. In this context, **Value** means that citizens wanted to be sure that they were receiving something useful in exchange for the fee for service. On the other hand, the two key drivers for indirect municipal services were **Dependability** (the citizen can count on the delivery of routine services be it garbage collection or snow removal) and **Effectiveness** (the citizen is satisfied that the service was done properly).

The City's Commitment to Customer Service

The City of Winnipeg is dedicated to developing a Customer Service Mission as defined by the Citizen & Customer Focus core competency and that responds to the drivers of successful customer service as identified in the "Citizen First" initiative: **Knowledge, Fairness, Extra-mile, Timeliness, Outcome, Value, Dependability,** and **Effectiveness**.

Guided by the Citizen & Customer Focus core competency and the drivers of successful customer service, an Administrative Directive relating to the Customer Service Mission will be issued in May 2007 that:

- Responds to Council direction, as expressed through the adoption of the Report of the Red Tape Commission, that quality customer service become the mission of all employees;
- Promotes the City of Winnipeg's commitment to customer service excellence as reflected in Plan Winnipeg's 2020 Vision statement "To be a vibrant and healthy city which places its highest priority on quality of life for all its citizens."
- Conveys the City's commitment to providing quality customer service in the delivery of all public services.
- Ensures that all employees are aware that providing quality customer service to external and internal customers is considered the key component in performing of their duties.
- Provides protocols and standards for communicating with customers.

As noted, the Administrative Directive will include protocols for all employees for communicating with internal and external customers. With the implementation of 311, these protocols will be updated and refined but the guiding principles associated with the Citizen & Customer Focus core competency and the drivers of successful customer will remain the same.

Financial Impact Statement — Date: May 3, 2007

Project Name: Customer Service Mission **First Year of Program** 2007

	0	1	2	3	4
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants (Enter Description Here)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Other - Enter Description Here	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	-	-	-	-	-
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	-	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Additional Comments: There are no immediate financial impacts related to this report.

original signed by
Manager of Finance & Administration

IN PREPARING THIS REPORT THERE WAS:

Internal Consultation With and Concurrence By:
Corporate Services
Water and Waste Department
Planning, Property and Development
Property Assessment
Public Works
CIT

External Consultation With:

THIS REPORT SUBMITTED BY:

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File No.