



Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of May 11, 2017

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** April 27, 2017
From: Jonathan Tinney, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development
Subject: Development Summit 2017

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council receive this Development Summit Action Plan status report for information.
2. That Council direct staff to:
 - a. Continue to implement the short-term and mid-term actions identified within the 2016 Development Summit Action Plan; and
 - b. Proceed with planning the next annual Development Summit, in the form of a smaller and more focused session to examine more specific topics, to be held by July 2017.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Victoria held its third annual Development Summit: Working Together, Doing Business in the Capital City, on June 13, 2016. Victoria's development industry, design professionals, neighbourhood representatives, Mayor, Council and City staff were invited to share their ideas on improving the City's land use application and permit processes. A 2016 Development Summit Action Plan was prepared based on the feedback received at the Summit and approved by Council in October 2016. This report provides Council with a status on the short-term actions identified within the Action Plan.

Some of the notable milestones that have been reached since the last Summit are:

- Completion of the Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) review and custom-tailored meetings to provide CALUCs with training and support.
- Expansion of the Development Tracker to include heritage alteration permit with variance applications.
- A public open house and CALUC information meeting was held to receive feedback on the emerging regulations being prepared for the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* Schedule 'C' – Off-Street Parking Regulations update.
- Progress on local area planning was made with the Burnside-Gorge Neighbourhood Plan nearing the final stages and new neighbourhood plans commenced and well underway for Fairfield, Gonzales and Victoria West neighbourhoods.
- Process improvements are underway and nearing completion that will improve development application and building permit application processes.
- The targeted timelines for review of major permits and inspections (aiming for 90%) were met 81% of the time in 2016, with an average turnaround time of 11 days, taking into account

confined increases in volumes of applications.

- The targeted timelines for Development Applications (aiming for 75%) were met 89.9% of the time for applications completed between June 1 and December 31, 2016.

Staff will continue to make progress on the short and mid-term actions. Council had directed staff to evaluate the format and timing of future Development Summits and report back with options and recommendations in March 2017. It is recommended that the City continue with hosting a Development Summit for 2017 as it provides ongoing dialogue, feedback and information exchange that has resulted in valuable improvements over the past three years. It is also recommended that a different format be considered for this year, given the City has implemented many of the improvements that have been suggested in past years, in the form of a smaller and more focused session to dig deeper into specialized topics and find solutions for some Action Plan items that are next in line for implementation. Staff will proceed with planning the next Development Summit for 2017, aiming for early June or early July.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on Development Summit Action Plan progress and to provide a recommended approach for the next Development Summit in 2017.

BACKGROUND

The City of Victoria held its third annual Development Summit: Working Together, Doing Business in the Capital City on June 13, 2016. Victoria's development industry, design professionals, neighbourhood representatives, Mayor, Council and City staff were invited to share their ideas on improving the City's land use application and permit processes. A 2016 Development Summit Action Plan was prepared based on the feedback received at the Summit and is attached to this report. It contained short-term actions with implementation commencing immediately in 2016 to September 2017 and mid-term actions for implementation in October 2017 to September 2019. The Action Plan was considered at the Council meeting of October 27, 2016 and approved as follows:

Motion:

1. Approve the 2016 Development Summit Action Plan (Attachment 1 to the report dated October 7, 2016).
2. Direct staff to provide an update to Council on the status of the action items outlined in the Action Plan in March 2017.
3. Direct staff to evaluate the format and timing of future Development Summits and report back with options and recommendations in March 2017."

This report provides a brief summary of progress made to date on the short-term Action Plan items and a proposed approach for the next Summit in response to recommendation 3, above.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

There were nine short-term actions identified for implementation during the period of October 2016 to September 2017. A brief summary of the status of these are provided as follows:

1. Following completion of the Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) review, develop a "Planning 101" series for CALUCs and residents to provide a better understanding of Victoria's policies, land use procedures and development application processes.

Progress to Date: Upon completion of the CALUC review which involved a number of meetings with the CALUCs and Urban Development Institute (UDI) which were held over the course of 2016, staff have initiated a series of custom-tailored meetings where staff have attended local neighbourhood meetings with CALUC members and interested residents. These meetings are focused on:

- Implementing the changes that were agreed to during the review including introducing new tools to support CALUCs.
 - Providing training on the CALUC Terms of Reference, CALUC Procedures for Processing Rezoning and Variance Applications.
 - Outlining the Principles and Guidelines for Involving Community Association Land Use Committees in broader project and policy initiatives.
 - Discussing the development process in general and current applications specifically.
 - Additionally, staff are now available to attend Community Meetings for complex applications upon request of the CALUC.
2. Expand the Development Tracker to include building, plumbing and electrical permit tracking and heritage alteration permits.

Progress to Date: Increasing the scope of applications featured in the Development Tracker continues. In particular, heritage alteration permits with variance applications were added to the Tracker. Electrical permits will be added in April 2017 and plumbing permits by the end of 2017. Building permits will be added in 2018.

3. Develop on-line applications for plumbing, electrical and building permit applications, including electronic submission of revised plans during the processes.

Progress to Date: Work is underway for this action item. Electronic applications for electrical permits will be implemented in August 2017 and for plumbing permits by the end of 2017. Electronic building permits will be implemented in 2018.

4. Evaluate fees for rental of city space (e.g. sidewalk, parking) during construction, considering: a) evaluation of fee structure and b) better up-front communication of fee structure (e.g. on application forms).

Progress to Date: The current street occupancy fee structure considers demand for public space by other users – the occupancy rate for on-street parking space is more than what is charged for sidewalk and boulevard space, while the occupancy rate for downtown/metered space is more than what would be charged in areas outside the core. The current occupancy rates are consistent with the City's Guiding Principles for the Use of Public Space by charging fair market value – the rates also encourage returning the occupied space back to public use as soon as practicable. Staff will continue to work with the development community to explore efficiencies for minimizing occupancy charges while also minimizing impacts to the general public. For example, construction sites that use walk-through scaffolding to keep public sidewalks open on the development frontage are not charged for occupancy of the sidewalk, and if they locate site trailers/etc. on top of the scaffolding, no additional occupancy charges would be incurred.

Comments referencing street occupancy rates will be included with Technical Review Group minutes and other development-related correspondence at the early stages of development proposals to draw attention to potential occupancy charges, particularly when the anticipated scope/scale of proposed developments would suggest extensive street occupancy requirement

to facilitate construction. Links to street occupancy information will be added to more intuitive locations on the City's website (e.g. Development Services page, Land Development page), to alert the public that charges may be incurred.

5. As part of the update of Schedule C – Off-Street Parking Requirements, evaluate and consider the reduction or elimination of the need for parking variances where business tenants change.

Progress to Date: Work on Schedule C is progressing. An Open House was held on December 7, 2016 and a follow up workshop with the CALUC's was held January 16, 2017. Staff anticipate bringing forward a report with recommendations in the summer of 2017.

6. Complete new local area plans to provide more certainty for the community and development industry: Burnside-Gorge, Victoria West, Fairfield and Gonzales plans.

Progress to Date: A proposed Burnside-Gorge Neighbourhood Plan was brought forward to Council in March 2017. Staff are currently undertaking one last round of engagement on parallel amendments to the *Official Community Plan* to ensure both plans are in alignment and to implement new development permit and heritage conservation areas. Final plan approval is anticipated in spring 2017. Planning commenced in June 2016 for Fairfield, Gonzales and Victoria West neighbourhoods. As of April 2017, the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan is at the "co-planning" phase where engagement with the neighbourhood on options for growth, infill housing forms and heritage conservation areas will take place. Staff are currently writing the Gonzales and Victoria West Neighbourhood Plans and anticipate public engagement on the draft plans in summer 2017.

7. Conduct a second round of process-specific staff workshops and focus groups with applicants to future explore the process regarding referrals to various departments and the up-front communication of submission requirements. Formalize intake procedures, targets and communication materials based on the complexity of the application. Implement identified solutions immediately where possible.

Progress to Date: Development Services, and Permits and Inspections have built this into regular business, supporting a culture of continual improvement. Each area hosts regular meetings for the purpose of continuing the process of improvement, monitoring initiatives underway, and proposing future improvements. Current initiatives and improvements that are underway and near completion include the following:

- Process improvements are being implemented that will improve development applications (rezoning, variance, development permits and heritage alteration permits), including the establishment of a monthly stat sheet that reports on the success of achieving target turn-around timelines (example attached). This will be posted online as well as reviewed with staff on a monthly basis, in order to monitor and adapt the process to achieve our goals.
- A comprehensive review of the entire building permit application process is nearing completion. This included everything from application to occupancy and all stages in between. Resulting changes include new consolidated application forms and corresponding application/intake checklists, enhancements to internal work flow tools, and file management tools ensuring oversight of files is occurring.
- Establishment of standardized monthly reporting for both planning and construction permits. The standardization of reporting enables customers and managers to observe and respond to trending issues or volume increases. The reporting also provides an ability to share a positive story with customers and staff about targeted permit turnaround times which, more often than not, are being met. (February 2017 reporting attached for

reference).

- The targeted timelines for review of major permits and inspections (aiming for 90%) were met 81% of the time in 2016, with an average turnaround time of 11 days, taking into account confined increases in volumes of applications.
- The targeted timelines for Development Applications (aiming for 75%) were met 89.9% of the time for applications completed between June 1 and December 31, 2016.

8. Develop a system for staff reports for Council to be reviewed and submitted electronically.

Progress to Date: Staff are exploring new Meeting Management software that would include an electronic submission function for reports. This is anticipated for early 2018.

9. Update the Land Use Procedures Bylaw to reflect any administrative streamlining, as needed.

Progress to Date: An amendment to the Land Use Procedures Bylaw was recently approved to address discrepancies related to Heritage Alteration Permits. Additional proposed changes will be presented to Council in the spring of 2017 in order to:

- Fully implement Council's direction related to the CALUC review completed late in 2016.
- Recommend fee changes related to most development applications, non-profit affordable housing, public health facilities, and public hearing notice fees.
- Undertake a number of housekeeping amendments to ensure the Bylaw is clear and consistent with longstanding practices.

Proposed Approach for 2017 Development Summit

At last reporting, Council directed staff to evaluate the format and timing of future Development Summits and report back with options and recommendations in March 2017. It is recommended that the City continue with hosting a Development Summit for 2017 as it provides ongoing dialogue, feedback and information exchange that has resulted in valuable improvements over the past three years. It is also recommended that a different format be considered for this year given the City has implemented many of the improvements that have been suggested in past years, with some that continue to be a work in progress and others scheduled for late 2017 and over the years of 2018-2019.

It is proposed that the next Summit continue to provide an opportunity for the City to update participants on progress made since 2016, and be a smaller and more focused session to dig deeper into specialized topics and find solutions for some Action Plan items that are next in line for implementation. Staff will proceed with planning the next Development Summit for 2017, aiming for early June or early July.

OPTIONS & IMPACTS

Accessibility Considerations

Accessibility considerations are not directly applicable as the Development Summit initiatives generally focus on City process improvements.

2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan

This initiative supports Strategic Plan Objective 3: Strive for Excellence in Planning and Land Use by reducing processing times for all types of applications from building permits to rezoning, streamlining land use policies, and undertaking local area planning focused on urban villages and transportation corridors.

Impacts to Financial Plan

The action items identified in the 2016 Development Summit Action Plan are being implemented using existing staff resources, are accommodated in current operational plans and do not impact the Financial Plan.

Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

Most of these initiatives are related to process improvements; however, local area planning in Burnside, Fairfield, Gonzales and Victoria West implement the OCP directions with respect to updating neighbourhood plans with a focus on villages and transportation corridors. The Schedule C – Off-Street Parking Regulation update also implements OCP transportation objectives.

CONCLUSIONS

Staff will continue to make progress on the short-term actions identified in the Development Summit Action Plan and will proceed with planning the next Development Summit for summer 2017.

Respectfully submitted,



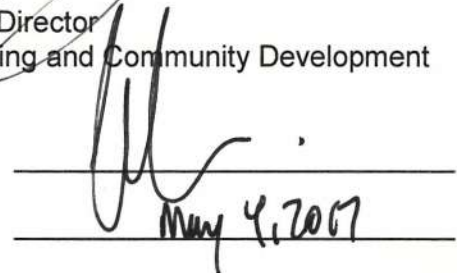
Andrea Hudson
Assistant Director, Community Planning



Jonathan Tinney, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community Development

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

Date:


May 4, 2017

List of Attachments

- 2016 Development Summit Action Plan
- Consolidated Monthly Reporting - February 2017