



Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

1593 Four Mile Creek Road
P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0
905-468-3266 www.notl.com

REPORT #: FES-24-008 **COMMITTEE DATE:** 2024-06-18
REPORT TO: COTW-General **DUE IN COUNCIL:** 2024-06-25
SUBJECT: Support for Prince Edward County Resolution 2024-46

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is respectfully recommended that:

- 1.1 Council receive this report.
- 1.2 Council support Prince Edward County resolution 2024-26 “Expanding the Life Span of Fire Apparatus.”

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire & Emergency Services Staff have reviewed the resolution from Prince Edward County and recommends Council support the resolution.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to outline the advantages and disadvantages related to expanding the life span of fire apparatus, to assist Council in determining if they wish to support the Prince Edward County Resolution 2024-46.

4. BACKGROUND

At the January 30, 2024 Council meeting, a motion was made to have Staff review Prince Edward County Resolution 2024-46 “Expanding the Life Span of Fire Apparatus,” and report back indicating whether Council should support the resolution or not.

5. DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS

The life span of an apparatus is governed by industry best practices and the application of recognized industry standards, such as Ontario Fire Service Section 21 Guidance Notes, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC), and Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS). Most of these documents speak to replacing an apparatus or redesignating an apparatus as a first run to a second run at or around 15 to 20 years.

The resolution from Prince Edward County specifically notes that instructions be made to several provincial officials based on the replacement date outlined within the FUS documents. Specifically within a FUS Technical Bulletin, it notes:

“Fire apparatus should respond to first alarms for the first fifteen years of service. During this period it has reasonably been shown that apparatus effectively responds and performs as designed without failure at least 95% of the time. For the next five years, it should be held in reserve status for use at major fires or used as a temporary replacement for out-of-service first line apparatus. Apparatus should be retired from service at twenty years of age. Present practice indicates the recommended service periods and protocols are usually followed by the first purchaser. However, at the end of that period, the apparatus is either traded in on new apparatus or sold to another fire department”

FUS is a national organization administered by OPTA Information Intelligence, formerly CGI Insurance Business Services, formerly the Insurers' Advisory Organization and Canadian Underwriters Association. FUS provides data on public fire protection for fire insurance statistical work and underwriting purposes of subscribing insurance companies. Subscribers of Fire Underwriters Survey represent approximately 85 percent of the private sector property and casualty insurers in Canada.

Based on the information above, citizens in communities with Fire Departments that maintain vehicles older than 20 years may be subject to paying a higher insurance rate than those who live in the community that maintains apparatus at 20 years or younger. The Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire & Emergency Services believes that other considerations should be considered when looking to provide an insurance benefit to the community.

When considering whether an apparatus should provide a benefit, several factors should be considered, not just the age of the apparatus. As identified with *NFPA 1901 - Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus*, *NFPA 1911 - Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Emergency Vehicles*, And *NFPA 1912 – Standard for Fire Apparatus Refurbishing*.

- What is the true condition of the existing apparatus? Has it been in a major accident, or has something else happened to it?
- What advancements in design, safety, and technology have improved the efficiency and safety of personnel? Firefighting is already a dangerous job, so ensuring that the equipment, including apparatus, is not outdated aims at minimizing the risk of injuries.
- Does the current apparatus meet the Department's needs for the area it is serving? Is it designed for the way the fire department operates today and is expected to operate in the foreseeable future, or is the apparatus functionally obsolete? Can it carry everything needed to do the job without overloading?
- What is the anticipated cost per year to operate an older apparatus? What would the cost per year be for a new apparatus? Insurance costs, downtime costs, maintenance costs, depreciation, reliability, and the safety of the users and the public all have to be considered. At what rate are those costs rising each year? Are parts still readily available for all the components of the apparatus? A refurbished 15-year-old apparatus still has 15-year-old parts in it. How long could the fire department operate without the apparatus if it suddenly needed major repairs?

Fire apparatus serving across Ontario are all subject to different working conditions and frequency of use. There are fire apparatus with 8 to 10 years of service in large communities that are simply worn out. There are also fire apparatus that were manufactured with quality components, that have had excellent maintenance, and that have responded to a minimum number of incidents that are still in serviceable condition after 20 years. Directly providing a benefit based on the age of an apparatus does not seem to truly represent the service the community is getting from its fire apparatus.

6. STRATEGIC PLAN

The content of this report supports the following Strategic Plan initiatives:

Pillar

3. Enrich Community Assets, Environment, & Infrastructure

Priority

3.1 Assets

Action

3.1 a) Assets

Pillar

2. Good Governance

Priority

2.1 Financially Sustainable Future

Action

2.1 c) Efficiencies and Cost Reductions/Avoidances

7. OPTIONS

- 7.1 Option 1: Council support resolution 2024-26, as written and presented by Prince Edward County. **(Recommended)**
- 7.2 Option 2: Council not support resolution 2024-26, as written and presented by Prince Edward County *(Not Recommended)*

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications related to this report.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications related to this report.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

If Council approves this motion, its endorsement will be forwarded to other municipalities and local provincial officials.

11. CONCLUSION

At this time, Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire & Emergency Services Staff have reviewed the resolution from Prince Edward County and recommends Council support the resolution.

12. PREVIOUS REPORTS

N/A

13. APPENDICES

- Appendix I – Resolution 2024-46

Respectfully submitted:

Prepared by:



**Jay Plato
Fire Chief & CEMC /
Director of Municipal Enforcement,
Fire & Emergency Services**

Submitted by:



**Bruce Zvaniga
Chief Administrative Officer (Interim)**