REPORT
Meeting Date: 2023-11-16
Regional Council Budget

For Information

REPORT TITLE:	**Improvements in Service Delivery 2023**
FROM:	Davinder Valeri, Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Corporate Services

OBJECTIVE

To provide an update on the service improvements and efficiencies gained through the Region of Peel's Continuous Improvement Program in 2023.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Region's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement helps deliver improved service outcomes that provide value for tax dollars and contributes to advancing the Region's Strategic Plan and vision of Community for Life.
- With the decision by the Province to dissolve the Region of Peel, staff are now required to support the work of the Transition Board while at the same time maintaining the business operations of essential services and managing the increasing complexity of community needs. The intense work related to the dissolution of Peel adds to the mental and emotional strain that staff already feel in these uncertain times and further reduces the time and capacity that is required to be spent on service innovation.
- Nevertheless, continuous improvement remains a priority at the Region with 31 Continuous Improvement Initiatives completed in 2023 which contributed $939K in cost savings and $3.32M in cost avoidance. These results are also reflected in the 2024 budget and service plans.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

The Region of Peel remains committed to delivering services that are effective and efficient and which provide value for tax dollars. This commitment drives the advancement of the Region's Strategic Plan and helps ensure that the Region's efforts are aligned with achieving the vision of building a Community for Life in Peel.

Between 2018 to 2022, 180 continuous improvement initiatives (CIIs) have been completed resulting in $17.9M of cost savings and a further $20.2M in cost avoidance. These achievements are the result of using Lean Six Sigma, a structured problem-solving data-driven methodology, and by building internal capacity of staff to document, measure and improve service-delivery processes for better customer satisfaction. We continue to work with Finance to ensure validation of financial benefits achieved and alignment with annual budget submissions.

With the decision by the Province to dissolve the Region of Peel, staff are now required to support the work of the Transition Board while at the same time maintaining the business operations of essential services and managing the increasing complexity of community needs. The intense work related to the dissolution of Peel adds to the mental and emotional strain that staff already feel in these uncertain times and further reduces the time and capacity that is required to be spent on service innovation. Nevertheless, continuous improvement (CI) remains a priority at the Region and CIIs continue to be completed in 2023, with results summarized in this report.

2. Findings

a) Continuous Improvement Program – 2023 Results

In 2023, 31 CIIs were completed with $939K in cost savings and $3.32M in cost avoidance achieved, as summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below. Cost savings from these initiatives also contributed to the achievement of Peel's annual cost containment targets which, for 2024, is estimated to be $5.8 million. More information about these initiatives can be found in Appendix I.

Notable initiatives completed in 2023 include:

- Cost savings of $450K achieved by reprocessing organics "compost overs" and recovering woodchips for amendment materials
- Cost savings of $210K achieved in a pilot program that reduced contamination in the collection and processing of blue-box recycling
- Reducing energy use on peak demand days at Water and Wastewater facilities and working in partnership with the Province to receive lower electricity fee rates, which resulted in a cost avoidance of $1.844M above the $6.6M in cost avoidance reported in 2022
- Cost avoidance of $74K from staff time saved by automating processes used by staff to conduct public health investigations.
- Automation of core functions in Treasury Services allowed for more efficient investment trading, with an estimated $400K in cost avoidance achieved

Table 1: 2023 Cost Savings and Cost Avoidance – Utility Rate Supported Services

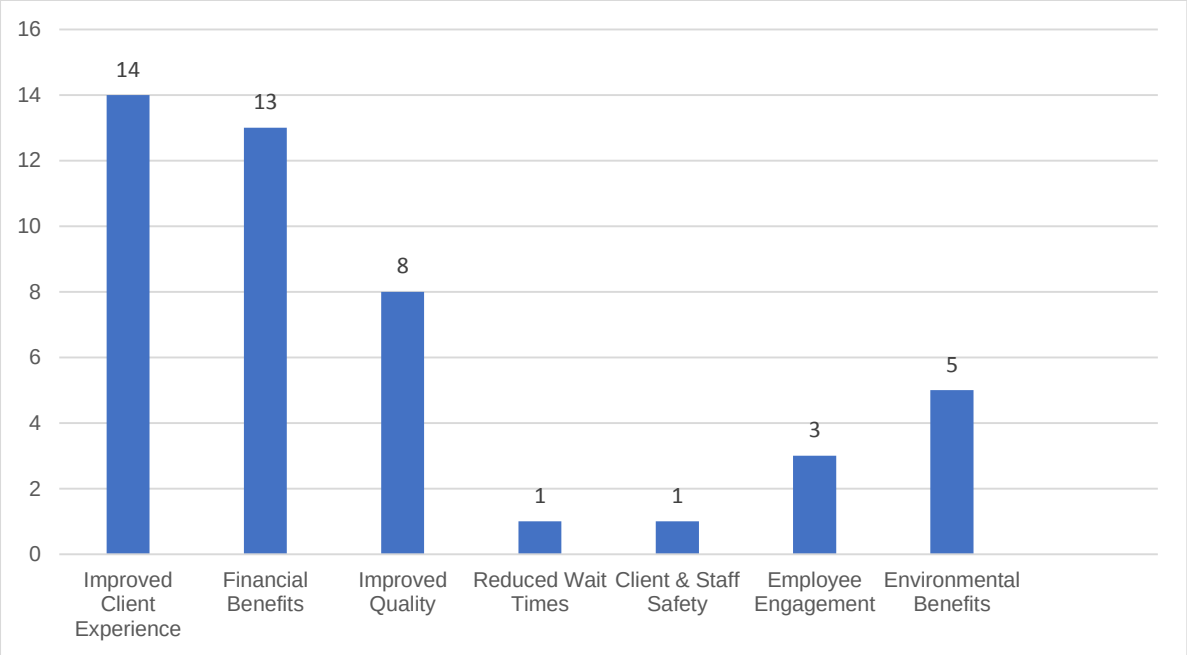
Service	# of CI Initiatives	Cost Savings ($000's)	Cost Avoidance ($000's)
Strategic Plan Outcome: Communities are integrated, safe and complete			
Water and Wastewater	3	$20	$1,894
Total	**3**	**$20K**	**$1,894K**

Table 2: 2023 Cost Savings and Cost Avoidance – Property Tax Supported Services

Service	# of CI Initiatives	Cost Savings ($000's)	Cost Avoidance ($000's)
Strategic Plan Outcome: People's lives are improved in their time of need			
Early Years and Child Care	2	-	$10
Seniors Services	3	-	-
Strategic Plan Outcome: Communities are integrated, safe and complete			
Heritage, Arts and Culture	1	-	-
Public Health	7	-	$756
Public Works Operations Support	3	$235	-
Transportation	1	$24	$70
Waste Management	6	$660	-
Strategic Plan Outcome: Government is future oriented and accountable			
Business Services	2	-	$580
Information and Technology	3	-	$6
Total	**28**	**$919K**	**$1,422K**

In addition to the financial benefits, other benefits, such as improved client experience, employee engagement, and environmental benefits, have also been achieved. Chart 1 below shows the types of benefits achieved across these CIIs. (Note that some CIIs have more than one type of benefit achieved and are included below).

Chart 1: CIIs Completed with Type of Benefits Achieved



b) Transformational Programs

In addition to the specific improvements noted so far, there are several transformational programs and changes underway that will contribute to improving service delivery, regardless of specific governance decisions to be made.

Work is underway to support the Region's Digital Peel Strategy, which includes the design, digitization, and implementation of 27 services over a three-year period (2022-2025). These services represent the largest opportunities for improvements in efficiencies and customer experience and enable service continuity if in-person service access is not possible.

Additionally, the Region's diverse population requires us to think differently about how we identify and remove systemic barriers inherent in the delivery of our programs and services. These efforts include demonstrating commitment to acting on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's call to action to address the unique needs of indigenous peoples. Conducting community-based participatory research and creating a community of practice that will include equity-seeking groups and indigenous peoples are critical first steps in creating equitable and inclusive programs and services.

BILL 112 RISKS AND IMPLICATIONS

Recent legislative changes introduced by Bill 112, the *Hazel McCallion Act (Peel Dissolution), 2023* have required staff to support the work of the Transition Board while at the same time maintaining delivery of essential services to the community. This has reduced the time and staff capacity spent on service innovation and improvement in 2023. It is expected that the resource draw to support the Transition Board and dissolution activities will continue in 2024. As such, it is anticipated that there will be fewer improvement initiatives completed in 2024.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Cost savings and cost avoidance achieved have been validated by Finance staff and are reflected in the 2024 budget report to Council and in service plans as part of the overall savings achieved of $5.7 million. Additional benefits, such as improved client experience and employee well-being, are reflected in budget stories as they play a significant role in building a Community for Life in Peel.

CONCLUSION

The Region of Peel remains committed to delivering services that provide value to taxpayers. The Continuous Improvement Program contributes to a strong culture of continuous improvement at all levels of the organization and ensures alignment with the Region's annual planning and budgeting process.

Improvements in Service Delivery 2023

APPENDICES

Appendix I – 2023 Service Delivery Improvements

Davinder Valeri, Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Corporate Services

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2023 Service Delivery Improvements

Table 1 – List of Completed Continuous Improvement Initiatives (CIIs) by Benefit Type Achieved

	Service (Sub-Service)	Initiative Name	Benefit Type Achieved						
			Improved Quality	Reduced Wait time	Improved Client Experience	Improved Employee Engagement	Health and Safety	Environ-mental Benefit	Cost Savings / Avoidance
Strategic Plan Outcome: People's lives are improved in their time of need									
1.	Early Years and Child Care	Automation of Annual Review for Child Care	✓		✓				Cost avoidance $10K
2.	Early Years and Child Care	Family Portal Implementation	✓		✓				
3.	Seniors Services (Adult Day Services)	Streamlined Adult Day Services Admission Consent Process			✓				
4.	Seniors Services (Adult Day Services)	Improving Experience of Clients Accessing TransHelp			✓				
5.	Seniors Services (Adult Day Services	Alaya Care Implementation	✓		✓				
Strategic Plan Outcome: Communities are integrated, safe and complete									
6.	Heritage, Arts and Culture	Open Public Access Catalogue		✓	✓				
7.	Public Health (Health Protection)	Automation of Communicable Diseases Investigations Process						✓	Cost avoidance $74K
8.	Public Health (Immunization Services)	Courier Service Reduction							Cost avoidance $180k
9.	Public Health (Immunization Services)	Basic Life Safety and N95 Fit Testing							Cost avoidance $2K
10.	Public Health (Immunization Services)	Service Delivery Model Optimization				✓			Cost avoidance $500k
11.	Public Health (Immunization Services)	Vaccine Management Improvement	✓				✓		
12.	Public Health (Immunization Services)	End-of-Day Reporting Process Optimization	✓						
13.	Public Health (Immunization Services)	Removing Registration at Mixed Clinics		✓	✓				
14.	Public Works Operations Support	Water Bill Adjustment Pilot Program			✓				

Appendix I
Improvements in Service Delivery 2023

	Service (Sub-Service)	Initiative Name	Benefit Type Achieved						
			Improved Quality	Reduced Wait time	Improved Client Experience	Improved Employee Engagement	Health and Safety	Environ-mental Benefit	Cost Savings / Avoidance
15.	Public Works Operations Support	Online Water Billing Portal			✓				Cost savings $160K
16.	Public Works Operations Support	Water Metering Infrastructure Upgrades			✓	✓			Cost savings $75K
17.	Transportation	Ditching Maintenance			✓	✓			Cost Savings $24K, cost avoidance $70K
18.	Waste Management	School Organics Program						✓	
19.	Waste Management	Bike Take-Back Program						✓	
20.	Waste Management	Chemical Cab Pilot						✓	
21.	Waste Management	Recycling Contamination Reduction	✓						Cost savings $210K
22.	Waste Management	Geographic Information System (GIS) Complaint Tracking			✓				
23.	Waste Management	Enhancement to Compost Amendment Material Plan	✓						Cost savings $450K
24.	Water and Wastewater	ICI Program Participation						✓	Cost avoidance $1.844M
25.	Water and Wastewater	Automation and Data Solutions Ignition Upgrade	✓						Cost savings $20K
26.	Water and Wastewater	Driveway Restoration Improvements			✓				Cost avoidance $50K
Strategic Plan Outcome: Government is future oriented and accountable									
27.	Business Services (Communications)	Five9 Technology Implementation							Cost avoidance $160K
28.	Business Services (Treasury Services)	Treasury Operational Improvements							Cost avoidance $420K
29.	Information and Technology (IT Solutions)	Robotic Process Automation Pilot	✓						Cost avoidance $6K
30.	Information and Technology (IT Solutions)	Resident Online Forms			✓				
31.	Information and Technology (IT Operations)	Hybrid Meeting Rooms	✓			✓			

Table 2 – Details of Completed 2023 CIIs

	Service (Sub-Service) / Initiative Name	Business Issue being Addressed	Benefits Realized
Strategic Plan Outcome: People's lives are improved in their time of need			
1.	**Early Years and Child Care/** Automation of Annual Review for Child Care Subsidy (Q1 – Q2 2023)	Current process is paper-based, and application forms require more information than necessary for eligibility assessment.	• Transitioned paper-based annual review process to an electronic process resulting in a cost avoidance of $10K in mailing costs • Reduced program eligibility requirements to better support vulnerable families with one-third less documentation required from families • Streamlined forms making them easier to complete virtually
2.	**Early Years and Child Care/** Family Portal Implementation (Q1 – Q2 2023)	Implementing a secure portal for family communications and documents - eliminating email communication from families	• Implemented updated Children's Services portal (Ontario Child Care Management System – OCCMS) which replaces email communications and ensures personal information is kept safe and confidential
3.	**Seniors Services (Adult Day Services)/** Streamlined Admission Consent Process (Q2 2022 – Q1 2023)	Adult Day Services (ADS) enrollment process is lengthy with inconsistent forms that are difficult to understand.	• Streamlined ADS process and forms • Clients and caregivers have a better understanding of what they are signing with reduced legal jargon and length of the form they need to review and sign
4.	**Seniors Services (Adult Day Services)/** Improving Experience of Clients Accessing TransHelp (Q2 2019 – Q3 2022)	Adult Day Services (ADS) clients/ caregivers have to ask their primary care practitioners complete lengthy TransHelp application forms and may be charged a fee.	• Improved process eliminates the need for the application form to be completed and just requires clients to give consent for Human Services to share their information with TransHelp
5.	**Seniors Services (Adult Day Services)/** Alaya Care Implementation (Q1 2022 – Q3 2023)	Use of Point-Click-Care (PCC) for client billing requires workarounds and duplications of work in SharePoint and Excel and does not allow for itemized billing.	• Replacement of PCC with Alaya Care software allows staff supporting virtual programs to have access to client charts regardless of which ADS program they are registered in • Improved client experience by providing them with one itemized invoice for all of their services
Strategic Plan Outcome: Communities are integrated, safe and complete			
6.	**Heritage, Arts and Culture/** Open Public Access Catalogue (Q2 – Q4 2022)	Need to develop an open public access catalogue (OPAC) that would allow the community to search important information about the Region's cultural collections and archival holdings.	• Over 700 queries using OPAC in the first 6 months of 2023 • Selected public domain information describing the Archives, Museum, and Art collections can be consulted by people and groups across Peel or around the world • Reduced retrieval times
7.	**Public Health (Health Protection)/** Automation of Communicable Diseases Investigations Process (Q1 2023)	Opportunity to automate processes used by staff to conduct public health investigations.	• Cost avoidance of $74K in staff time saved
8.	**Public Health (Immunization Services)/** Courier Service Reduction (Q1 – Q3 2023)	Optimizing use of staff for transport of vaccines and dry supplies to reduce dependency on vendors.	• Cost avoidance of $180K by using internal staff for courier needs

9.	**Public Health (Immunization Services)**/ Basic Life Safety (BLS) and N95 Fit Testing (Q1 – Q2 2023)	Optimizing the use of internal expertise and resourcing in Paramedic Services to reduce costs associated with BLS re-certification requirement for nursing staff and N95 mask fit testing.	• Cost avoidance of $2K by leveraging mask fitting services for Immunization Services staff from within Paramedic Services • Centralizing process also provides surge coverage in case of program capacity requirement increases
10.	**Public Health (Immunization Services)**/ Service Delivery Model Optimization (Q1 – Q2 2023)	Changes in community needs and the desire to provide more respite time for operational staff.	• Cost avoidance of $500K by shifting from a 7-day to a 6-days per week operation and adding more staff on the remaining 6 days to achieve savings in weekend shift premiums, casual staff wages, and courier costs • Improved employee engagement by allowing staff to have 2 consecutive days off.
11.	**Public Health (Immunization Services)**/ Vaccine Management Improvement (Q1 – Q2 2023)	Use of colour-coding labels for various COVID-19 vaccines were contributing to medication and documentation errors.	• Pilot project aimed to support staff behaviour change when handling, administering, and documenting vaccine, increase staff accountability, and support staff training needs • Zero medical errors reported since April 2023
12.	**Public Health (Immunization Services)**/ End-of-Day Reporting Process Optimization (Q1 – Q2 2023)	End-of-day reporting processes were manual and resource intensive.	• A simplified, integrated, and automated reporting process for all clinic modalities reduces the risk of errors in reporting, interpretation, and analysis • Enhanced employee experience and utilization of staff time to focus on other process improvements
13.	**Public Health (Immunization Services)**/ Removing Registration at Mixed Clinics (Q1 – Q3 2023)	With a decrease in the number of clients seeking COVID-19 vaccines, there was an opportunity to move clients out of registration lines in mixed-use clinics and having them seen directly by their immunizer leveraging volunteers in clinics.	• Wait time for clients to be seen by immunizer reduced from 5-10 minutes to less than 2 minutes • Improved client experience • Reduced staff burden at registration desk
14.	**Public Works Operations Support/** Water Bill Adjustment Pilot Program (Q2 2022)	There is a need to provide financial assistance to water customers experiencing undetected leaks that are raising their water bills.	• Enhanced customer satisfaction by providing $206K in financial assistance to 255 accounts
15.	**Public Works Operations Support/** Online Water Billing Portal (Q1 2022)	Opportunity to digitize the water billing process to achieve efficiencies and improve client experience.	• Cost savings of $160K in 2023 realized from reduced print and postage costs • Enhanced features including bill and payment reminders • Ability for clients to access their information anywhere, anytime
16.	**Public Works Operations Support**/ Water Metering Infrastructure Upgrades (Q1 – Q4 2023)	Current meter reading process requires staff to walk up to meters and may face risks in accessing meter locations.	• Cost savings of $75K in reduced need for staff • Improved client experience as staff no longer need to access meters located behind locked doors and gates • Improved employee experience in staff not having to navigate potentially unsafe conditions when accessing private properties
17.	**Transportation/** Ditching Maintenance (Q1 – Q4 2023)	Hiring private contractors to haul and dispose of excess soil from ditch cleaning operations is costly.	• Diverted excess waste soils to the Chinguacousy Landfill filling project where soils are being reused to improve the land grade. • Cost savings of $24K and cost avoidance of $70K achieved
18.	**Waste Management**/ School Organics Program Pilot (Q3	Regional schools lack organics programs, resulting in organic materials going into landfill.	• Piloted organics collection pilot with 66 schools in Peel with 115 tonnes of organic material diverted from landfill

	2022 – Q2 2023)		
19.	**Waste Management/** Bike Take-Back Program (Q1 – Q4 2023)	Opportunity to refurbish usable bicycles being disposed of at Community Recycling Centres.	• Partnered with non-profit organizations to provide them with bikes to be refurbished and given to the community. • 839 bikes (over 11 tonnes of materials) were diverted from scrap in 2023
20.	**Waste Management/** Chemical Cab Pilot (Q1 2021 – Q3 2023)	Residents in multi-residential buildings do not typically bring chemicals, batteries and electronics to Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) for proper disposal.	• Pilot completed with 4.7 tonnes of hazardous waste and electronics collected from 21 participating buildings
21.	**Waste Management/** Recycling Contamination Reduction (Q1 – Q4 2022)	Contamination in blue-box recycling process results in additional costs in processing this material.	• Pilot completed to reinforce proper blue-box recycling requirements in curbside and multi-residential dwellings • $210K in cost savings in collection and processing costs due to reduced contamination
22.	**Waste Management/** Geographic Information System (GIS) Complaint Tracking (Q1 – Q4 2022)	Opportunity to better understand types of resident complaints by using GIS tracking so that targeted actions can be implemented.	• Using GIS to heat map complaints and strategically and effectively focus enforcement and collection staff efforts to improve service delivery • Increase contractor monitoring • Increase ability to target education and enforcement
23.	**Waste Management/** Enhancement to Compost Amendment Material Plan (Q1 – Q4 2022)	The need to purchase third-party “amended materials” for the composting process is costly.	• Recovering woodchips for amendment materials while reprocessing “compost overs resulted in $450K in annualized cost savings
24.	**Water and Wastewater/** Industrial Conservation Initiative (ICI) Program Participation (Q1 – Q4 2023)	Opportunity to obtain lower energy rates from the Province by reducing energy consumption at W/WW facilities on peak demand days.	• Reduction in energy consumption required for W/WW facilities though peak demand management during peak days • Cost avoidance of $1.844M above the $6.6M in cost avoidance reported in the past
25.	**Water and Wastewater/** Automation and Data Solutions Ignition Upgrade (Q1 – Q4 2022)	Need to investigate software options that improve staff’s ability to understand system data.	• Cost savings of $20K from reduced licensing costs by upgrading to Ignition platform • Improved quality and decision-making due to more intuitive machine interface and ability to address alarms faster
26.	**Water and Wastewater/** Driveway Restoration Improvements (Q1 – Q4 2023)	Current process to open up resident driveways to replace shut-off rods results in large areas that need to be patched.	• Implemented process to cut smaller bore holes requiring less work to repair driveways and leaving driveways with less noticeable alterations • Cost avoidance of $50K from staff time saved
Strategic Plan Outcome: Government is future oriented and accountable			
27.	**Business Services (Communications) Five9 Technology Implementation** (Q1 2022 – Q4 2023)	Need to roll out Five9 technology to programs beyond the Customer Contact Centre (CCC).	• Cost avoidance of $160K have been achieved by supporting other programs in setting up Five9 using CCC staff instead of vendors, and by shifting server management from the US to Canada • This is in addition to the $175K in cost avoidance

			achieved in 2019 in rollout out Five9 in the CCC
28.	**Business Services (Treasury Services)/** Treasury Operational Improvements (Q1 – Q4 2023)	Opportunity to further automate Treasury's core functions to improve trade execution processes and achieve operational efficiencies.	• Cost avoidance of $20K derived from employee time saved in month-end activities • Automation of our core functions allows for more efficient investment trading, with an estimated $400K in cost avoidance achieved
29.	**Information and Technology (Information Solutions)/** Robotic Process Automation Pilot (Q1 – Q2 2023)	There are a number of highly manual, repetitive, rule-based tasks that consume a lot of staff time.	• Robotic Process Automation (RPA) pilots completed • Cost avoidance of $6K achieved for staff time saved in automatically updating Paramedic staff driver licence information • Lessons learned indicate that there is value in using RPA in cases where automation can run unattended and allow users the full use of their devices to complete other work
30.	**Information and Technology (IT Solutions)** Resident Online Forms (Q1 – Q3 2023)	There is a need to improve client accessibility with pdf fillable and web-based forms on the Region's internet site.	• Redesigned 14 new digital forms that reduce security risks, enable process efficiencies, ensure accessibility, and create a better customer experience • New forms will allow residents to initiate a service request, apply for programs, pay for services, book appointments, etc.
31.	**Information and Technology (IT Operations)/** Hybrid Meeting Rooms (Q1 – Q3 2023)	There is a need to enable a flexible and hybrid workforce to support in-person and online collaboration.	• Over 75% of meeting rooms have been updated to include updated technology • Improved employee engagement and collaboration opportunities