



Staff Report

Planning and Development Services

Report To: Committee of the Whole
Meeting Date: November 18, 2019
Report Number: PDS.19.84
Subject: Investing in Development Engineering Level of Service
Prepared by: Nathan Westendorp, Director of Planning & Development Services

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report PDS.19.84, entitled “Investing in Development Engineering Levels of Service”;

AND THAT Council authorize the Development Engineering contract extensions as substantively outlined in Staff Report PDS.19.84 to allow for consideration of any longer term staffing levels to be considered through the 2020 Budget process.

B. Overview

This report recommends the extension of two existing contract positions (2 Development Engineering Reviewers) to ensure engineering review services and development implementation oversight can continue given the existing workloads associated with the development applications being processed by the Town.

C. Background

Council has authorized the completion of an Updated Fee Review project to support the Budget 2020 process. The intent of the Updated Fee Review will allow the Town to explore how the programs, activities and services provided by the Planning & Development Services Department can be funded in the future. Specifically, the Planning Division fees and the Development Engineering Fees are under review. As noted in previous reports, the volume of planning applications, engineering submissions and building permits being processed by the Town of The Blue Mountains remains significant. The approximate current volume of work (mid-year statistics for 2019) for the Development Engineering Division is noted below in Table 1.

Table 1 – Development Applications

Application Status	Development Engineering Role	Number of Developments (Approx.)	Number of Units (Approx.)
Under Review	- Review technical information submitted with development applications.	11	1100+
Approved with Conditions	- Review detailed engineering designs and reports to ensure conditions of development are fulfilled satisfactorily	20	2400+
Approved/Under Constuction	- Review implementation of approved developments to ensure construction is compliant with designs and standards - Ensure infrastructure works to be assumed by Town are in good & working order	29	2600+
LPAT	- Support Town Planning staff in technical review of applications that have been appealed to LPAT	3	850+
Total		63	7000+

Note: Numbers are subject to change as applications are received and/or complete the process.

However, there is an immediate need to address Development Engineering staff levels so that a reasonable level of service can be maintained until any recommendations are provided through the Fees Update Project and requested through the 2020 Budget process.

As indicated in Table 1, there are a significant number of development applications that are under review by the Town’s Development Engineering staff. The applications effectively fall under two groups, Current Files and Legacy Files. Current Files are those that have been submitted to the Town in recent years and generally have designs, issues and review times that are typical of present-day development applications. Legacy Files are often associated with older development applications and can be either still under review or built but have remaining implementation matters to be addressed. Work associated with Legacy files also includes addressing open “Entrance Permits” previously issued within unassumed subdivisions. This work has historically been completed by the former Infrastructure & Public Works Department. However, with the recent department restructuring within the Town, the Development Engineering Division will be handling such matters in the future. The age of these Legacy Files often presents more complex engineering and/or legal issues, thus requiring much more staff time to facilitate a thorough review and move forward with resolution of any issues there may be.

The current Development Engineering Division is currently comprised of a Manager of Development Engineering, and two Development Engineering Reviewers (1 contract position as coverage for existing maternity leave; 1 additional contract position). Both contract positions are scheduled to end in 2020 (February 2019 and April 2019). If these contracts are not extended, the Development Engineering team will revert back to its previous staffing compliment of one full-time Manager and one full-time Development Engineering Reviewer. If this occurs, response times for review will be negatively impacted and the level of municipal oversight of development implementation will be reduced. Considering the volume of work the Division is tasked with in development review and implementation, it is recommended that the existing contracts be extended through to September 2020. However, the Development Engineering contract extensions are required at this time to ensure appropriate staff levels continue to be in place. If approved, the Development Engineering Division would be comprised of a Manager, 1 full-time Development Engineering Reviewer (upon return from maternity leave), and 2 contract Development Engineering Reviewers. It will ensure staff can more actively address complex issues associated with Legacy Files while maintaining timely review of Current Files and expected development applications in the future. The results of the ongoing Updated Fee Review project will help inform Development Engineering staffing levels that are required in the future and the fees that could be collected to fund positions within this Division on a longer term basis. Longer terms staffing needs and associated requests will occur through the 2020 Budget.

From a financial perspective, Town staff have prepared Table 2 below to summarize the costs associated with the above staff requests.

Table 2 – Financial Summary Table

Opportunity	Staff Resource	Term	2019 Cost	2020 Cost*	Tax Impact (%)	Funding Source
Maintain Level of Service/Legacy Matters	Development Engineering Reviewer (2)	Extend & Harmonize existing contracts through end of September 2020	N/A already budgeted	\$99,962.06	0	Development Engineering Fees (100 %)

* Assumes a 1% Cola increase, 4 month extension DER, 8 month extension DER

D. Analysis

If approved, the requested contract extensions within the Development Engineering Division will ensure staff can more actively address complex issues associated with Legacy Files while maintaining timely review of Current Files and expected development applications in the future. Deferral of this decision to the Budget 2020 process will introduce employment

instability to the current contract staff. Considering the projected Budget 2020 timeline (Spring 2020 approval), it is very likely the existing Development Engineering contract staff will consider securing more stable employment elsewhere prior to conclusion of the budget process. If this occurs, corporate and file knowledge will be lost, further complicating and impacting development applications being processed.

Deferral and/or failure to approve these contract extensions will negatively impact response times for development review and the level of municipal oversight of development implementation. Furthermore, Town staff's ability to address issues related to Legacy Files will be impacted, extending the time it takes to bring resolution to issues. Not resolving these issues in a timely manner has proven to make matters more complicated in several situations. This results in even more Town staff time and resources spent to address matters in the future, and at times, increased potential for legal implications.

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

Goal #2: Engage Our Communities & Partners
Objective #1 Improve External Communication with our Constituents

Goal #3: Support Healthy Lifestyles
Objective #3 Manage Growth and Promote Smart Growth

Goal #4: Promote a Culture of Organizational & Operational Excellence
Objective #3 To Consistently Deliver Excellent Customer Service

F. Environmental Impacts

No environmental impacts are directly associated with the recommendations of the report.

G. Financial Impact

Approval of the recommendations contained within this report total will not have an impact on taxation funded portions of the Town budget. Funds for the two Development Engineering contract extensions will be sourced from Development Engineering fees that have either been collected or are expected to be collected in the near future (i.e. deferred revenue). Approximately \$100,000 will be utilized to provide for the Development Engineering Division contract extensions.

H. In consultation with

Tim Murawsky, Chief Building Official
Brian Worsley, Manager of Development Engineering

Ruth Prince, Director of Finance & IT Services
Jennifer Moreau, Director of Human Resources
Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer

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

No attachments.

Respectfully submitted,

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

For more information, please contact:
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