



The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Community Safety

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Wade Bondy, Director Community Safety & Fire Chief

Date to Council: January 28, 2025

Report Number: CS-2025-01

Subject: Fire Equipment Five Year Capital Works Plan 2025-2029

Recommendations

It is recommended:

That the 2025 Fire Equipment purchases as summarized in Attachment 1 to Report CS-2025-01 Fire Equipment Five Year Capital Works Plan 2025-2029, **be approved**;

And that the equipment purchases outlined in report CS-2025-01 **be funded** through the Lifecycle Fire Equipment Reserve.

Background

The fire equipment capital works plan is intended to maintain equipment in peak operating efficiency, replacing equipment at the end of its useful life and purchasing additional equipment where necessary to increase safety of firefighters and residents, thus providing improved service to the public.

Comments

Equipment used by firefighters requires periodic replacement, in accordance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards for protective gear. Items such as helmets, boots and bunker gear are limited to a ten-year lifespan under these

standards. In addition to replacement of expiring equipment, the funding requested for 2025 includes protective gear for newly hired firefighters.

Community Safety is also requesting funding in 2025 for replacement of radio hardware used by the Department. The funding requested for 2025 is noted below.

1. Pagers	\$ 3,000
2. Firefighter Helmets, Boots, & Bunker Gear	\$ 28,000
3. Radio System Upgrades	\$ 120,000

With respect to the firefighter protective gear, in consultation with Financial Services, the individual items have now been compiled into one line item with the requested amount representing a historic average required annually for these items.

With respect to the Radio System Upgrades, Council had previously approved funding in the amount of \$608,000 for the radio system replacement, which represented the costs to fully upgrade the system to a P-25 standard, which is the Public Safety Industry Standard. With ongoing delays from the intended service provider, replacement of hardware for the existing radio system is now required to ensure reliability of the system, which is beyond its intended service life and no longer supported by the manufacturer. The proposed existing system upgrades also require the replacement of the radios used by Community Safety and other Town Departments. The funding requested by this report for 2025 represents the costs of replacing all portable and mobile (truck mounted) radios used by Community Safety, as well as two in-vehicle signal repeaters to improve in-building radio communications.

Completing the upgrades to the existing radio system in 2025 has two main benefits. Firstly, reliability of the system is improved, ensuring the safety of our firefighters. Secondly, the new radios are greatly improved over the existing equipment including features such as being intrinsically safe and capable of operating in potentially explosive environments, improved noise reduction for clearer communications when wearing SCBA, and provision of a functional emergency button for use by firefighters in distress requiring immediate assistance.

While a P-25 standard radio system would ultimately remain the intended solution for the County wide radio system, the proposed upgrade to the existing system provides some of the same features required for safe operations and communications, allowing the changeover to be delayed significantly without reducing the safety provided to our firefighters. Additionally, the reduced funding required for these upgrades versus the full replacement allows the Lifecycle Fire Equipment Reserve to be in a better financial position when the full system replacement is completed.

A future report will be presented for Council's consideration regarding the purchase of the radio equipment noted in this report and execution of an agreement with the radio system provider.

2026-2029 Outlook

Looking forward to the years 2026 to 2029, in addition to regular replacement of firefighter gear, Council will note that funding for the complete radio system replacement previously requested has been delayed beyond the 5-year outlook. With that change, the only significant purchase planned for the outlook period is replacement of one set of vehicle extrication equipment that will have been in service for 10 years by 2029.

Consultations

Financial Services
Technology & Client Services
Essex County Fire Chiefs Group

Financial Implications

Administration recommends that the aforementioned equipment purchase in the amount of \$151,000 be funded from the Lifecycle Fire Equipment Reserve (Reserve).

The Reserve annual requirement was adjusted to \$125,000 with respect to increased equipment replacement costs, as referenced in Council Report CS-2022-01. The annual budget allocation to this Reserve was increased by \$10,000 during the 2024 budget process, to \$95,000, and the 2025 Proposed Budget includes a further \$10,000 annual increase effective for 2025, working towards the annual requirement of \$125,000. The Reserve is expected to be in a deficit balance for 2025 through to 2027, after which it will recover. Short-term deficit balances to Lifecycle Reserve accounts are generally covered by the Town's group of Lifecycle Reserves, which overall are in a surplus position.

Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	2023-2026 Strategic Priorities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sustainable Growth: Achieve prosperity and a livable community through sustainable growth.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Health and Inclusion: Integrate community health and inclusion into our places and spaces and everything we do.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Experience: Enhance the experience of Team Tecumseh and our citizens through responsive and respectful service.

Communications

Not applicable

Website

Social Media

News Release

Local Newspaper

This report has been reviewed by Senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Prepared by:

Wade Bondy
Director Community Safety & Fire Chief

Reviewed by:

Tom Kitsos, CPA, CMA, BComm
Director Financial Services & Chief Financial Officer

Recommended by:

Margaret Misek-Evans, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment Number	Attachment Name
1	Fire Equipment Five Year Capital Works Plan 2025-2029