



Staff Report

Planning and Development Services

Report To: Committee of the Whole
Meeting Date: August 26, 2019
Report Number: PDS.19.88
Subject: Review of Planning & Development Engineering Services Fees
Prepared by: Nathan Westendorp, Director of Planning & Development Services

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report PDS.19.88, entitled “Review of Planning & Development Engineering Services Fees” be received;

AND THAT Council authorize staff to engage Watson & Associates on a single source basis to complete an updated review of fees related to Planning and Development Engineering activities for an upset budget limit of \$40,000 from Working Capital Reserve.

B. Overview

This report requests authorization from Council to single source an updated review of fees related to Planning and Development Engineering activities. This update is recommended to inform the Budget 2020 process and any associated adjustments Council may deem appropriate. The project is recommended to be single sourced to Watson & Associates as they performed similar work for the Town in recent years (2016).

C. Background

During the preparation of the 2019 Budget and 2020 Budget, it has become evident that the financial resources funding some Planning and Development Engineering activities require an updated review. During the last couple years, several factors have contributed to a strain being placed on the land use planning and development application review functions provided by Planning & Development Engineering staff. These include the following:

- **Changing legislative context** – In 2017, Bill 139 introduced an entirely new planning, development and appeal framework in Ontario. This has recently been replaced by another new planning development and appeal framework in Ontario, via Bill 108. Each time new legislative changes are introduced, particularly comprehensive bills such as Bill 139 or Bill 108, it requires considerable amount of staff time to assess the changes, to review their impacts on the municipality’s processes, policies and bylaws, and to determine any implications the changes may have on existing applications.

- **Bill 108** – Bill 108 has introduced shorter application processing timelines for the Town. This means Town staff will have less time to receive information, review it in consultation with the appropriate internal and external stakeholders, and recommend a decision before the application is eligible for an appeal to the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal (LPAT). This has the effect of requiring more devoted time/attention from Planning & Development Services staff to ensure a proper review is conducted.
- **Proactive Planning** -- Shorter planning application processing timelines enacted through Bill 108 also suggest that it would be prudent for the Town to invest in proactively addressing both land use planning issues and pre-zoning certain areas for development. Such an approach would allow Council, members of the public, landowners, and other stakeholders the opportunity to collaboratively engage in a process of planning ahead. This is anticipated to have the effect of providing more certainty about what development can be expected and where; as well as reducing the need for some associated Planning Act applications.
- **Significant Volume of Development Applications** (both number of applications & number of units proposed) – This factor relates directly to workload volume.
- **Current Planning/Policy Projects** – It is anticipated that the number and complexity of planning special projects will continue to increase. Currently, the Planning & Development Services Department has a number of projects underway which include the following: Short Term Accommodation Zoning Framework Review, Housekeeping Zoning Bylaw Amendment; Tree Preservation Bylaw and Future work related to Tree Canopy analysis and associated comprehensive Tree Bylaw; Green Energy Act repeal & required policy/zoning updates, Community Planning Permit System review; Staff support for Attainable Housing; Provincial Policy Statement review and anticipated Official Plan update.

Considering the above and the diverse demands being placed on the Planning & Development Services Department, an updated review of the Town's fees pertaining to Planning and Development Engineering activities would be prudent. It is noted that similar work was completed by Watson and Associates in 2016. However, information from this updated review would inform the current Council in determining how much of the Town's Planning and Development Engineering functions are funded by various revenue sources, including the taxpayer, development application fees, etc. Accordingly, Town staff recommend that it would be beneficial to single source to Watson & Associates for the completion of an update to the fees review.

POL.COR.07.05, Purchasing of Goods & Services Policy permits Single sourcing. Single sourcing is a method of procurement whereby there is more than one vendor able to supply the services. Single sourcing is permitted:

- When competitive procurement may be found to be impractical.

Watson is very familiar with the Town's Planning and Development Fee matters through its past work for the Town.

D. Analysis

Increasing demands being placed on the Planning & Development Services Department require a reassessment of the revenue sources that provide funding to the department's functions. An update to the fee review for Planning and Development Engineering activities will provide valuable information for Council consideration through the Budget 2020 process. Considering the past work and familiarity with related Planning & Development Department fee matters, there are anticipated efficiencies with retaining Watson & Associates on a single source basis to complete an update to their previous work completed for the Town a few years ago.

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

Goal #3: Support Healthy Lifestyles

Objective #3 Manage Growth and Promote Smart Growth

Goal #4: Promote a Culture of Organizational & Operational Excellence

Objective #4 To Be a Financially Responsible Organization

Objective #5 Constantly Identify Opportunities to Improve Efficiencies and Effectiveness

F. Environmental Impacts

No direct environmental impacts are expected as a result of this report.

G. Financial Impact

An upset limit of \$40,000 will be allocated from the Working Capital budget towards this project.

H. In consultation with

Ruth Prince, Director of Finance & IT Services

Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer

Serena Wilgress, Manager of Purchasing & Risk Management

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been subject to a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. Comments regarding this report should be submitted to Nathan Westendorp directorplanningdevelopment@thebluemountains.ca

J. Attached

None.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Westendorp, RPP, MCIP
Director of Planning and Development Services

For more information, please contact:
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