



Committee of the Whole Report

For the Meeting of November 9, 2017

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** October 6, 2017
From: Jonathan Tinney, Director, Sustainable Planning & Community Development
Subject: 2017 Development Summit Action Plan

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approve the 2017 Development Summit Action Plan (Attachment 1).
2. Direct staff to provide an update to Council on the status of the action items outlined in the Action Plan in May 2018.
3. Direct staff to organize the 2018 Development Summit and report back on details of the planned event in May 2018.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the results of the fourth annual Development Summit which was held on July 10, 2017, and to propose a 2017 Development Summit Action Plan (Action Plan) for Council's consideration. Victoria's development industry, design professionals, neighbourhood representatives, Mayor, Council and City staff were invited to the Development Summit which, for 2017, was organized as a Development Workshop allowing participants to delve into specifics on five areas for improvement.

Participants opted into two of the five available workshop discussions. The five workshop were

- Business Hub: Making Business Easier in the City
- Building
- Electrical and Plumbing Permits
- Engineering Plan Review
- Construction to Building Completion

Discussion was structured to develop detail on what is working well and what the challenges are. Following that, participants were asked to provide input as staff prepare to tackle some more complex areas of improvement that were brought forward at previous Development Summits. The relationship that has been developing since the first Development Summit between the groupings of participants resulted in productive workshop discussions and valuable input that shaped the 2017 Action Plan.

The following key messages and opportunities were heard:

Business Hub: Making Business Easier in the City

- The local economy benefits when the working relationships are enhanced between local government and local business. Sharing of information and statistics helps business make informed decisions and results in better ability to achieve goals. Agreeing on growth focus for the local economy should be a shared discussion. (Tourism, Clean Manufacturing, Tech., etc).
- City support is needed to create a comprehensive business development plan that includes everything from parking to licencing.

Building, Electrical and Plumbing Permits

- Continue to utilize technology to complement process refinement, support improved transparency of active files and support timely, efficient file reviews.

Engineering Plan Review

- Improve communication of technical requirements including fees and as-built requirements
- Challenges addressing sewage attenuation.

Construction to Building Completion

- Explore options to permit street level marketing for new developments and facilitate construction schedules for large, complex builds.
- Improve working relationships with Public Works as an integral partner in any construction project.

Participants provided a large amount of feedback indicating the City was headed in the right direction in a number of areas. This included recognition that processes, information and transparency, staff accountability and availability are consistently improving. Recognition of the importance the City places on business development and timely review of all applications was also expressed.

These suggestions have been incorporated in the proposed 2017 Action Plan (attached) that will include short term (within the year), medium term (within three years), and ongoing actions.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the results of the fourth annual Development Summit held on July 10, 2017, and to propose an Action Plan for Council's consideration.

BACKGROUND

The City of Victoria held its fourth annual Development Summit on July 10, 2017, which was organized as a Development Workshop, to delve into specifics on four areas for improvement. Victoria's development industry, design professionals, neighbourhood representatives, Mayor, Council and City staff were invited to share their ideas on four focused areas for discussion to provide guidance for the 2017 Action Plan. A total of 44 public stakeholders participated in the workshop.

The format of the event included structured table discussions of approximately 10 participants per table to encourage productive dialogue and allow staff to hear directly from customers. City staff were active participants in the roundtable discussions and were also present as technical facilitators ensuring notes retained the integrity of the discussions.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

Workshop Feedback

The following is a summary of what was heard. See attached 2017 Development Summit Engagement Summary for more detail.

Business Hub – Making Business easier in the City

- Delegate more responsibility to staff and the Business Hub, i.e. 'formal teeth' to action quicker decisions and processes.
- Analyse by department the 'Top 5' challenges that if staff were empowered to direct would expedite business and development.
- Continue the strategic role of the Business Hub to gather feedback and engage with staff and the business community to support business and development.
- Provide more accessible data, i.e. number and types of businesses.

Building/Electrical/Plumbing Permits

- Development of a digital application, review and permitting system is desired
- Process transparency – application review progress and developing comments need to be available in real time to applicants.
- Applicants need better understanding of requirements for the permitting and construction approval process prior to application. Customers indicate they are surprised by requests for things such as engineering deposits and surveys for example. Application forms and information should be clearer and more comprehensive.

Engineering Plan Review Stage (Prior to Building Permit Issuance)

- Improved communications on fees, estimates, deposits and street occupancy charges to allow applicants to incorporate into construction costing.
- A single staff person is desired as a point of contact during the entire process.
- Challenges addressing sewage attenuation.

Construction to Building Completion (After Building Permit Issuance)

- Flexibility is required to accommodate street level marketing (signage) for developments
- Accommodation under noise bylaw to permit major concrete pours.
- Applicants have difficulty coordinating work with utilities such as BC Hydro, Telus, Shaw and private utility contractors
- Improve scheduling of service installations and communication with Public Works
- Continue expanding on the use of VicMap by adding more accessible documents and information

2017 Development Summit Action Plan

Several items in the 2017 Action Plan are carry forward items already in progress, or items advanced which were listed as "medium term" in last year's Action Plan. The action plan includes new items and refinement on previous items to the 2017 Workshop influence.

New items:

- Undertake a review and report to Council on options regarding street level marketing options for new developments. (Moved forward from Mid-Term Actions to Short-Term)

- Explore options for Noise Bylaw to accommodate extended construction hours for things such as lengthy concrete pours for larger projects. Improve application forms associated documents as necessary to support the following outcomes
 - Application requirements should be clear, comprehensive and under continual improvement to increase rates of permit issuance after a single review cycle.
 - Applicants should be able to determine fees and deposits in advance of an application.
 - Targeted review times and review process for any application type should be transparent

Items carried forward from the 2016 Action Plan:

- Evaluate the City's charges for leasing City space during construction and how these charges are communicated (short-term).
- Evaluate sewage attenuation requirements pending completion of the Sanitary Sewer Master Plan.
- Continue to develop online applications for plumbing, and building permits (short-term) and planning applications (medium-term).
- Expand the Development Tracker to more types of applications, and create a push function to communicate information with stakeholders (short-term).
- Continue work on neighbourhood plans directly followed by updates to zoning and development permit areas to align with plans (short-medium term).

Items from the 2016 Action Plan which have been achieved:

- Electrical Permit Applications will go digital before the end of 2017 with plans to phase out paper application options consistent with BC Safety Authority application options.
- Development Tracker expanded to include Electrical Permits
- Implementation of the CALUC Review (including providing a "Planning 101" series and setting up additional supports for the CALUCs).

OPTIONS & IMPACTS

If implemented collectively over the next 12 months, the Action Plan supports continued improvements to service delivery commitments, enhanced application and review processes, and improving customer service overall. The short-term actions have been assessed by staff and are within existing administrative or operational resources.

Staff propose to update Council on the status of the 2017 Action Plan in May 2018 and planning of the 2018 Development Summit, with options and recommendations that consider:

- Work plan status update;
- format options for the Summit focusing on constructive dialogue with stakeholders.

2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan

The proposed Action Plan supports the City's Strategic Plan, Objective 3: Strive for Excellence in Planning and Land Use; 2016 Outcomes: Reduced processing times for all types of applications from building permits to rezoning.

Impacts to Financial Plan

The Action Plan proposes a number of initiatives that are reflected in the draft 2018-2022 Financial Plan requests. These requests include:

- Digital Plans and Streamlined Development Processes (related to Development Summit Action Plan Items 4, 12, 13)
- Development Tracker Enhancements (related to Development Summit Action Plan Items 3, 13)
- SharePoint Development and Maintenance (related to Development Summit Action Plan Item 12)
- Online Forms (related to Development Summit Action Item 4, 11 and 14)

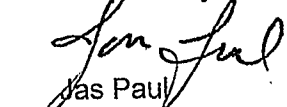
Other initiatives are expected to be completed as part of departmental operations.

Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

Continued residential and employment growth is central to achieving the vision and objectives of the OCP. The *Action Plan* aims to reduce barriers to investment and development in Victoria by making land use applications and permit processes more effective and efficient.

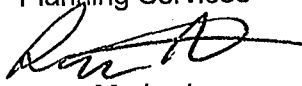
Accessibility Impact Statement

Respectfully submitted,


Jas Paul
Assistant Director
Engineering and Public Works

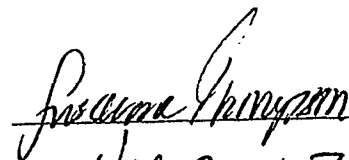

Jonathan Tinney
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Alison Meyer
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Ryan Morhart
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Permits & Inspections

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

Date:


Nov. 3, 2017

List of Attachments

- Attachment 1 – 2017 Development Summit Action Plan
- Attachment 2 – 2017 Development Summit Engagement Summary