



2025 Budget Request

Request: Professional Development

From: Brittany Drury

Department: Office of the CAO

Total Financial Ask: \$103,000

Type of Budget Request: Core (Operating)

This document and its attachments are public and available in an accessible format upon request.

Background and Strategic Priority

The Township formally recognized the benefits and necessity for ongoing staff professional development via creation of the Human Resources Policy manual in 2018. Said manual includes a Training and Development Policy, establishing opportunities for professional development at the staff level, and parameters for pursuing career development.

Historic Township Budgets have allocated \$2,500 per staff member to pursue professional development opportunities. This amount has remained the same since at least 2008. With inflation, new demands, and levels of expertise at the local government level and new service downloads from upper tiers, expansion of funding dedicated to staff professional development is recommended.

Investing in staff professional development achieves Council's fifth strategic pillar, as established in the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, being, "Deliver Effective and Cost-Efficient Services.

Said pillar identifies the Township as a leader in municipal and customer service excellence, through a focus on fiscal responsibility and investing in staff to attract and retain highly skilled employees. Within said pillar, objective 5.4 establishes an expectation for ensuring proper distribution of workload and retention of staff, and specifically, to support ongoing staff education and succession planning.



Investing in staff, and prioritizing retention and attraction of a skilled workforce will continue to be prioritized in the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.

Analysis

Currently, and for at least the past decade, the Township has allocated \$2,500 per Full Time Employee (FTE) to pursue professional development opportunities on an annual basis. With existing staff compliments, the total budget allocation for professional development in 2024 was \$99,500. While this allocation totals the \$2,500 per FTE, flexibility in how the total budget is spent is flexible per department.

This individual allotment is expected to fund educational opportunities, including webinars, workshops, and training sessions, as well as conferences and networking events.

In considering inflation, increased costs at conferences and simply increased costs overall, enhancement of funding dedicated to staff professional development is recommended. With new legislation and downloading of services from upper tiers, including the province, education and training opportunities for staff are paramount in providing excellent service to the Georgian Bluffs community and minimizing risk to the corporation.

Over the past year, the Office of the CAO, with the support of Council, has prioritized a cultural shift throughout the organization. In doing so, the Leadership Team has initiated an organization-wide training program, building the Township's company culture from the ground up. Through seminars, focus groups and team building events, the entire staff team has been welcomed to share their vision and values to inform the Township's Strategic Plan and cultural landscape. This investment to our staff team demonstrates the Township's commitment to creating a safe and welcoming space for all, while prioritizing staff retention and overall satisfaction in the workplace.

This cultural reset is an ongoing initiative, one that will require regular investment and maintenance. Organization-wide training opportunities, such as that described above, are funded through the annual professional development budget, thereby reducing funds available for individual, career-specific professional development opportunities.

To accommodate corporate training and team building events and to account for inflation in costs associated with professional development, and to ensure staff can pursue continuing education to remain up to date on changing legislation, service levels and service delivery, an increase to the annual professional development budget is required.

It is recommended that the annual professional development budget be increased by \$103,000, thereby increasing the annual allotment per FTE to \$4,500. With an existing staff compliment of 45 FTEs, total annual contributions are estimated at \$202,500.



As previously highlighted, the funds allocated to professional development are flexible in their application per department. While this increase is substantial, it accounts for inflation over the past decade, incorporates corporate training events and prioritizes a continued investment to the sustainability of Township operations through attracting and retaining qualified staff.

With the shift in Township corporate culture in 2024, professional development costs totalled, \$111,405, resulting in a budget overage of \$11,905. Increasing the annual budget amounts will avoid future overspending.

Financial Impact

In expanding professional development allocations per FTE to the recommended \$4,500, \$103,000 will be added to future professional development budgets, bringing the total operating expense to \$202,500.



Report Approval Details

Document Title:	2025 Budget Request - Professional Development .docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Sep 10, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Niall Loble, Chief Administrative Officer