



Memorandum

TO: Krista Power, Director – Legislative Services & City Clerk **FILE:**

FROM: Dana Earle, Director – Customer Service
City Manager’s Office – Customer Service

DATE: 09/12/2025 (mm/dd/yyyy)

SUBJECT: Project Initiation – Centralized Customer Service

MEETING & DATE: Finance & Administration Standing Committee - 10/14/2025
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Municipalities across Ontario are increasingly adopting centralized customer service models to improve service delivery, create efficiencies, and enhance the overall customer experience.

The 2023-2027 Maamawe, Growing Together Strategic Plan reaffirms the City’s values for Accountability, Continuous Improvement, Teamwork, Respect = A.C.T. with Respect. The employees of the City of Thunder Bay are committed to delivering the right services to the public in the right way. Under the Growth pillar, a goal of the Strategic Plan is to “make it easier to access City services” with the objective of implementing better ways of servicing the public that focus on continuous improvement and delivering positive outcomes for residents. This project is included on the City Manager’s 2025-2027 Workplan as a Tier 2 project.

Currently, services provided by the City of Thunder Bay are de-centralized and are accessed through multiple points of contact across all departments sometimes without resolution for the customer at the first point of contact. The introduction of a centralized model will strive to streamline communication channels, reduce response wait times, enhance online services, train and empower staff, improve integration of services, increase proactive communication, and provide for a more efficient complaint resolution process.

With the project launching in September 2025, it is Administration's plan to fully launch the new Customer Service Division in Q4 2026.

A Get Involved site has been launched where residents and city staff can find information relating to the project as well as opportunities for involvement and feedback. The first survey is currently available and will close on October 31. Focus groups are being organized for the month of November, a sign up is also available through the Get Involved site. Staff will be available to answer any questions or concerns about the project at the Thunder Bay Talks event being held on October 22 at the Moose Hall on Fort William Road.

At this initial stage, the project will be managed within existing staff resources. The proposed 2026 capital and operating budget will include requests for investment in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software licensing and implementation, office space upgrades, staff training and change management initiatives.

The project also includes the development of customer service standards for the City. This policy work will ensure that the service provided by all City employees to customers is consistent and reflects a commitment to customer service excellence. Engagement and research on these standards is underway with a report scheduled to Council in Q1 2026.

Administration will report on significant milestones as the project proceeds, with a full report to City Council prior to Q4 2026.