

Municipality of Lakeshore – Report to Council

Chief Administrative Officer

Information Management & Technology
Solutions



To: Mayor & Members of Council
From: Truper McBride, CAO
Date: September 15, 2021
Subject: Data Backup and Disaster Recovery – Service Levels

Recommendation

Authorize a first charge in the amount of \$30,000 to the base budget commencing in the 2022 budget to support annualized costs of the proposed data backup and discovery strategy, as presented at the September 28, 2021 Council Meeting.

Background

The Organizational Review accepted by Council in March 2021 presented a number of recommendations to guide the restructuring of the Information Management and Technology Division over the next five to ten years (Appendix A). The recommendations specifically highlight vulnerabilities to the Municipality's data backup processes as presented below:

Business Continuity/ Disaster Recovery Plan is not in place

- Business impact analysis and IT risk assessments are not conducted to determine recovery time objectives. As a result, threats and vulnerabilities of IT infrastructure are not being identified and the proper IT controls and security tools are not in place.
- Budget has been allocated for the development of BCP/DR but requires a lead resource and engagement with the business to effectively execute.
- Implications – data quality and reliance is compromised with data exposed to risk of loss and privacy breaches

In August 2021, Administration proceeded with the development of a Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan which is nearly complete. This strategy will guide IT operations should a disaster event be experienced.

Due to near disaster events experienced in August, Administration proceeded to enter a temporary offsite backup agreement with no fees for 60 days. This backup service ensures critical systems are backed up nightly to offsite storage locations in separate geographies to provide redundancy.

On September 15th 2021, a disaster event was realized with the Municipality's Exchange Server (Email). The full impact of this disaster event could have been catastrophic with complete loss of email data if the temporary backup solution put in place in August had not been executed.

This report is being brought to Council to recommend increasing levels of service in IT to support a new backup and disaster mitigation program and address significant risk the Municipality.

Comments

Data Backup and Disaster Recovery Service Enhancement

The Municipality's existing backup solution is high risk and requires modernizing. As a result of a series of system outages, work stoppages, and security concerns, experienced in the month of August and September, Administration has developed a new backup solution which will begin storing the Municipality's data in a secure off-site location in the cloud. Administration is recommending moving immediately to an increased level of service in order to address risks and realized vulnerabilities to municipal operations.

This backup solution is considered an industry best practice and significantly shields the Municipality from ransomware attacks and protection of data/privacy as a result of cyber security breaches. Currently the Municipality pays \$25,000 in cybersecurity insurance premiums, which will climb over time should the cybersecurity measures such as this not be put in place.

Should Council chose not to proceed with the recommended action and maintain existing service levels regarding backups, the Municipality will be accepting the risks presented related to privacy, cybersecurity, ransom attacks, and data loss.

Others Consulted

Gary Walker, Optimus SBR.

Financial Impacts

In order to support increased service levels and address the significant risk concerns identified in this report to protection of privacy, Administration is recommending \$30,000 be pre-dedicated to the base of the draft 2022 Budget as an annualized support cost for the new remote cloud backup solution. Administration will manage the support costs for the remainder of 2021 through existing budgets and wage gapping from IT.

Administration is able to fund the \$12,000 cost of the on-site hardware required to support the proposed backup solution through the existing Backup Enhancement budget that was not spent.

Attachments

Appendix A - IT Review Findings and Recommendations

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Data Backup and Disaster Recovery Service Level.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Sep 23, 2021

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

Jessica Gaspard

Kristen Newman