



ACCESS BARRIE MEMORANDUM

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TO: MAYOR J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

FROM: S. FAVRETTO, PROJECT MANAGER, INNOVATION x5144

NOTED: D. CLARKE, MANAGER, INNOVATION

R. JAMES-REID, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ACCESS BARRIE

M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RE: MIX CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE – SNOW ANGELS CANADA

DATE: APRIL 19, 2021

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of Council with an update concerning the Municipal Innovation Exchange (MIX). MIX is a collaborative partnership between the cities of Barrie, Guelph and London that leverages challenge-based procurement to collaborate with a vendor of any size to address a community driven issue. Each city chose a challenge unique to their community.

The City of Barrie selected the challenge of winter snow removal (specifically windrows – the pile of snow at the end of a residential driveway created by a snowplow) for senior residents and persons with disabilities that are not able to clear the snow themselves. In February 2020, Snow Angels Canada <https://snowangelscanada.ca/> began operating in Barrie with 10 clients and 46 volunteers. Snow Angels Canada is an online platform that connects volunteers and clients (those needing snow removal assistance) at a neighbourhood level. Although the City does not own or operate the online platform, City staff worked with Snow Angels to customize it for Barrie residents and has been encouraging residents to sign up as clients or volunteers through communications and social media.

The platform is based on community volunteerism and no money exchanges hands for the services.

- Clients can post a request for service based on their postal code. The client is shown volunteers in their immediate area and given the opportunity to reach out through the platform.
- Volunteers also register on Snow Angels Canada and based on their postal code, are shown service requests in their neighbourhood. If volunteer is already registered, they would just need to log into the platform to see any new service requests.
- The initial message from the volunteer to the client is sent through the platform. Any additional correspondences are handled through direct email between the participants.

During the 2020/2021 Winter season, the platform significantly grew with 34 clients (200% increase over last season) and 83 volunteers (100% increase over last season). Having the ability to refer residents to the platform has ServiceBarrie seeing benefits as well – call length time decreased by 64 hours, compared to last Winter.

The City of Barrie created a municipal launch kit to assist other municipalities in promoting Snow Angels Canada. To date, this kit has assisted more than 10 municipalities with their community launches of Snow Angels.

The cities of Barrie, Guelph and London, in partnership with MaRS Discovery District have just released the MIX Toolkit which includes each city's journey through their chosen challenge, the steps taken and case studies. The MIX Toolkit will guide other municipalities on building innovation capacity and modernizing public service. It is available at: <https://guelph.ca/2021/03/municipal-innovation-exchange-toolkit-helps-local-governments-modernize-public-service/>