



For the Committee of the Whole Meeting June 14 2018

Date: Friday June 8 2018

From: Mayor Helps and Councillors Lucas and Alto

Subject: Process Improvements for Development Process

Background

Council routinely requests that staff do “lessons learned” reports at the end of major projects or processes. Council also need to do this. This report and recommendations outline the process improvements Council can make based on our experience that will help the next Council start off in good stead, particularly when it comes to the development process.

In this term of Council there has been an unprecedented level of development. The economy is strong, people are moving here for jobs and the city is growing. This pace of development isn’t going to slow down. There about 1800 units of rental housing alone in the development pipeline at City Hall. Couple this private sector investment in rental housing with the \$90 million Regional Housing First Program, which will see 2000 units of new rental housing built in the region (many of which will be in the city) and it’s clear that new housing will continue to be built.

We also know, through three particularly contentious land use applications – St. Andrew’s, Cook and Oliphant, and the Truth Centre – that if these processes do not get off to a good start, there is time wasted, which is money from the point of view of the developer, and there is citizen energy wasted, a loss that should not be undervalued. As a result, unnecessarily acrimonious development processes damage the social fabric of the city, pit neighbours against neighbours and erode trust between citizens and city hall.

In the aftermath of the Truth Centre hearing the Mayor met with both the Chair of the Land Use Committee and the developer (who had also already met with each other – a good sign!) and discussed a proposed process for going forward, which they both thought was a good idea.

For developments over a certain threshold (to be determined based on staff advice requested in recommendation below), the first step in the process – before a CALUC meeting – would be a meeting between the developer, the community, and city staff. The meeting would be facilitated by a neutral, third party facilitator with experience in bringing together disparate and diverse points of view. In this meeting each party would lay out its requirements and preferences and the facilitator would help find a path forward that could meet the needs of all parties. Transparency and honesty will be key criteria for all participants.

Community invitees to the meeting would be those living within 100m of the development for non-OCP amendment and 200m for an OCP amendment. The mailouts for the meeting will be paid for by the City. The cost of the facilitator will be paid for by the City as part of the CALUC funding of \$250 per meeting.

Note that this process will be the exception not the norm and is not intended to add cumbersome steps to the development process. Some developers already engage in an informal “open house”

process before a CALUC meeting and find that this step has provided an opportunity to identify and respond to issues before they get to public hearing.

Recommendation

1. That Council direct staff to report back to Council with a proposed amendment to the CALUC process that requires an initial meeting between the developer, the community, and city staff. The meeting would be facilitated by a neutral, third party facilitator with experience in bringing together disparate and diverse points of view.
2. That staff report back to Council on the appropriate threshold for requiring such a meeting to ensure that this is not an added, unnecessary step for most developments. Criteria might include a rezoning that increases density a certain percentage over the existing zoning or changes to the OCP.
3. That staff report back to Council on the budget implications of this proposal and suggest potential funding mechanisms for the mailout costs to be covered by the city.


Respectfully Submitted,



Mayor Helps



Councillor Alto



Councillor Lucas