

ADDENDUM Note

Please note that the following is an addendum to the **Council** Agenda for the meeting being held on **April 17, 2018**:

8. h) Manager of Planning's Report dated April 17, 2018 – Planning Department Staffing

Recommendation: THAT Council authorize staff to proceed with the recruitment and hire of a Senior Planner on a permanent full-time basis.

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorize a planning staffing budget adjustment of \$33,465

This report was added and is now included as an Addendum to the original Agenda Package.

STAFF REPORT



TO: Council

FROM: Doug Herron, Manager of Planning and Development Review

SUBJECT: Planning Department Staffing

DATE: April 17, 2017

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council authorize staff to proceed with the recruitment and hire of a Senior Planner on a permanent full-time basis.

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorize a planning staffing budget adjustment of \$33,465.

BACKGROUND

The Junior Planner has provided notice to the Town that his last day of work with the Town will be Friday, May 4, 2017. In the immediacy of this departure, the Planning Department will not be capable of processing development applications in a timely manner or in a manner which is responsive to the development industry. Out of necessity, the Junior Planner is currently assigned the role of processing the majority of the development applications currently underway. The Junior Planner is also involved with coordinating the work of WSP Group who is assisting the Town while a planner is on parental leave. Note that the Junior Planner and the Planner currently on leave perform nearly 100% of the development review work for the Town. There is considerable oversight of the Junior Planner's work by senior staff in the Planning Department to bring the work up to a level typically required of more experienced planning professionals.

With the imminent departure of the Junior Planner, there is an urgency to address the staffing capacity in the Planning Department to ensure that development proposals are advanced through the planning process in a timely manner. The development industry is reliant upon the Town providing predictable approval timelines to bring their products to the market.

The Planning Department is currently staffed with a Manager of Planning, a Planning Administrator, a Zoning Administrator, two Planners, and a Junior Planner. The current staffing complement is the same as was in place in 2008 with the exception that 10 years ago one of the planners was a Senior Planner. Ten years ago, the role of the Planning Department was almost entirely dedicated to the processing of development applications.

In today's planning environment, the amount of Planning policy work being performed by the department is nearly equivalent, of not in excess of, the amount of implementation work or development applications currently being processed by the Planning Department. Of note is that the number of development applications currently being processed is equivalent to the number of planning applications processed a decade ago. This is evident in that the Town of Wasaga Beach has consistently ranked as one of the fastest growing municipalities in Canada. In 2008, the Town performed only a limited amount of planning policy work. Today's workload environment has doubled from that of a decade ago with the need to create new planning policy to satisfy new Provincial legislative requirements, and to address the Town's new direction to grow as an urban community. The amount of staff time dedicated to the creation on new planning policy is equivalent to, if not greater than, the amount of staff time dedicated to planning implementation, or the review of development applications.

New planning policy work which is currently underway in the Planning Department includes:

- Performing a complete overhaul and update of the Official Plan to bring it into compliance with Provincial and County growth policies, along with Wasaga Beach urbanization growth policies
- Creating and performing an Official Plan Amendment for the Downtown and Beach Areas 1 and 2
- Creating and processing a Community Improvement Plan for the Downtown
- Working with the County of Simcoe on their Official Plan update to meet current Growth Plan legislation.
- Coordinating and responding to the numerous Provincial Growth legislative changes relating to growth and also OMB reform.
- Addressing local growth issues such as affordable housing and creation of local growth nodes.

Out of necessity, the significant workload associated with the policy role has been assigned to one planner within the Department. This same planner is also tasked with the review of several complex development applications due to a lack of experience of other staff in the Department.

In effect, to meet both the implementation workload and the policy workload, the division of labour within the department has resulted in a division of responsibilities within the Department. With two members of the planning team assigned to implementation files, and one member of the planning team assigned to policy files.

As a quick summary to this background, there are two staff dedicated to processing development applications within the Planning Department. With the resignation of the Junior Planner, and the other planner assigned to development review away on parental leave, the Department has lost its effective ability to process development applications in an timely manner.

DISCUSSION:

There are both short term staffing needs and longer-term staffing needs to be addressed with the imminent departure of the Junior Planner.

Short-Term / Interim Staffing Needs

With both the Junior Planner and Implementation Planner positions left absent, there is an immediate need to ensure the business of the Town in processing planning applications is maintained. The WSP Group are currently assisting the Town in providing planning review services while the planner is away on parental leave. In light of the resignation of the Junior Planner, staff have approached WSP Group to enhance their planning services with the Town in the interim to the Town hiring a replacement for the Junior Planner. WSP is currently preparing a cost estimate to this effect.

Staff have requested of WSP that they provide estimates for three scenarios: 1- for WSP staff to work remotely from their Maple Ontario office; 2 – for WSP planning staff to work part-time at the Town of Wasaga Beach offices; and, 3 – for WSP planning staff to work full-time at the Town of Wasaga Beach offices.

The rationale for having WSP staff located at the Town of Wasaga Beach is simply to have staff available locally to answer phone queries and walk-ins related to development applications, and to provide added planning services which are so necessary to the day to day function of a planning department.

Longer-Term Staffing Needs

The long-term staffing needs of the Department involve enhancing the capability of the Department by replacing the Junior Planner position with a Senior Planner position. There are several justifications provided in support the recommendation.

First, the justification is based on the Town's recent experiences in hiring new planning staff. The Town sought to hire a new Junior Planner in 2017. The applicants for the Junior Planner position proved not to have the experienced needed to fill the role. In adjusting for the lack of experience in the hiring pool, the Town sought to be more competitive in the market and Council subsequently approved the hire of a full-time planner. In replacing the current Junior Planner, it is expected that the employment market conditions of 2017 continue to apply. There is currently a demand for experienced planners in Ontario by both public and private employers. It is known that the current Junior Planner was 'poached' by a private consulting firm. In meeting current market demand for qualified planners, and in order to fill the junior planner position with a qualified and experienced planner, it is recommended that the Town maximize its position in the employment market by advertising for a senior planner permanent position. The expectation is that the response will be from experienced planners seeking to move-up or from senior planners seeking the lifestyle offered by the Southern Georgian Bay Region.

Second, the justification for hiring a Senior Planner is to raise the ability of the Planning Department to meet the current work challenges and projected growth of Wasaga Beach. A senior implementation planner would possess a higher level of experience and the skillset necessary to manage and process development applications without the need for oversight from other Town staff. This itself frees-up other Planning staff for other duties and makes the department more effective overall.

Third, the justification for the hiring of a senior planner is the ability of the Town to require 'urban design' as a skillset to the new position. Given the Town is moving forward as a 'urban' municipality, complementing the in-house capabilities of the Planning Department with a senior planner with an 'urban designer' skillset would be an asset to the Town leading to an improved built form within the Town.

ANALYSIS

Current Overtime Costs

As noted earlier in this report, the current Planning Department staffing complement is similar to that of a decade ago. Also noted earlier in this report, the departmental workload has increased annually over a decade of Town growth. With staffing numbers unchanged over a decade, and workload increasing annually, it is inherent that department overtime costs will have increased coincidentally with workload increase.

The following table demonstrates the overtime hours performed by planning staff over the past three years, 2015, 2016, and 2017.

<u>Position</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Planning Mgr	107	496	340
Senior Planner	479		
Planner	249	126	145

In reviewing the overtime costs for the planner in the above table, the Treasury Department reports that the total overtime hours attributed to the Planner equates to \$21,470.

Budget

The Treasurer has provided a summary of the difference in annual budget costs between a Junior Planner and a Senior Planner in the attached tables.

The first scenario is moving the present Jr. Planner level (Group 6, step 2) to the equivalent step for a Senior Planner (Group 8, step 2). The incremental cost is \$29,148.81.

Position	Hrly Rate	Wages	Benefits	Total	Group	Step
Jr. Planner	32.87	68,360.66	23,183.34	91,544.00	6	2
Sr. Planner	44.60	92,768.00	27,924.81	120,692.81	8	2
Incremental Cost	11.73	24,407.34	4,741.47	29,148.81		

The next scenario is moving the Sr. Planner to Group 8, Step 1: The incremental total cost would be \$24,918.70.

Position	Hrly Rate	Wages	Benefits	Total	Group	Step
Jr. Planner	32.87	68,360.66	23,183.34	91,544.00	6	2
Sr. Planner	42.87	89,169.60	27,293.10	116,462.70	8	1
Incremental Cost	10.00	20,808.94	4,109.76	24,918.70		

The last scenario is if you had to go to a step 3 for a Sr. Planner: The incremental total cost would be \$33,463.96.

Position	Hrly Rate	Wages	Benefits	Total	Group	Step
Jr. Planner	32.87	68,360.66	23,183.34	91,544.00	6	2
Sr. Planner	46.38	96,470.40	28,537.56	125,007.96	8	3
Incremental Cost	13.51	28,109.74	5,354.22	33,463.96		

Based on the above, the cost difference to the Planning Staffing budget ranges from \$24,918.70 to \$33,463.96. Typically the wage negotiation process for a new hire will revolve around wage expectations on the applicants' part, and comfort with the applicant's experience and abilities on the Town's part. For this reason, it is reasonable for the Treasurer to have provided a range of wages as the final negotiation for a wage cannot be known until a job offer is extended to an applicant.

Further, the wages offered in the G.T.A. tend to exceed those offered locally and for this reason, allowing for a budget adjustment of up to \$33,365.00 would be reasonable in order for the Town to secure the most capable applicant.

Revenues in the Department continue to be strong. Each subdivision, site plan, rezoning and Official Plan amendment application attracts an application fee that is paid by the developer. These fees go towards the costs of processing the applications, which is for the most part, staff salaries. In 2017 the Planning Department had revenues that exceeded budget by \$61,000 and overall the Planning

Department's net expenditures were less than expected. It is anticipated that 2018 will be another busy year and revenues will be just as strong.

RECOMMENDATION

With the departure of the Junior Planner, there exists an urgency to fill an implementation planner position in the Planning Department. Given current Department staffing has not changed greatly over the past decade whereas Department workload has greatly increased, it is reasonable to consider an enhancement to the current staff complement. Enhancing the Junior Planner position to a Senior Planner position will serve to improve the Department's ability to respond to the development industry in a timely manner and can be done at a relatively economical increase to the Department budget.

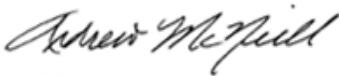
To remain competitive in a high demand market, staff request that Council authorize staff to advertise for a Senior Planner to replace the soon to be vacant Junior Planner position, and that Council authorize a planning staffing budget adjustment to a maximum of \$33,465.00.

Respectfully Submitted,



Doug Herron, MCIP, RPP, MPA
Manager of Planning and Development Review

Concur with Recommendation



Andrew McNeill
Director of Economic Development and Tourism



George Vadeboncoeur
Chief Administrative Officer