

CAO Succession Plan – CAO Planned Retirement

Purpose

A CAO succession plan is an important document for Council to agree on and have available to the members to fill this position on a full-time basis.

CAO Position Assets/Requirements for Consideration as Priorities

The following is a possible list of skill sets and personal attributes that Council should consider in candidates, as either being mandatory requirements, expertise areas needed, that it would be of value in the position to achieve successful and those items that are trainable:

- Accomplishments have been demonstrated
- Business experience
- Common sense
- Community fit
- Community passion
- Communicator
- Competence
- Conflict resolution skills
- Customer Service experience
- Creative thinker
- Entrepreneurial attitude
- Financial and budgeting background
- Fiscal efficiency thinking
- Fiscal responsibility
- Leadership skills
- Municipal or related sector service experience
- Open minded and decisive
- People Management experience
- Professionalism
- Solution oriented
- Team builder

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Internal Candidate Process

Council should start discussions with the incumbent CAO and the HR Coordinator 12 to 18 months prior to the planned retirement date, if that Council-CAO relationship has trust and confidence of the members exists, to work together on CAO succession options. The steps to follow under this process should be:

1. First staff recommend an internal posting for an "Intent to Apply". The purpose of this application process is to make Council aware of the potential internal candidates.

Proposed Timeline: September 27, 2021

2. After the closing date of the internal posting, staff recommend a closed session report to notify Council if there are any internal candidates and have discussions about the candidates. Staff recommend that the CAO be included in this discussion for trusted input and the ability to answer questions that could relate back to the position.

Proposed Timeline: Post: September 16 – 27.

Closed Session Report: October 6, 2021

3. Once internal candidate(s) have shown interest as possible future CAO applicants, the members should individually monitor, assess and document their observations during Council meetings and during any day-to-day interactions with the individual(s). This should be done over a 60 day period, to provide the time to observe and assess the positives and the concerns, in order to reach a consensus of an applicant's viability and the probability of long term success in the position. Bottom line is, do you have the trust, and do you have the confidence in this individual. Staff recommend a closed session report at the end of the observation period to discuss their findings. If no internal applicant(s) pass this observation period, proceed with an internal and external CAO recruitment process, as outlined later in this document.

Proposed Timeline: Observation Period: October 7 to December 7, 2021

Informal Council Interviews: December 8, 2021

(not more than 30 minutes)

Closed session: December 15, 2021.

4. The CAO Job Description should be reviewed and updated as required by the incumbent CAO and Human Resources. Once updated, the job description will go to Council for final approval prior to job posting.

Proposed Timeline: December 15, 2021

5. Council should now consider, if there is an interested internal applicant(s) that still has Council's confidence, that they then proceed and post an internal only CAO job posting to allow all employees the opportunity to apply for the vacancy, to comply with the Township's Hiring Policy. If no internal applicant(s) apply for the posted CAO position, proceed with an internal and external CAO recruitment process, as outlined later in this document.

6. Once the internal posting has closed, Council should work with the incumbent CAO, Human Resources or a consultant to draft interview questions and develop multiple scenario(s) to test the applicant(s) skills related to administrative, building, by-law enforcement, financial, human resources, planning, recreation and roads type of issues.

7. As per Southgate Hiring Policy #8 "In the situation of recruiting a new CAO the whole of council will constitute the Hiring Committee with the assistance of internal human resources staff and or an external HR support consultant to manage the selection process.". Council should next conduct the initial interview(s) with the internal applicant(s). Once the first round of interview(s) have been completed, Council should discuss the applicants in a closed session regular council meeting and decide if a second interview is required to dig deeper into unconfirmed issues and any outstanding concerns. If there are no internal applicant(s) that satisfy Council for the internal posted CAO position, proceed with and internal and external CAO recruitment process, as outlined later in this document.
8. If a second interview is required, it should be completed with the qualified internal applicant(s). Council should with the incumbent CAO, Human Resources or consultant, create a second list of interview questions and discussion to investigate and focus on issues and concerns from the first interview and could also consider requesting a report and presentation from the applicant(s) on their vision and plan for Southgate's 3 major issues, over the next 3 years. This process will either confirm a worthy candidate for the internal posted CAO position or necessitate an internal and external CAO recruitment process to increase to the number of applicants for comparison purposes, as outlined later in this document.

Council should ensure at this point the internal applicants are not shut out of the process. For an internal applicant to get this far there has to have been significant interest by both parties. The second internal interviews should not rule out the internal applicant(s), but more reflect that Council would like to explore external applicants for comparison purposes.

The Council Hiring Committee should at the end of the second round of the internal interviews make it very clear with the internal applicant(s) that an internal and external posting may be a consideration of Council, to ensure the Township hires the best possible person for the position and in no way is a reflection on the confidence in the internal candidate(s) for consideration during that process. Staff suggests that all adequately qualified internal applicants, that receives a second interview, should be advanced to the internal-external process for consideration. Council should also confirm that the internal applicants are still interested in the internal-external posting, as some may become frustrated with the length of the process, which is a risk Council should be aware of and consider.

9. Council will now need to decide in a closed session regular Council meeting if the best internal candidate has the confidence of a majority of the members to take on the CAO position on a full time basis. If not, then

proceed with an internal and external CAO recruitment process, as outlined later in this document.

10. If Council decides to proceed with an internal hiring for the CAO position an employee contract will then be negotiated between the candidate and Council. It would be an option to engage the services of the Township's Human Resources Consultant, to take out any internal biases. Consideration for a 6 to 12 month probation period and a transition period may be a consideration, to allow the internal employee the option through our policy, to return to their previous position, if they wish to do so in the first 6 months.
11. The decision to proceed with the internal applicant should be made at not less than 6 months prior to the incumbent CAO's final day, in order to allow the necessary time for filling of other vacated position(s) caused by this internal CAO appointment.
Proposed Timeline: June 2022
12. Staff will need 3 to 4 months to possibly post and hire for multiple positions to infill jobs vacated, to support the CAO transition.
13. The final 60 days of the incumbent CAO's employment should allow a time for the transitioning CAO to allow working time in the new position and at the same time transition out of the previous department responsibilities.

CAO Position Internal & External Recruitment Process

Recruitment success is highly impacted by a good succession plan and thorough interview questioning, scenario responses, applicant presentations, employment & personal reference checks, social media research and background checks to reach a well researched and informed hiring decision. The steps to follow for an external hiring process is as follows:

- i. The Township posts internally and externally for 30 days, on the Township's website, Facebook page & promote through other internal social media options, advertise in local (Dundalk Herald & Mount Forest Confederate) and regional (Owen Sound Sun-Times) newspapers and industry communication promotion options like AMO, OMAA, etc., for the open CAO position, to start the internal and external CAO recruitment process;
- ii. The Council Hiring Committee should work with the incumbent CAO and/or Human Resources, or trusted staff member not involved in the process or an Human Resources (HR) Consultant to draft interview questions and develop three scenario(s) to test the applicant(s) skills related to administrative, financial, and roads types of challenges;

- iii. After the closing date for the posted CAO position, the Council Hiring Committee should review the applications received and select those for external applications that are deemed qualified for a first interview;
- iv. Schedule times with the Council Hiring Committee, HR, if required, meet with all the internal and selected external applicants to conduct the initial interview with those applicants. The writer recommends that the interviews for the first round should be each scheduled for 90 minutes in duration;
- v. The Council Hiring Committee and HR, if required, should meet following the completion of the first interview process and decide those internal and external applicants that will be selected for the second round of interviews;
- vi. The Council Hiring Committee should again work with in greater detail the incumbent CAO, HR, or trusted staff member not involved in the process or an Human Resources Consultant to draft second round interview questions. The focus should be on digging deeper into knowing each of the applicants better, exploring their job history in detail and also probe into specific concerns of each applicant raised by the interviewers in round 1. It is recommended that another group of multiple scenarios be developed to test the applicant(s) skills related to their building, by-law enforcement, human resources, planning, recreation and/or budgeting skills through these types of experience issues. The second interview candidates should also be required to provide a report and presentation on there vision and plan for Southgate's 3 major issues facing the Township over the next 3 years.
- vii. Next in the process it would be time to schedule times with the Council Hiring Committee, HR, if required and all the selected internal and external applicants to conduct the second round interview with the applicants. At the time of scheduling the interviews with the selected candidates, they should be presented with the presentation document guidelines, that they will have 30 minutes to present and 10 calendar days to prepare in advance of the second interview. The writer recommends that this interviews for the second round should be each scheduled for 2 hours in duration;
- viii. The Council Hiring Committee and HR, if required should meet the following day or at the completion of the second round interviews, to process all the information and decide those internal and/or external applicant(s) that will be selected for further research related to background, social media research and reference checks;
- ix. The Council Hiring Committee should direct Human Resources (HR) to complete the necessary research related to background, social media research and reference checks and report back to Council on those outcomes;

- x. The Council Hiring Committee and Council should meet with and discuss with HR the information on the background information and reference checks received on the targeted CAO candidate(s) and make a decision to proceed with hiring a selected applicant, or to repost the position if there are no other options; and
- xi. When there is a selected candidate for the position, Council should direct HR to start negotiations and execution of an Employment Contract Agreement with the selected individual.
- xii. There should be a transition period between the incumbent CAO and the newly hired CAO for transfer of knowledge.