Subject: Municipal Benchmarking Network of Canada (MBNCanada) 2018 Data Report

Report to: Corporate Services Committee

Report date: Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Recommendations

That this report **BE RECEIVED** for information

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to inform Council on the release of the latest MBNCanada report containing 2018 data which shares information on Niagara's performance as it compares to partnering municipalities within the program. The full report is available at www.mbncanada.ca.
- As a founding member, Niagara has participated in MBNC since 1998. The program is now national, with 17 participating municipalities. The new report, containing 2018 data, was released on November 1, 2019.
- Niagara collects data across 27 service areas with measures that include both financial and operational measures.
- Multiple factors influence the comparability of metrics, including a municipality's size, organizational structure, single or upper tier status, age / size of infrastructure, etc. Each of these factors must be considered in making any direct comparisons, and the purpose is to invoke meaningful questions around how we can all do better to serve our residents.

Financial Considerations

Participation in MBNCanada costs Niagara $28,450 for annual membership, in addition to the in-kind services provided by the CAO, Municipal Lead, and staff time from all service areas to collect and validate data. These costs are included in the council approved operating budget.

Analysis

MBNCanada is the most comprehensive benchmarking system available for Canadian municipalities. Financial and operating measures reflect business performance across Canada for single and upper tier municipalities. Data experts from each participating municipality collaboratively create data definitions and suggest additional or alterative measures to reflect emerging trends. MBNC's Board of Directors consist of

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participating municipalities' CAOs who support the strategic decisions of the program, ensuring the program is aligned directly with the needs of member municipalities.

Public benchmarking is a mode of providing government transparency and is increasingly expected from our residents. Benchmarking is commonly used in the public sector to compare areas such as taxation, staffing and funding, and can empower staff to make informed decisions. As a result of changes in public expectations for access to information, this has resulted in public dashboards in all levels of government, including Niagara's public facing dashboard www.niagararegion.ca/priorities/dashboard, which includes measures captured through this program. A few highlights from the 2018 report can be found in Appendix 1 of this report, and the full report can be downloaded from www.mbncanada.ca.

Alternatives Reviewed

Although service-specific benchmarking is available for some business units such as through their respective Ministries, formal or informal networks, MBNCanada is the only municipal benchmarking available for many service areas in our organization.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

This report aligns with Strategic Priority 4: Sustainable and Engaging Government. Niagara's participation in MBNCanada's public report shows municipal performance across a wide range of service areas and supports our goals to be transparent, drive informed decisions and ensure access to data without limitations of silos across the organization.

Other Pertinent Reports

- CWCD 27-2019: MBNCanada 2017 Report

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Appendices

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