



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Toronto Fire Services – 2015 to 2019 Master Fire Plan

Date:	February 27, 2015
To:	Community Development and Recreation Committee
From:	Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	p:\2015\ClusterB\FIR\cd150004

SUMMARY

The Toronto Fire Services (TFS) 2015-2019 Master Fire Plan supports the Division's ongoing efforts to increase fire safety and fire prevention through education and prevention mechanisms and to provide high quality, efficient, and effective emergency response such that life safety outcomes are improved for all residents across the city.

The Master Fire Plan provides strategic direction for TFS and outlines the critical initiatives that TFS will implement over the next five years in order to achieve its strategic objectives. The strategic objectives include keeping communities safe, empowering people, strengthening partnerships and improving performance.

The Master Fire Plan addresses a number of major issues which form the basis of the work to be carried out over the five year term of the plan. This includes technological improvements, accreditation through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) as well as a number of service priorities such as vertical growth, densification and congestion, diversity, fiscal sustainability, and the importance of fire prevention and public education.

Guiding divisional priorities and investments over the next five years and beyond, the Master Fire Plan is intended to align TFS service and priorities in preparation for the accreditation process and to prepare TFS for a commitment to continuous improvement. The Plan will act as the foundation and transition document to support TFS' upcoming application for accreditation through the CFAI.

RECOMMENDATION

The Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services recommends that:

1. City Council adopt the Master Fire Plan 2015-2019.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications associated with the adoption of this report. Any financial implications associated with the implementation of the Master Fire Plan will be considered through separate reporting to the Community Development and Recreation Committee, or considered as part of future-year Capital and Operating Budget processes.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

The Master Fire Plan 2007 was adopted by City Council on June 19, 2007.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/cc/decisions/2007-06-19-cc10-dd.pdf>

An update on the implementation status of the Master Fire Plan was considered by the Community Development and Recreation Committee in May 2011.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2011.CD4.1>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Toronto Fire Services (TFS) Master Fire Plan 2007 was developed to serve as a strategic planning framework to guide policy, organizational, capital and operational decisions over a five year period. During the course of the five year plan, TFS made considerable progress in commencing and delivering many of the recommendations contained in the Master Fire Plan. The rehabilitation, replacement and construction of a number of fire halls was commenced, a number of key communications projects were initiated and recommendations contained in the 2006 Auditor General's Operational Review were successfully implemented.

In 2011, TFS provided a report on the implementation status of the Master Fire Plan, including an overview of items to be considered in the new Master Fire Plan.

The development and delivery of the new Master Fire Plan was intentionally delayed to 2015 to be able to consider and incorporate the research and recommendations brought forward by third party organizations (including the 2013 Fire Underwriters Survey, the 2013 POMAX Efficiency Study, and the 2013 Auditor General's Report on Recruitment and Training).

COMMENTS

The Toronto Fire Services 2015-2019 Master Fire Plan supports the Division's ongoing efforts to increase fire safety and fire prevention through education and prevention mechanisms and to provide high quality, efficient, and effective emergency response such that life safety outcomes are improved for all residents across the city.

This Master Fire Plan provides strategic direction for TFS and outlines the critical initiatives that TFS will implement over the next five years in order to achieve its strategic objectives. The strategic objectives include:

- Keeping our communities safe – This includes the development and implementation of fire safety programs and initiatives, the development of proactive risk mitigation awareness through enhanced prevention, investigation, and enforcement strategies and the continuous efforts to improve service response times.
- Empowering our people – This includes attracting and selecting the most qualified candidates and the empowerment of staff through relevant training and ongoing staff development. This objective also focuses on building an inclusive and diverse workforce that is reflective of the communities it serves, improving administrative processes that support staff and their needs, and creating a staffing pipeline that enables the Division to effectively achieve its objectives.
- Strengthening our partnerships – TFS is committed to strengthening relationships with external and internal partners and work to identify new collaborative opportunities.
- Improving our performance – This lends to TFS' commitment to monitor, benchmark, and evaluate performance to ensure the delivery of services is aligned with the needs of the residents of Toronto. This also includes improving service delivery by leveraging research and technology.

Several critical elements have directly informed the development of the Master Fire Plan in addition to carry forward items from the 2007 Master Fire Plan. These include recommendations put forward by the *Core Service Review*; *Service and Organizational Review of Toronto EMS and Toronto Fire Services*; the *Auditor General's Report on Training and Recruitment*; and the *Fire Underwriters Survey*. TFS also considered the City's Strategic Action Plan for 2013-2018, the TFS Strategic Plan 2013-2018 and the recommendations resulting from the TFS *A Path to Diversity* Report. Other key considerations include legislation, regulations, and industry standards, consultations with public, staff, other City Divisions, and other fire services.

The Master Fire Plan addresses a number of major issues which form the basis of the work to be carried out over the five year term of the plan.

1. Technological Improvements

TFS is in the process of implementing a number of critical technological changes that have the potential to alter the way in which resources are utilized in the future. Current projects including the implementation of a new radio system in conjunction with Toronto Police Service and Toronto Paramedic Services includes the replacement of the current Fire Station Alerting System. In addition, two new software packages are currently being implemented, to allow both predictive modelling and dynamic staging.

TFS is continuing to develop its own in-house GIS capacity for real-time mapping, and to enhance potential collaborations with other City Divisions, such as City Planning. TFS is also continuing to utilize and build on existing business intelligence software to better analyze historical data and improve future resource allocations for a more efficient service. Future projects include partnering with other City Divisions including Transportation Services, Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), Toronto Paramedic Services, and Toronto Police Service on the development of a traffic pre-emption system to improve emergency vehicle response times.

2. CFAI Accreditation

TFS will be implementing a total quality improvement process, as recommended in the *Service and Organizational Review of Toronto Emergency Medical Services and Toronto Fire Services*, and approved by City Council on July 16, 2013. The Master Fire Plan has been built to provide a stepping stone from previous planning processes to accreditation. The Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) administers a program, which enables emergency response providers to set goals, develop strategic action plans and continuously evaluate and improve services provided to the public.

3. Interim Service Priorities

While TFS continues with the development of the major initiatives outlined above, there are a number of priorities that must be addressed to ensure ongoing efficient and effective service:

- Vertical Growth: The proliferation of high-rise developments increases the need for re-assessing overall placement of stations and firefighting apparatus (trucks) due to the impact of vertical response times. Vertical growth can result in extended response times as firefighters require extra travel time to get to the location of the emergency incident. Vertical response issues can be tempered somewhat through recent changes to the Building Code requiring sprinklers in new multiple unit residential buildings over three storeys (since 2010), although a significant stock of older buildings exist in the city with no retrofit requirements.
- Densification and Congestion: Emergency response travel times have been impacted by the increasing amounts of traffic and congestion in the city and this will only be heightened as the city continues to grow and develop. Some of the planned technology projects may assist with these pressures, while in some cases new models for meeting service needs may be required.

- Diversity: Increasing diversity in the city provides challenges for meeting needs with respect to fire prevention and public education efforts, which must increasingly be offered in many languages and forms to ensure messages are transmitted in a way that resonates with residents. In addition, increasing diversity in the city provides opportunities to improve recruitment practices to attract a workforce that reflects the diversity of the city.
- Service Challenges: Despite ongoing fiscal uncertainty and budget challenges, TFS is committed to optimizing available financial resources to deliver services in the safest, most effective and efficient manner possible. A critical challenge for TFS to ensure that all trucks remain in service at all times because of decreases in staffing levels due to unanticipated retirements, vacancies, and scheduled and unscheduled absences. TFS is working towards solutions that ensure that all trucks remain on the road and in service.
- Importance of Fire Prevention and Public Education: The *Fire Prevention Division* undertakes inspections to enforce the Fire Code. The *Public Education Division* educates the public about potential fire hazards and fire regulations. These activities have been identified by the Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal and Emergency Management as the first two lines of defense, where fire response (suppression) is the last line of defence when education and prevention fails. TFS continues to be proactive in providing residents with fire safety education and prevention programs and campaigns that align with their needs.
- Succession Planning: The workforce at TFS is aging with 35.8% of the total workforce eligible to retire by 2018, which highlights a need for effective succession planning. This is particularly significant when considering officer ranks. The development of a robust mentorship and succession planning program is required in the short-term.

Once approved, the Plan will help to guide divisional priorities and investments over the next five years. The Master Fire Plan is also meant to act as the foundation and transition document for TFS as it embarks on its upcoming application for accreditation through the CFAI. The accreditation process and commitment to continuous improvement will support TFS in achieving its objectives over the next five years and beyond.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – 2015-2019 Master Fire Plan