



2024 to 2026 Issue Paper

Payroll Supervisor

Purpose

The purpose of this issue paper is to present the need to create a Payroll Supervisor position within the Human Resources/Payroll Department, that will be responsible for the direct supervision of the payroll staff and GPL scheduling staff ensuring compliance with all applicable legislation and collective agreement provisions.

Background

Northumberland County's payroll is responsible for the end-to-end process of preparing and processing payrolls from timesheets to T4's for 687 employees while interpreting and complying with government regulations, CRA, Pension Act. County policies, and collective agreements. Weekly, monthly, and annual reconciling of general ledger accounts, benefit accounts, OMERS administration, statutory remittances, and all other payroll withholdings are processed in a timely manner.

In 2004 there was 1 payroll coordinator who was responsible for processing payroll, administering pension, benefits and all government reporting for 421 (310 FTE's) employees bi-weekly. A second payroll coordinator was hired due to the addition of Land Ambulance, Provincial Offences, Social Housing, Land Use Planning, and Waste Management as well as additional employees hired in finance and IT, to support these new departments. Since 2004 staffing levels have increased from 421 (310 FTE's) to 687 (494 FTE's) while the payroll staffing has remained the same.

These additional services delivered by the County have also increased the salary and benefit information included in various Ministry reports to ensure that operating departments continue to receive their current level of funding or have accurate data to apply for new funding.

Ministry reporting requirements has increased significantly with more accountabilities being placed on the recipients of the funding to verify how and where the funding was used and, in some cases, requires copies of paystubs, bank deposits etc.



There are monthly, quarterly and annual reports completed by payroll staff for the various ministries to provide verifiable payroll information to support funding that has been received and to also ensure ongoing funding. Any funding received for positions must be substantiated by payroll staff through one or more ministry reporting mechanisms. E.g., Paramedics salaries and benefits are subsidized 50% by the Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care and reports verifying this information is provided by payroll staff.

The payroll coordinators manage and maintain 15 benefit plans including activating and inactivating employees, processing monthly invoices, and preparing annual pension reports and balancing all expenses and payments to the general ledgers. Ensuring accurate information and timely updates to managers and supervisors for employee status changes, seniority lists, and ensuring sick time is monitored for qualifying staff, as well as other information required for the adjudication of WSIB, STD and LTD claims.

Working closely with the finance department the payroll department provides accurate and timely information to the finance department including bi-weekly general ledger postings created through the payroll process and any adjustments that may affect the financial statements including journal entries required to revise previous entries including month end and year end information for the departmental operating statements.

The payroll team is instrumental in completing salary and benefit information for several Ministries on a quarterly and annual basis to support the funding that has been or will be received by the County. The past few years the data that is required to support the Counties current funding has become more complex. The continuous legislative changes to the reporting information for current or future funding has become more in-depth and has a direct impact on monies the County receives to subsidize salaries and wages throughout several departments.

There have been 2 full time Payroll/Benefits Coordinators within the Human Resources and Payroll department since 2004 who carry out the payroll processing for 600+ employees. The regular bi-weekly payroll process and reporting has become more complex due to legislation, Ministry reporting requirements and the tight timelines to meet the deadlines.

In late 2019 the payroll department implemented a new HRIS system which is also used for payroll processing. This system requires that in-house staff program the system based on needs, legislation, collective agreements and county policies. This requires payroll staff to understand the entire payroll database so that they can upgrade, add, remove or revise any pay codes, benefits, benefit calculations, union dues etc.

The payroll supervisor would be the compliance expert and ensure that CRA, Pension Act, County policies, and 6 Collective Agreements are followed reducing the risk of



costly penalties, legal issues or union grievances. The payroll supervisor position would also be responsible for the direct supervision of the payroll team, in the planning, development, operation and maintenance of the payroll system and all related functions. This position would also be responsible for identifying cost saving opportunities, such as optimizing payroll processes or identifying potential overpayments, ultimately saving the County money.

The payroll supervisor would also be responsible for overseeing day-to-day payroll operations, such as processing employee payments, calculating taxes and managing benefits. This will allow the manager to focus on the more strategic aspects of the role. The payroll supervisor will be the subject matter expert and handle complex payroll issues and discrepancies freeing up the manager from dealing with time-consuming problem-solving tasks.

Reporting will become a significant part of the payroll supervisor's role including generating detailed reports, for government agencies, managers and collective bargaining. Costing for new funding or new positions as well as various ad hoc reports as requested by managers for budgeting or funding applications.

Compiling the salary and benefit budget for all departments annually (\$57M) will be a key responsibility of the payroll manager as well as ongoing monitoring of the budget to ensure salaries and benefits are being expensed appropriately.

Assisting managers with the analysis of salary and benefit costs will provide the data required for managers to make strong strategic decisions related to staffing.

Gaining efficiencies can lead to more efficient payroll processing resulting in time savings for human resources and payroll staff allowing them to focus on other value-added tasks which can improve overall productivity.

Payroll supervisors often have expertise in identifying cost saving opportunities within the payroll process. They can streamline procedures, reduce overpayments, and provide valuable data required for decision making and funding applications.

Consultation/Options

Review of comparator information through the Ontario Municipal Human Resources Association.

Financial Impact

2024 – \$125,600 inclusive of benefits



2025 – \$125,600 inclusive of benefits

2026 – \$125,600 inclusive of benefits

Risk Considerations

The current blended position of Human Resources/Payroll manager will be difficult to fill when requiring the position to be a subject matter expert in both payroll compliance and human resources compliance. Additionally, the excessive workload of the combined payroll and human resources functions does not afford the Manager the time to focus on strategic priorities.

The position is critical to ensure that the bi-weekly processing of payroll for 687 (494 FTE's) employees is accurate and in compliance with Provincial and Federal regulations as well as internal policy and 6 collective agreements.

The 2 Payroll/Benefit Coordinators are currently at capacity which can increase the risk of errors. Payroll tasks are split between the two coordinators with 5 payrolls processed bi-weekly. There are many other duties including, balancing and paying deductions such as Income Tax, CPP, EI, Union Dues, 15 benefit plans, OMERS, EHT, Maternity and Parental Leave Top-ups, Garnishments, and PWE reporting and without a dedicated payroll supervisor there is a risk of non-compliance with Provincial and Federal complex regulations and tax laws as well as reviewing and balancing all payments made to ensure accuracy. These tasks are currently performed by the Human Resources/Payroll Manager.

All funding application for salaries and benefits are currently completed by the Human Resources/Payroll Manager and would be better suited to the Payroll Supervisor position who would be the subject matter expert on payroll related costings and reporting.

All Ministry reporting to verify how funding was used is completed by the 2 Payroll Benefits Coordinators and this task would be more suited to the Payroll Supervisor who could analyse this data to ensure we are receiving the maximum funding allowable under each funding envelope.

The payroll supervisor will closely work with the various schedulers to ensure that information submitted is accurate and in compliance with labour and pension legislation as well as collective agreements and policy. Regular audits and reviews of the scheduling and payroll process can help identify and rectify errors before they become major issues. Additionally, providing ongoing training to scheduling and payroll staff can enhance their skills and reduce the likelihood of errors.



Impacts to Member Municipalities/Partners

There is no direct impact to the member municipalities.
The position will collaborate with municipal partners through various working groups.

Included in 2023 Long Term Plan: YES/NO

No

Increased staffing levels and additional Ministry reporting has indicated the need for a Supervisory position to manage the day-to-day payroll processing and all reporting requirements to ensure that the county continues to receive the maximum funding available through the various ministries.

Hiring a Payroll Supervisor will enhance, compliance, accuracy and efficiency while potentially reducing costs and risks.



2024 to 2026 Issue Paper

Occupational Health Services

Purpose

The purpose of this issue paper is to present the need for an increase in the County's Occupational Health Services.

Background

The Corporation of the County of Northumberland has contracted with Walsh and Associates Occupational Health and Safety Services Ltd. since 2008, when Occupational Health Services was added to the Organizational Chart (1 FTE). Walsh and Associates assists with employee disability case management and health promotion. The service includes an occupational health physician, an occupational health nurse and an occupational therapist. The goal of health promotion and disability case management is to assist an employee to stay at work or assist with early and safe return to work following a work or non-work-related injury, illness or disability. The process includes early intervention and assistance to stay or return to work with an appropriate return to work plan based on medical information and restrictions and limitations received. This process enables employees to return to work safely and within their abilities.

One important reason for using Walsh and Associates is to maintain medical information in a confidential manner away from the employer. Walsh and Associates requests and maintains the medical information; the County does not have access to the employee medical information. The County receives functional ability information only to implement a modified work plan or permanent accommodation with the employee and supervisor. Occupational Health Services evaluates and manages occupational and non-occupational absences and ensures the absences are supported by objective medical information, providing a consistent process of absence, modified work and accommodation management.

Since 2008, Occupational Health Services hours have remained consistent:

- Occupational Health Nurse - 28 hours per week
- Occupational Health Physician - 2 hours per week

In 2022, an Occupational Therapist with Mental Health expertise was added to the Occupational Health Services program to provide cognitive health support at 6 hours



per week. This program has been incredibly well received by staff, particularly following COVID and the service has been expanded to 24 hours per month.

Consultation/Options

The Health, Safety, Emergency Planning Department reviewed data from 2009 to 2022 including health and safety incident reporting, Occupational Health Services statistics, total head count of employees and the results of the How Are You Doing? survey completed in the first quarter of 2023 by Northumberland County's Wellbeing Committee. Consultation also included Walsh and Associates.

Disability case management and early, safe return to work programs have been shown to greatly benefit the recovery of an injured or ill employee. These programs help the employee maintain income and benefits, retain employment and job skills and maintain self-esteem, family stability and social ties. The program also helps to maintain a positive and supportive connection between the employer and the injured or ill employee.¹

The data indicates there has been a 35% increase in the total number of employees and a 52% increase in disability case management since 2009. Despite these increases, Occupational Health Services hours have remained the same since the inception of the program. In order to continue to effectively manage the case load, proactive elements of the Occupational Health Service, such as health promotion, have decreased.

Staff are experiencing increased mental health related illnesses. Over 50% of staff who responded to the How Are You Doing? survey indicated that they are experiencing exhaustion, burnout and new or increased stress levels and over 40% indicated that they are experiencing a negative impact on their wellbeing and new or increased anxiety. The majority of the survey respondents are aware of the supports the County offers, including the Employee and Family Assistance Program, Occupational Health Services, WorkPerks and the Wellbeing Committee initiatives.

In consultation with Walsh and Associates, it is recommended the County increase the Occupational Health Nurse hours from 28 hours per week to 44 hours per week.

Financial Impact

Financial impact:

2024 – \$62,575

2025 – \$65,078

2026 – \$67,681

¹ Ontario Occupational Health Nurses Association



Providing a comprehensive Occupational Health Services program results in savings to the County by reducing employee turnover and lost time, reducing hiring and training costs and increasing employee morale and productivity.¹

Risk Considerations

A major responsibility of the Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Department is to support the people resources of the operational departments. Occupational Health Services and disability case management is a significant component of assisting employees to stay at work or return to work early and safely.

Maintaining the same level of Occupational Health Services is no longer manageable. The number of County employees has increased steadily since 2008. Mental health illnesses continue to rise, requiring increases to supports for staff.

Maintaining the same number of hours of Occupational Health Services presents risks of longer staff absences, increased turnover of staff due to burn out and fatigue, increased financial costs to the County including increased WSIB, STD and backfill costs.

Walsh and Associates has continued to manage the increasing disability cases by decreasing the provision of health promotion services. Review of the data indicates we need to increase capacity in our Occupational Health Service to continue to manage disability cases effectively. The service increase will ensure we continue to effectively manage disability cases and support our staff in early and safe return to work while allowing for renewed health promotion activities, proactively contributing to healthier and more resilient employees and aligns with Northumberland County's values Care and Support, Collaboration and Communication.

Impacts to Member Municipalities/Partners

There are no impacts to member municipalities. One member municipality has expressed interest in utilizing the County's third-party resource, Occupational Health Services.

Included in 2023 Long Term Plan: YES/NO

No.



2024 to 2026 Issue Paper

Trail Repair & Maintenance

Purpose

To reduce County risk and liability, ensure users safety, maintain the recreational trail to County standards and to ensure short and long-term maintenance of the trail. Staff are seeking an increase in the levy to cover trail repair and maintenance.

Background

Northumberland County Forest is a 2,235 hectares (5,524 acres) forest that provides users with ecological services, forestry resources, and recreational opportunities to residents of the County and beyond. The Forest has over 100, 000 users annually and numbers have been increasing. The County maintains five parking lots that are open all year round. Currently, there are 121 km of multi-use recreational trails including and maintenance trails.

In 2009, the County examined trail use in the Forest, bringing together user groups and establishing trail rules. Since then, the County has created trail and signage standards for and continues to follow best practices and high standards managing the County Forest.

The Northumberland County Forest contains important natural and non-natural assets.

The Forest is located on the Oak Ridges Moraine and regulated provincially by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. In addition to the tangible resources such as recreation, hunting and timber harvesting provided by the Northumberland County Forest, other ecosystem goods and services such as:

- Mental and physical health
- Tourism and economic spin offs
- Renewable resources
- Soil stabilization
- Water filtration and storage
- Cultural history conservation



- Air purification
- Carbon sequestration
- Unique habitats and species
- Beneficial insects and wildlife (e.g., crop and forest protection and pollination)
- Scenic vistas
- Local climate moderation
- Intrinsic value (value of the existence of forested land)

Staff also manage signage and trailside vegetation to NCF standards. Vegetation is regularly cut to ensure sight lines and to remove vegetation in the trail area, reducing poison ivy, tick areas and safety concerns.

Since Covid, the use of the trails has increased for all users. These include local users but also users from Central Ontario and beyond and many first-time users are visiting the Forest. The size of machines has increased with larger and more powerful ATV's and larger side by sides. This increase in size, power, weight, and number of users necessitates the increased frequency and amount of repairs and maintenance.

With increasing motorized use, severity of storms/climate change, erosion and damage, the budget is not matching the costs to maintain to standards. Most of these areas are associated with motorized use and Forest trails were not designed for the level of use there are currently getting.

Asset trail repair been identified in the Council approved Forest Management Plan.

The County Forest use bylaw identifies following motorized users are permitted and the County has use agreements with these groups:

- Parent organization Ontario Federation of ATV (OFATV) with local group, Northumberland and District ATV Riders (NDATV)
- Parent organization Ontario Federation of Trail Riders (OFTR) with local group Northumberland Trail Riders (NTR)
- Parent organization, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Riders (OFSC), with local group Great Pine Ridge Snowmobile Association (GPRSC)

ATV's and side by sides are currently allowed on Township roads and NTR owns 100 acres east of the Forest.

Fees charged by the groups per person vary from \$65 per year for NTR (376 members) to \$137 per year by NDATV (over 800 members), to \$270 per year by GPRSA (140 members). Some groups have early bird prices. NDATV has provided a donation of 4K in the last years. Some



groups receive money from the sale of passes from parent organization for trail repair, trail and trail side management, signage and enforcement in their area. This can be up to 75% of the cost of the pass amounts.

NCF doesn't receive funds for the licensed use of the trails from the groups.

Staff (County Grant writer and Natural Heritage Manager) have applied for grants with licensed groups for repair and maintenance. To date in total, \$17,000 has been provided in 2022 by the OFSC and 12,000 in 2022 by OFATV through grant applications by County staff.

Emergency trail repair reserve is currently at \$92,000. \$50,000 to be used in 2024.

Consultation/Options

Consultations have taken place through surveys with the public, in field public discussions and discussions with the Forest Advisory Committee. Trail use and maintenance and options have been discussed in previous Forest Service strategy documents and Forest Management Plan.

An increase in motorized use and size and power of machines, and climate change impacts, including intense short-term rains, freeze and thaw in winter have increasing cost implications.

Without an increase in funds to address these issues, trails will have to be closed.

Options going forward include the following:

1. Use reserve to address highest priority issues – The reserve is used for emergency and will be used in 2024 to cover some of the cost associated with increased repair and long-term maintenance costs. This will reduce the reserve significantly and there is not enough in the reserve to cover increasing future expenses.
2. Increase levy amount to address issues with trail impacts mainly associated with motorized use of the trails – Generally the cost for repair and maintenance of the trails are to address motorized use of the trails. With increasing costs for aggregate, diesel, and rental or contractors, this is above budget.
3. Require motorized licence agreement groups to provide funds to NCF for the maintenance and repair of the motorized trails. Most of the work associated with trail repair and maintenance is due to motorized use. These funds could be an amount per permit sold and ideally would be noted in future agreements with the groups.



4. Reduce the number of motorized trails, thereby reducing costs of maintenance and impacts to wildlife. A focused trail, i.e. Dunbar, would focus ecological and users impacts, on a limited area, reduce trail costs and impacts, and allow connectivity for motorized users.
5. Develop a pass system directly with NC for the NCF, much like the Ganaraska Forest has. Money from the sale of passes would provide funds for maintenance of the trail. The amount of money received from this system would depend on the costs to set up this system, and the number of users that purchase a pass.
6. Remove motorized use from the Forest, thereby, significantly reducing the maintenance, risk, and liability and costs for the County. Many Community Forests and Ontario Parks do not have motorized use in their parks.

Staff's recommendations and this Issue Paper is for Option 2.

Financial Impact

- 2024 – \$50,000 from NCF reserve
- 2025 – \$100,000 from levy
- 2026 – \$100,000 from levy

Risk Considerations

Motorized trail use has ecological wildlife impacts and users impacts and these trails require more regular maintenance than non motorized trails. With climate change, the increasing size and number of motorized uses, especially side by sides, this cost will continue to increase.

The Forest is an important asset with natural and non-natural assets. Recreational trails are assets much like bridges and roads and must be maintained. Standards for maintenance follow the NCF Trail Standards.

Without additional funds for trail maintenance, trails will need to be closed.



Impacts to Member Municipalities/Partners

All residents of Northumberland County benefit from having a safe visitor experience in the County Forest and a Forest that is appropriately managed with respect to forestry, recreation and ecology.

Included in 2023 Long Term Plan: YES/NO

No, trails are maintained to the trail standards and this work is funded through the levy, conifer plantation thinning, and the reserves. An increase in trail use, and the amount of motorized use, climate change and cost of repairs and materials has increased impacts on the trail and maintenance needs.



2024 to 2026 Issue Paper

Weather Event Reserve

Purpose

To establish a reserve to address increasing weather-related damage within the Northumberland County Forest.

Background

Northumberland County Forest is a 2,235 hectares (5,524 acres) forest that provides users with ecological services, forestry resources, and recreational opportunities to residents of the County and beyond.

The Forest has over 100,000 users per year and numbers have been increasing. The County maintains five parking lots that are open all year round. Currently there are 121 km of multiuse recreational trails.

The Northumberland County Forest is an important asset with natural and non-natural assets.

The Northumberland County Forest is located on the Oak Ridges Moraine and regulated provincially by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. In addition to the tangible resources such as recreation, hunting and timber harvesting provided by the Northumberland County Forest, other ecosystem goods and services such as:

- Mental and physical health
- Tourism and economic spin offs
- Renewable resources
- Soil stabilization
- Water filtration and storage
- Cultural history conservation
- Air purification
- Carbon sequestration
- Unique habitats and species
- Beneficial insects and wildlife (e.g., crop and forest protection and pollination)



- Scenic vistas
- Local climate moderation
- Intrinsic value (value of the existence of forested land)

Hazard tree evaluation in the Forest occurs regularly and is addressed by staff and contractors. In the last several years, large storms have come through the region. These storms have occurred in all seasons and result in significant damage and repair costs in the forest.

In addition, invasive species such as Spongy moth and environmental conditions (droughts) have increased the number of hazard trees within the forest. These impacts include:

- Closing of trails
- Reallocating all staff from their core work to damage repair
- Hiring of contractors to remove trees
- Increased rental of equipment to deal with tree removal

Currently there is no reserve to address this issue.

Consultation/Options

Trees can't be left on the trail or as hazards adjacent to the trail. This creates safety issues for staff and users. Two options are:

- 1) Increase the levy to cover yearly maintenance and hazard tree removal
- 2) Set up a reserve to cover off hazard and storm tree removal

Staff recommendations is to set up a reserve to deal with storm events.

Financial Impact

Add \$10,000 to the reserves in perpetuity.

- 2024 – \$10,000 to reserves
- 2025 - \$10,000 to reserves
- 2026 - \$10,000 to reserves

Risk Considerations

Leaving trees blocking the trail or not removing hazard trees along the trail isn't an option with respect to risk and liability. When trees or limbs fall on the trail, users avoid this trail or will



establish a new trail around the debris, causing erosion and impacts to the surrounding environment.

Impacts to Member Municipalities/Partners

Users benefit from a well maintained and safe trail system.

Included in 2023 Long Term Plan: YES/NO

No. Hazard tree management is paid through the budget, but costs and actions required with respect to storms are increasing and these were not accounted for in the long-term plan. This includes the increasing severity, occurrence and costs associated with these actions (rental, diesel, and contractor costs).



2024 to 2026 Issue Paper

Land Acquisition Reserve

Purpose

To increase the contributions to the County Forest land acquisition reserve annual, starting in 2025 by \$10, 000, to increase the size of the Northumberland County Forest.

Background

Northumberland County Forest is a 2,235 hectares (5,524 acres) forest that provides users with ecological services, forestry resources, and recreational opportunities to residents of the County and beyond.

The Northumberland County Forest contains important natural and non-natural assets.

The Forest has over 100, 000 users annually and numbers have been increasing. The County maintains five parking lots that are open all year round. Currently, there are 121 km of multi-use recreational trails including and maintenance trails.

All the Northumberland County Forest is located on the Oak Ridges Moraine and regulated provincially by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. In addition to the tangible resources such as recreation, hunting and timber harvesting provided by the Northumberland County Forest, other ecosystem goods and services such as:

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- Air purification
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- Scenic vistas
- Local climate moderation
- Intrinsic value (value of the existence of forested land)

Large forests have high conservation values for providing habitat for species that depend on large forest expanses and are often the remaining refuges for rare and at-risk habitats, vegetation, and wildlife. As well, the impetus for the acquisition and planting of these large forests, the Northumberland Forest included, was to protect and restore eroding and degraded landscapes and provide ecological services such as floodwater protection.

Increasing the size of the forest has been documented within the 2017 Forest Service Strategy, Climate change plans and successive Forest Management Plans. A reserve was set up prior to 2017 adding \$5,000 per year. Currently this reserve is at \$50,000. Cost of land in the area has increased.

Consultation/Options

The value of the reserves is not enough to cover the securement of lands. Funding through grants is evaluated but often it is not available for municipalities for securement of land. Potentially new land could be used to increase trails and provide additional habitat and climate change benefits for the County Forest and residents.

Financial Impact

Starting in 2025, add \$10,000 in perpetuity.

- 2024 – n/a
- 2025 – \$10,000
- 2026 - \$10,000

Risk Considerations

Without an appropriate reserve, land will not be able to be added to the forest.

Impacts to Member Municipalities/Partners

No



Included in 2023 Long Term Plan: YES/NO

No. Money has been added to the reserves yearly. Currently, this amount is not enough to cover the expense of securement of properties.



2024 to 2026 Issue Paper

Seasonal Technician increase to FT hours & Vehicle

Purpose

To create a full time Technician position, by increasing the current Seasonal Technician (April to October, 31 weeks) within Natural Heritage in the Corporate Services Department to full time. A truck would be required for this position. This position would perform year-round work with respect to forestry, recreation and perform ecological management and stewardship of Northumberland County Forest. This position will continue the day-to-day supervision of summer students from May to August.

Background

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The Northumberland County Forest is located on the Oak Ridges Moraine and regulated provincially by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. In addition to the tangible resources such as recreation, hunting and timber harvesting provided by the Northumberland County Forest, other ecosystem goods and services such as:

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- Unique habitats and species
- Beneficial insects and wildlife (e.g., crop and forest protection and pollination)
- Scenic vistas
- Local climate moderation
- Intrinsic value (value of the existence of forested land)

Natural Heritage, within Corporate Services, manages the Northumberland County Forest which includes forestry, ecological and recreation work within the Forest and Weed Bylaw and Tree Conservation Bylaw within Northumberland County. Staff within the section include the Natural Heritage Manager, the Forestry Technician, the Forest Trails Coordinator, and the Natural Infrastructure Technician. A maximum of four summer students from May to August are used to complete recreation, ecological and forestry work. Students are carrying out recreation, ecological and forest stewardship work in occurrence to our Forest Management Plan and Standard Operating Procedures for the Forest. These students rotate on a weekly basis with staff, who are often are pulled away for core office needs, which results in safety and lack of supervision for that time, or a reorganization of schedules and a re-deployment of staff from other planned core activities to supervise. Neither option is ideal.

In 2021, the Trail Coordinator took an acting assignment as the Natural Heritage Manager. One of the returning students was modified to a Seasonal Lead Hand. Based on this experience, the value of a Seasonal position was shown. The Seasonal Lead Hand allowed staff to provide timely responses to high priority issues that came up, while the supervised students focused on core summer activities in a safe efficient manner. It is an uncommon situation in Natural Heritage that students return multiple years and therefore would not have experience in the work or be able to be in a supervisory position. Therefore, modifying a student position into a supervisor would generally not work as they need to be onboarded earlier than May to familiarize them with work requirements and the supervision duties.

A Seasonal Technician was hired in 2023 following an issue paper. The position started in April and was onboarded and assist staff during the month. Onboarding of a new Seasonal Technician each year and getting them trained requires time. Through our hiring we were able to get two of four student positions filled. The Seasonal Technician was able to help maintain our core activities and allowed for staff to focus on high priority items.

Work done by the Seasonal Technician is as follows:

Recreation

- Trail bed management; trailside vegetation management
- Trail and signage monitoring
- Garbage collection
- Site survey of visitors
- Volunteer and student supervision



- Research and report, best practices
- Enforcement
- Preparing for the field season
- Tool maintenance and prep

Forestry

- Forestry restoration
- Assist Forestry staff with tree marking. This will allow us to tender the timber harvest earlier, which will draw bidders prior to them booking other sites. Potentially resulting in a better price for our wood.
- Plot establishment and inventory
- Invasive species monitoring – Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, Oak Wilt, Spongy Moth
- Post harvest surveys
- hazard tree removal
- Invasive species removal/treatment
- Data entry
- Stump treatments of Red Pine in areas of pocket decline
- Forest Resource Inventory collection in Plantation and Mixed Deciduous Forest
- Maintenance of Forestry equipment
- Assist with polygons mapping and documentation of new sub-compartments
- Reporting back to staff on technical webinars
- Flagging trails for upcoming Conifer Harvest Operations
- Tree Bylaw visit support

Ecology

- Data input into Natural Heritage inventory files
- Education and outreach of the ecology of the Forest
- Invasive species treatment including brush sawing and chemical treatments across the Forest
- Preparation for prescribed burns and post burn monitoring
- Ecology research on best practices
- Invasives species inventory data entry and research
- Weed Bylaw
- Vegetation habitat mapping and ELC compartment project, habitat monitoring
- Deer browsing monitoring data collection (AVID)
- Assistance with data collection and plot establishment
- Wildlife camera monitoring
- Outreach and awareness
- Tree planting



- Native seed collecting and preparation
- Species at-risk inventory, Management of globally rare ecosystem present in NCF
- Volunteer and student supervision Inventories of plants and animals
- restoration planning and on the ground stewardship work
- Special Management Zone restoration (Forest/Wetland/Tallgrass)
- Habitat and species monitoring; Species at risk surveys; Invasive species management

Consultation/Options

- 1) Increase the hours of the Seasonal Technician to full time.
 - Build on existing workload.
 - Additional field and office work during the Fall, Winter and Spring necessitates additional hours
 - Research, planning and field data entry. The current position doesn't allow for this.
 - Preparation for the field season in March and April
 - Core essential work to maintain levels of service and internal and external regulatory standards.
 - Savings would be realized with respect onboarding needs, retraining of a new Seasonal Technician yearly and familiarity with the forest and work. This would be more efficient (Lean) and maintain continuity with staff, volunteers, and students.
 - Additional hours would help address data entry and field work needs in November to April times, increasing efficiency during increasing busy field season times
 - This issue paper request matches increasing needs with respect to increasing ecological, forestry and recreation work.
- 2) Contract out this work
 - This option has been explored, but with the variety of tasks, skillset, and the needs for timely and direct, regular connection to staff, and the variety of work, a permanent position is required.
- 3) Not change hours of Seasonal Technician
 - Loss of service
 - Reduction in core activities
 - Increasing needs with respect to invasive species, forestry, ecology, recreation in the field during times not covered during Seasonal Technician time as well as increasing office and data entry needs, research in Nov – April.



Financial Impact

- 2024 – move to a full time Technician – Costs include increase in hours, addition of learning and development expenses and health and safety PPE (estimated \$30,000). A truck is required for this position (\$73,000).
- 2025 – \$30,000 staffing, \$9,500 to vehicle reserve in perpetuity.
- 2026 – \$30,000 staffing, \$9,500 to vehicle reserve in perpetuity.

Risk Considerations

- Conduct essential core ecological, forestry and recreation work with respect to natural and non-natural Forest assets to ensure compliance with regulatory and best practice standards. These include SAR, FSC and County standards.
- Failure to complete work has legal and regulatory impacts, internally and externally, as well as impacting levels of service. As core staff are pulled away from student management and supervision regularly, having a dedicated supervisor is important and lowers risk, ensuring a safe working environment.
- This extension of hours for this position will be of significant value during one of the busiest times in Natural Heritage, April and September and October when weather conditions are optimal for work in the forest and many key timely stewardship activities occur. Without a Seasonal position, levels of service, and efficiency would be impacted.
- Without this position, increased onboarding costs, reduction in efficiency, allow for more work to be done in summer months, including maximizing data entry, impact to levels of efficiency
- Reducing reoccurring training cost with new employees
- This extension of hours for this position will be of significant value during one of the busiest times in Natural Heritage, April and September and October when weather conditions are optimal for work in the forest and many key timely stewardship activities occur. Without a Seasonal position, levels of service, and efficiency would be impacted.
- Additional field and office workload during the Fall, Winter and Spring necessitates additional hours. This includes research, planning and field data entry. The current position doesn't allow for this.
 - Preparation for the field season in March and April
 - Core essential work to maintain levels of service and internal and external regulatory standards.
- Savings would be realized with respect onboarding needs, retraining of a new Seasonal Technician yearly and familiarity with the forest and work. This would



be more efficient (Lean) and maintain continuity with staff, volunteers, and students.

- Additional hours would help address data entry and field work needs in November to April times, increasing efficiency during increasing busy field season times.
- This issue paper request matches increasing needs with respect to increasing ecological, forestry and recreation work.

Impacts to Member Municipalities/Partners

Users benefit from a well maintained and safe trail system, and a forest that is appropriately managed, following Species at Risk criteria, legal requirements and FSC standards. Additional work with respect to the Weed Bylaw and Tree Conservation Bylaw will benefit the residents of Northumberland County.

Included in 2023 Long Term Plan: YES/NO

No, a seasonal technician is included in the long-term plan but based on the pilot in 2023, and the work required, the changes to the Seasonal Technician are recommended.

2024 to 2026 Issue Paper

Two Truck Replacements

Purpose

Seeking approval to purchase one new full-size, 4-wheel drive pick-up truck to replace one of the current trucks in each year 2025 and 2026 and ensure funds are available in the reserve to replace trucks in the future.

Background

Northumberland County Forest is a 2,235 hectares (5,524 acres) forest that provides users with ecological services, forestry resources, and recreational opportunities to residents of the County and beyond.

The Natural Heritage's Services trucks are used for management of the Forest, as well as Weed Bylaw and Conservation Forest (Tree) Bylaw inspections across Northumberland County.

These trucks are used all season, and transport staff and equipment (trailers) to and from the work site. The Trucks were purchased new in 2017. In 2022, the trucks were evaluated but this timeline had been moved to ensure fiscal restraint. Current repair and maintenance costs for the vehicles in the last two years are \$1,852.76 and \$5,019.07. Costs are expected to increase in future years.

Consultation/Options

The current trucks have been delayed in their purchase to reduce budget costs. Further costs of delaying purchase for these all season, daily used off road trucks will mean further maintenance costs.

The purchase of an electric vehicle is an option, but cost, and charging facilities availability are problematic.



The truck reserve is at \$42,630, and this amount would be used for the purchase in 2025 and 2026.

Based on recent corporate truck purchases, the cost will be \$66,000 plus lighting, towing, markings, and a capper. The total cost would be \$73,000.

Financial Impact

- 2025 – one truck at \$73,000, minus \$12,600 from reserves, total \$60,700
- 2026 - one truck at \$73,000, minus \$18,900 from reserves, total \$54,100

Risk Considerations

Natural heritage trucks are required by staff daily, for work within the forest and for Forest Conservation (tree) bylaw and Weed Bylaw work across the County. Lack of transportation would impact levels of service, and core activities in the Forest and beyond.

Impacts to Member Municipalities/Partners

No impacts to member municipalities/Partners.

Included in 2023 Long Term Plan: YES/NO

Yes, the truck replacement is within the long-term plan, but the cost of the trucks has increased beyond the reserve value and this amount doesn't include outfitting the trucks.

2024 to 2026 Issue Paper

Legal / Legislative Services Assistant Position

Purpose

To request a full-time, dedicated **Legal / Legislative Services Assistant** position, to be split between Legal Services and Legislative Services, commencing in quarter 1, 2024. The position will address the current resource deficit, build internal capacities, and support key responsibilities / functions carried out within the Legal Services and Legislative Services areas.

The position will report to the County's Municipal Solicitor and will also work closely with the Manager of Legislative Services / Clerk and Deputy Clerk.

Background

Legal Services

In 2021, County Council approved the addition of an in-house municipal Solicitor position. This was a recommendation from the Service Delivery Review prepared by StrategyCorp, in order to realize cost savings, address future demands for municipal prosecutorial responsibilities within Court Services / POA, and support business continuity and succession planning. The Legal Services Department was subsequently created in 2022, with 2023 being the Department's first budget cycle. Thus, Legal Services now operates cooperatively but independently from POA and Court Services Administration.

Key responsibilities / functions of Legal Services Department include:

- Legal representation before courts and tribunals;
- Legal advice to Council and County staff;
- Prosecution of Provincial Offences and appeals;
- Retain and instruct external legal counsel;
- Advise legal agreements; and
- Monitor legislative changes.



The Legal Services Department consists of three full-time permanent staff members, being the Municipal Solicitor and two Prosecutor Paralegal positions.

In addition to responsibility for the County's part I provincial offences prosecutions and directing the Prosecutor/Paralegals pursuant to the Municipal Provincial MOU with the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Municipal Solicitor provides or coordinates most of the County's legal representation and acts as a director and part of the County's Management Operating Committee. The Municipal Solicitor is currently engaged by all County departments to assist with projects, contract review and management, drafting of by-laws and agreements, review of policies and procedures, negotiation and mediation, claims, and the provision of general legal advice. While workloads for individual County departments may vary from time to time depending on legal issues, the Municipal Solicitor is more or less consistently engaged by all departments for these functions. The Municipal Solicitor often works closely with the Manager of Legislative Services / Clerk and Deputy Clerk with respect to the provision of general legal advice related to municipal governance, procedure, and regulatory compliance as well as the drafting and approval of by-laws and responses and obligations under the *Municipal Freedom of Information Act* and other statutes.

In addition to the administrative responsibilities inherent to the role as director and legal counsel for the Corporation, the Municipal Solicitor is obligated as a lawyer to adhere to the requirements of the Law Society of Ontario, including administrative requirements for the management of client (*i.e.* County) documents, the management of court and tribunal deadlines, and annual reporting and continuing education.

Currently, a major check on the Municipal Solicitor's ability to provide certain legal services in-house (without reliance on external legal counsel) and to provide value added services such as proactively developing and reviewing policies to determine and eliminate the County's legal risks before they manifest, is individual capacity. A means of addressing and increasing the Corporation's internal legal capacity is therefore to increase the capacity of the Municipal Solicitor by providing a position to perform delegated administrative and procedural tasks that will allow the Municipal Solicitor to focus on legal matters and departmental initiatives.

This approach would be consistent with standard legal industry practice, where lawyers are typically supported by administrative professionals and/or legal clerks in order to maximize the time available for client matters and other functions that must be performed by a lawyer. It is also expected that the proposed administrative support person could build further internal capacity with respect to certain administrative tasks that are specific to the legal field such as the drafting and preparation of documents for use in courts and tribunals, court filings, property and corporate searches, etc.



Legislative Services

Northumberland County's Legislative Services division is responsible for governance and legislative compliance issues in support of statutory responsibilities provided by the *Municipal Act*, *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*, *Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)*, the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and the *Planning Act*. Pursuant to these statutes, County policies and municipal best practices, Legislative Services provides secretariat support to Council, Standing Committees and various Boards, documents the official records of the actions of Council, and manages notices provisions related to public meetings. As the Council designated "Head" under MFIPPA, Legislative Services processes Freedom of Information requests, and provides internal and public support services including Commissioner of Oath services.

Legislative Services reviews and assists in drafting the Corporation's by-laws and governance related policies. Other responsibilities include being the liaison with the Integrity Commissioner / Closed Meeting Investigator, managing Conflict of Interest/public Declaration Registries, liaising with Member Municipalities, Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus municipalities, Federal and Provincial Ministries, and Alderville First Nation.

The Legislative Services area fulfills many critical responsibilities that touch on every single department of the Corporation, and it provides mandated services to the residents and businesses within Northumberland County. Legislative Services is the conduit between Council Members and their constituents. They are the link between Council and Standing Committees, and County staff. Legislative Services encompasses multi-disciplinary responsibilities. Staff provide advice and guidance to Directors, Managers, and support staff on a wide range of governance issues, as well as consult with their colleagues in municipalities locally and throughout Ontario to ensure best practices.

The Legislative Services Division consists of one full-time permanent Manager of Legislative Services / Clerk position and one full-time permanent Deputy Clerk position. A standalone Deputy Clerk position was approved by Council in 2021. Prior to 2021, this position was split between Legislative Services and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), the position being the 'Deputy Clerk / Executive Assistant to the CAO'. In 2023, Council approved a permanent, seasonal summer student position to assist Legislative Services during peak vacation periods.

In 2021, the County implemented a Standing Committee governance structure, consisting of six Standing Committees that meet monthly. Prior to 2021, the County had a system of informal departmental information meetings that were not open to the public. The County also transitioned to a hybrid meeting model in August 2022 to make Committee and Council proceedings more transparent and accessible. In order to operate the hybrid meeting system, a



dedicated person is required to attend all Committee/Council meetings. Thus, the Manager of Legislative Services / Clerk and Deputy Clerk are required to attend all Committee / Council meetings to operate the hybrid system and provide procedural guidance and support to Committee / Council Members. During summer 2023, the Legislative Services Student Assistant did operate the hybrid system at some Committee / Council meetings.

Prior to the implementation of the County's Standing Committee structure, between 2013 – 2018, Northumberland County averaged 14 Council meetings per year. Between 2019 – 2020, the County averaged 21 Council meetings per year. **In 2021, Legislative Services supported 69 Standing Committee meetings and 18 County Council meetings. In 2022, Legislative Services supported 55 Standing Committee meetings and 14 Council meetings.** The transition to the County's Standing Committee structure has significantly increased the number of meetings that Legislative Services supports, which is labour intensive and time-consuming for staff and is one of the main causes for the increased workload for Legislative Services. A Legal / Legislative Services Assistant position would alleviate the need for both the Manager of Legislative Services / Clerk and Deputy Clerk to attend all Committee / Council meetings, allowing staff to focus on more strategic / project work.

The volume and complexity of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests continue to increase yearly. Institutions are required to adhere to legislative deadlines when processing FOI requests, which creates strain on already limited Legislative Services staffing resources. For example, in 2023, the services of an external FOI consultant were retained to assist with processing a large FOI request due to competing priorities and limited resources within the division. Hiring external consultants is far more costly than using staff resources.

Legislative Services projects and initiatives beyond the day-to-day operations are significantly impacted, or simply do not get done. In terms of policy development, Legislative Services is forced to take a reactive approach, implementing, or updating policies only when new legislative requirements or issues arise. Most Legislative Services policies have not been updated since first implemented due to limited resources and a focus on day-to-day operations. For example, a large number of Legislative Services policies have not been updated since 2015 / 2016. Regular policy review is important to ensure that policies remain current, comply with legislation, and are reflective of best practices. With regards to policies that are specific to County Council (Council Code of Conduct, Staff-Councils Relations policy, etc.) it is considered best practice to update every four years, aligning with Council terms.

Another key duty of legislative Services is to proactively and regularly review existing by-laws.



This ensures that required amendments and updates are made in a timely manner, and it is an opportunity to seek out efficiencies and best practices to ensure that Northumberland County is a leader in 'good governance'. Currently this area is not receiving the attention it deserves.

As highlighted, Legislative Services is responsible for managing Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and ensuring compliance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*. However, in addition to FOI requests, Legislative Services is also responsible for ensuring the protection of personal information collected by the County. Due to limited Legislative Services resources, and a focus on responding to the 30-day response period applied to FOI requests, a more proactive approach could be taken on the privacy side of MFIPPA. For example, the development and implementation of a privacy program, including privacy impact assessments for County programs, projects, and initiatives. A privacy program is critical as it allows staff to proactively identify privacy risks and mitigate them before a privacy breach occurs.

In summary, creating a Legal / Legislative Services position would help create additional capacity within the division, ensure that critical project deadlines are met, and that by-laws, policies and procedures are reviewed and updated regularly.

Consultation/Options

This issue paper was discussed with the CAO and the Director of Corporate Services. It was agreed that this proposal meets the current and future needs of the organization.

In addition, Northumberland County has twelve Council-approved comparators including:

- County of Hastings;
- County of Lennox and Addington;
- County of Peterborough;
- City of Peterborough;
- City of Quinte West;
- Prince Edward County;
- City of Brantford;
- Municipality of Clarington;
- Town of Ajax;
- Town of Whitby;
- Durham Region; and
- Town of Pickering.



The below chart illustrates that Northumberland County has a staffing deficit in its Legislative Services division.

All comparator municipalities that have a Standing Committee structure have Committee / Council support and / or dedicated administrative support.

The County of Lennox and Addington does not have a Standing Committee structure and therefore only has a Clerk and Deputy Clerk position.

However, some comparator municipalities (i.e., City of Quinte West) do not have a Standing Committee structure, but still have additional Legislative Services staffing positions.

Comparator	Clerk Position	Deputy Clerk Position	Standing Committee Structure	Committee / Council Coordinator Position	Dedicated Administrative Support
Northumberland County	1 FTE	1 FTE	Yes	No	No
County of Hastings	1 FTE	1 FTE	Yes	No	1 FTE – Dedicated Administrative Assistant 1 FTE – Executive Assistant split between Warden, CAO, and Clerk
County of Lennox and Addington	1 FTE	1 FTE	No	No	No
County of Peterborough	1 FTE	No	Yes	No	2 FTE – Clerk’s Assistants
City of Peterborough	1 FTE	2 FTE	Yes	2 FTE – Committee Support positions	No
City of Quinte West	1 FTE	2 FTE	No	2 FTE - Legislative Coordinator positions	No
Prince Edward County	1 FTE	1 FTE	No - Committee of the Whole	1 FTE	1 FTE - Customer and Legislative Services position
City of Brantford	1 FTE	1 FTE	Yes - and Committee of the Whole	2 FTE	1 FTE - Administrative Assistant

Comparator	Clerk Position	Deputy Clerk Position	Standing Committee Structure	Committee / Council Coordinator Position	Dedicated Administrative Support
Northumberland County	1 FTE	1 FTE	Yes	No	No
Municipality of Clarington	1 FTE	1 FTE	Yes	1 – FTE Committee / Council Coordinator Position 1 – FTE Legislative Services Coordinator	3 FTE
Town of Ajax	1 FTE	1 FTE	Yes	1 – FTE	No
Town of Whitby	1 FTE	1 FTE	No - Committee of the Whole	2 – FTE Committee Coordinators 2 – FTE Legislative Specialists	3 - FTE Legislative Services Clerks
Durham Region	1 FTE	1 FTE	Yes - and Committee of the Whole	1 FTE - Assistant Secretary to Council 1 FTE - Legislative Officer Position	1 FTE
Town of Pickering	1 FTE	1 FTE	Yes	1 FTE – Committee Coordinator	1 FTE – Clerk Administration



				1 FTE – Legislative Coordinator	
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- Option 1: Maintain existing staffing levels
- Staff will be required to continue working excessive hours to meet the day-to-day workload requirements.
 - Legal matters may need to be referred to outside legal counsel.
 - Legislative Services projects outside of the day-to-day operations will be delayed or will not move forward.
- Option 2: Consider external supports
- The administrative responsibilities within Legal and Legislative Services areas do not lend themselves to hiring external, contracted supports due to specialized and confidential nature of work.
 - This option would not build internal capacities.
- Option 3: **Create a full-time dedicated position**
- Recommended option.
 - Ensures that staff with the required skill set are dedicated to the critical areas of Legal and Legislative Services .

Financial Impact

Staff consulted with Human Resources on the estimated financial impact for a Legal / Legislative Services Assistant.

Salary Grid C (1820 hours)

2024: \$68,750.00 (starting rate) - \$84,058.00 (maximum job rate)

2025: \$70,812.50 (starting rate) - \$86,579.74 (maximum job rate)

2026: \$72,936.88 (starting rate) - \$ 89,177.13 (maximum job rate)

*The above listed amounts include benefits/OMERS/statutory deductions

IT costs (hardware, software, etc.) for year one would be approximately \$2,000. IT costs in additional years would be approximately \$1,000 (annual costs for Microsoft Office licenses).



Total financial impact of position:

2024: \$84,058.00 (maximum job rate) + \$2,000 (IT costs) = \$86,058.00

2025: \$87,421.00 (maximum job rate) + \$1,000 (IT costs) = \$88,421.00

2026: \$90,917.00 (maximum job rate) + \$1,000 (IT costs) = \$91,917.00

This position would be funded through the County levy and split evenly between the Legal Services and Legislative Services budgets.

This staff position would reduce the administrative workload of the Director / Manager, decreasing the need to utilize costly external legal counsel and consulting services. More time could also be devoted to the value-added services provided by internal legal counsel such as the proactive development of legal policies and procedures, review of existing and potential legal risks, and ensuring statutory/regulatory compliance.

Non-financial Considerations:

Office space is available at 555 Courthouse Road; the location to be determined.

Risk Considerations

With the current staffing model, the Municipal Solicitor and Manager of Legislative Services / Clerk positions are conducting administrative functions. The creation of a Legal / Legislative Services position would allow for the offloading of administrative work and for the advancement of strategic priorities and tasks.

If the existing staffing model remains status quo, some legal matters will be referred to external legal counsel, due to the capacity of the Municipal Solicitor. In addition, if large and complex Freedom of Information requests are received, it is likely that the services of external consultants will need to be utilized, due to the limited capacity within Legislative Services. Utilizing the services of external legal counsel and consultants is more costly than using staff resources. In addition, the continuation of being under-staffed vis a vis the volume of work and responsibilities, service levels may be compromised, and some projects and tasks outside of day-to-day operations will be severely delayed, or simply will not get done.

A Legal / Legislative Services position will help make the workload of staff more manageable. Without this dedicated position, staff will be required to continue working excessive hours to meet workload requirements, which could lead to staff burnout.

The Ontario municipal sector is facing significant human resource challenges, and the recruitment and retention of employees continues to be an ongoing struggle for local government. Succession planning is a key factor in attracting and retaining high performing



employees. A dedicated Legal / Legislative Services Assistant position will help build the internal capacity within the Corporation for specific legal administrative tasks and support functions such as property and corporate searches that currently require outside consultants.

Impacts to Member Municipalities/Partners

Legal Services plays a role in the provision of shared/managed services (contract review, maintenance) with Member Municipalities. Administrative support will increase the capacity of the Municipal Solicitor, which may allow for the consideration of increased shared services for certain legal matters. Internal customers (County staff) benefit from knowledge and timely responses from Legal Services. Finally, Legal Services add value by allowing the Corporation to quickly respond to legal and risk issues and reduces the reliance on external counsel.

Northumberland County residents benefit from Legislative Services that provide accountability, transparency, excellent customer service, and a connection with their elected representatives.

Community stakeholders seek out information from Legislative Services staff when navigating County/Council processes, and regarding a variety of governance issues.

Member Municipal Clerks share their collective expertise and support each other through knowledge and efficiency best practices, as well as brainstorm challenging issues together.

Internal customers (County staff) benefit from knowledgeable and timely responses to their inquiries and requests. Legislative Services staff add value to all County departments and to County Council, by ensuring that the business of the County flows smoothly, efficiently, and adheres to legislative requirements.

Included in 2023 Long Term Plan: YES/NO

This position was identified in the long-term plan for Legislative Services. However, it was not captured in the long-term plan for Legal Services as the Department was only created in 2022, with the first budget cycle in 2023.