

# Customer Service Review

Final Report

June 27, 2022

# Background

- November 2020 Service Delivery Review Final report resulted in a mid-term refresh of the strategic plan
- Priorities were identified
- Align Council's Vision and priorities
- Customer Service - #1 priority
- Customer Service Review initiated in January 2022

## Priorities:

- Customer Service: Training, Technology, Staff, Review Standards/Level of service
- Housing: Affordability (lot sizes, developer incentives, second dwellings, density, etc.)
- Greenhouse: lights & dark sky, odours (site plan compliance, bylaws, other tools)
- Programming Increase: Youth and Seniors
- A development plan for Downtown Kingsville / Main Street

# Purpose of the Customer Service Review

The objective of the customer review was to obtain feedback regarding customer service, explore opportunities, and make recommendations for improvements.

# Outline

- Purpose and process
- Overview of Data sources
- CS Review questions
- Findings
- Observations
- Recommendations
- Customer Service Standards



# Customer Service Review Process

- 1) **Project Initiation**: Clarify expectations and develop a work plan.
- 2) **Customer Service Staff Committee**: Representation from all five departments and levels - biweekly meetings.
- 3) **Meetings with Mayor & Council**: gain input through one-on-one feedback.
- 4) **Staff Engagement Survey**: Online survey to identify strengths and areas of improvement.
- 5) **Community Survey**: Online survey to identify strengths and areas of improvement.
- 6) **Environmental Scan**: 2020 Service Review; benchmark Town services and approach against comparators; focus groups with key stakeholders:
- 7) **Customer Service Standards**: Create standards that support efficient and operationally effective approach.
- 8) **Final Report & Presentation**: Develop and present a final report with recommendations on the Town's customer service model to Council.

# Customer Service Committee

- Janice Forsyth, Consultant
- Rob Frias
- Jeromy Garant
- Patrick Girard, Vice Chair
- Tara Hewitt
- John Norton, CAO, Committee Liaison
- Paula Parker, Chair
- Andrew Plancke
- Vicky Sawatsky
- Adam Sellon
- Jennifer Settingington, Secretary
- Kelly Wolters

# Overview of Data Sources

Source	Number	Number of Participants
Municipality Interviews	8	8
Town Councillor Interviews	7	7
Focus Groups	7	25
Community Engagement Survey	83% live in Kingsville; with 55% > 16 years; F/T & retired	174
Staff Engagement Survey	51% < 5 yrs; majority FT permanent	41
Town Hall	110	70
Total		325

# Review Questions

- What is working well (strengths)?
- What is not working (areas of improvement)?
- What are the service standards that will guide us to improvement?



# Municipal Comparators

## Department Based

- Amherstburg
- LaSalle
- Pelham
- Wasaga Beach

## Centralized

- Tillsonburg
- Tecumseh
- City of Windsor \*
- Cobourg

\* Has written Customer Service Standards

# Municipal Comparators

## Strengths

- Small enough to answer phone and provide service
- Timely
- Customer first
- Onboarding process
- Well trained staff
- Single service counter

## Challenges

- Silos
- Lack of consistency
- Need for modernization
- Multiple buildings
- Older demographic
- Managing expectations

# What is your opinion of the Town?

**Survey** = 66% VPositive/Pos; 17% Neutral; 17% Negative/Vneg

**Focus groups** = about the same with a mix of positive and negative comments:

- Town Hall very positive experience very helpful; Lions Park – supportive of developing playground; fundraising – positive support
- Frustrated due to inconsistent service and rules for inspections (up to two days); good relationship with some staff but is inconsistent
- Poor communication at all levels
- Lots of red tape – things are slow; new business development can be slow; get ball rolling sooner

# Think of the last time you interacted with the Town of Kingsville. What was your experience like?

**Community** = Ext/Very Helpful 41%; somewhat 26%; Not so/not 25%

**Staff** = Ext/Very Helpful 78%; somewhat 17%; Not so/not 5%

## **Focus groups**

- Positive
  - work done through Kingsvilleworks has been positive; Mayor and Councillors very approachable and helpful; very available; opportunities for engagement
  - dialogue is open and constant; friendly and quick to respond
- Negative
  - poor communication; not getting adequate service from staff contact; staff admitting they don't have the knowledge and background; not very professional
  - weeks to get a response and lack of follow through; incorrect information and defensive responses; lack of coordination between departments

# Staff Survey

	<b>Extremely/Very</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Not so much/at all</b>
Empowered	61%	29%	9%
Capable	70%	17%	2%
Responsive	73%	24%	2%
Support from Management	54%	24%	22%
Suggest ideas	51%	29%	20%
Info needed	50%	28%	22%



# Roadblocks – Staff Perspective

## #1 Staff Resources

- Heavy workload
- Multiple priorities
- Lack of training

## #2 Communication

- Waiting on someone else
- Not being notified of changes

## #3 Equipment

- Outdated technology



**“Good customer service takes time. We need to have the staff hours available to listen and respond to residents.”**



In your opinion, is there a clear understanding of how customer service supports the strategic direction of the Town?

Yes = 12 responses (29%)

No = 19 responses (46%)

Not sure/somewhat = 11 responses (25%)

**“Not really, customers seem to be treated as the enemy in many circumstances, even though they are the only reason we exist. “**



# Combined – doing well

Question	Community	Staff	Average
Treating community members with dignity and respect	51%	78%	65%
Providing accessible services for all customers	47%	59%	53%
Providing consistent customer service while complying with policies, by-laws and regulations.	32%	49%	41%
Responding to telephone correspondence in a timely manner e.g. 2 days	34%	42%	38%
Providing service in the most cost-effective and timely manner possible.	24%	39%	32%
Responding to written correspondence in a timely manner e.g. 3 days	24%	37%	31%



# Combined – needs improvement

Question	Community	Staff	Average
Provide more consistent customer service while complying with policies, by-laws and regulations.	42%	61%	52%
Providing service in a more cost-effective and timely manner	46%	56%	51%
Respond to telephone correspondence in a more timely manner	22%	54%	49%
Respond to written correspondence in a more timely manner	23%	46%	35%
Providing additional accessible services for all customers	26%	27%	27%
Treating community members with more dignity and respect	28%	20%	24%

# Observations

- Directors within the organization are often tasked with investigating customer inquiries/concerns
- Lack of understanding of and training in customer service
- No formal cross training between municipal service areas
- Inconsistent use of the Kingsvilleworks software
- Inconsistent response times
- Limited ability to track customer interactions
- Inconsistent level of communication across departments
- The CAO has two jobs – the CAO and a Director position with direct reports

# Recommendations

## **1. Maximize the customer service experience.**

- a. Seek Town Council endorsement for Customer Service Standards.
- b. Implement a reporting cadence, at a frequency determined by Council, to report customer service data.
- c. Develop individualized departmental benchmarks that align with the approved customer service standards.
- d. Update policies and procedures to support the Customer Service Standards.
- e. Create accountability criteria for the delivery of excellent customer service on performance appraisals for staff at all levels.

# Recommendations

## 2. Centralize customer service.

- a. Create a Manager of Customer Service position with responsibility for all customer service representatives within the organization. This position should report to a Director\* and be accountable for customer service delivery throughout the organization.
- b. Develop an implementation plan with a focus on:
  - reviewing staff resources in all high-volume departments with consideration to additional positions;
  - reviewing opportunities to have inquiries that are reported to elected officials follow a more effective business process, e.g., the Manager of Customer Service. (rather than being forwarded to the CAO and/or Directors);
  - implementing recommendations from the Customer Service Review.

# Recommendations

## **3. Create a seamless, multi-channel, communication system.**

- a. Implement a marketing campaign internally and externally to promote the Customer Service Standards.
- b. Purchase an intranet to enhance internal communication, ensure consistency and promote knowledge sharing.
- c. Improve communication between front line and management to ensure timely and consistent responses.
- d. Create a policy and procedures regarding inappropriate, abusive or offensive behaviour from customers including how to manage unacceptable behaviour.
- e. Review opportunities to automate forms to ensure consistency regarding online payments, online fillable forms and the ability to submit electronically.

# Recommendations

## **4. Establish a formalized orientation and training program.**

- a. Develop an onboarding system for new staff with a customer service lens.
- b. Provide formalized customer service training throughout employment.
- c. Establish cross training on departmental programs and services, the website and KingsvilleWorks software.
- d. Train staff on how to manage unacceptable (inappropriate, abusive or offensive) behaviour from customers.

# Recommendations

5. Update systems and technology to support the delivery of high-level customer service.
  - a. Update the GIS system.
  - b. Review equipment needs and budget for new purchases.
  - c. Implement Kingsvilleworks in the departments not currently using it.
  - d. Implement appropriate technology to track customer interactions for various channels, such as, telephone, website, email, etc.

# Customer Service Standards

We believe that customer service is everyone's responsibility and must be provided in an environment where mutual respect and knowledge connect to create an optimal customer service experience. Great customer service is about facilitating timely, attentive, assistance to everyone who interacts with the Town of Kingsville. We have developed the following standards to provide excellent service for each and every customer:



1. We will treat you in a professional and respectful manner.
2. We will treat you fairly while complying with all our policies, by-laws and regulations.
3. We will provide service in a responsible, efficient and timely manner.
4. We will acknowledge receipt of your correspondence within 3 business days.
5. We will ensure our services are accessible for all of our customers.
6. We will identify ourselves to you by using our first name and position title (where applicable).