



## Planning and Land Use Committee Report

For the Meeting of June 5, 2014

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**To:** Planning and Land Use Committee **Date:** May 29, 2014  
**From:** Deb Day, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development  
**Subject:** Proposed Work Plan to Host a Development Summit

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### Executive Summary

On May 8, 2014, the Governance and Priorities Committee adopted the following motion:

*"That Council direct staff, on a priority basis, to bring forward a work plan to host a Development Summit facilitated workshop dedicated to strengthening the relationship between the City, development firms that are active in Victoria, and community association land use chairs (14/GPS 248)."*

This report recommends an approach to undertake this workshop on a timely basis with the assistance of an external consultant to enable full participation and to work towards producing findings and an action plan. The report sets out proposed objectives and a potential target timeline for the Development Summit meeting in late June 2014.

### Recommendation

That Council direct staff to undertake the Development Summit work plan as proposed with a target date for holding the Summit in late June 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. E. Day'.

Deb Day, Director  
Sustainable Planning and Community Development

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jason Johnson'.

Jason Johnson

Date:

May 30, 2014

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## 1.0 Purpose

The report outlines a proposed work plan consistent with the following Governance and Priorities Committee decision of May 8, 2014:

*"That Council direct staff, on a priority basis, to bring forward a work plan to host a Development Summit facilitated workshop dedicated to strengthening the relationship between the City, development firms that are active in Victoria, and community association land use chairs (14/GPS 248)."*

## 2.0 Background

Improving customer service remains an important strategic priority for the City's broad range of services as outlined in the *Customer Service Action Plan* (2012). Victoria's *Economic Development Strategy* (2011-2012) identified the need to "ensure the City has a competitive and business-supportive environment in terms of property taxes, development costs and development approvals".

Across the organization, the City has been engaged in reviewing and implementing improved development-related business and engagement processes through a series of stages, including:

- The creation of the pre-application and application phase procedures to advise and engage residents, businesses and property owners as well as Community Association Land Use Committees (CALUCs) regarding potential Rezoning Applications and Development Variance Permit Applications that Council would ultimately consider. Representatives of the Community Associations and the development industry worked together with City staff in this formulation, which Council approved initially in 2005. Subsequent refinements to these procedures have continued to be made.
- The City initiated a Development Business Process Review with the assistance of an external consultant in two phases which systematically analyzed the input received from multiple stakeholders and identified potential improvements in City processes, which involved many departments, particularly Sustainable Planning and Community Development and Engineering and Public Works. Council endorsed a number of key recommendations related to the first phase in 2009, which have been implemented as have a number of the more administrative aspects identified in the second phase recommendations (2010).

In order to foster further constructive dialogue and improvements, Council directed staff to prepare a proposal for a timely Development Summit that provides a forum involving the development industry representatives, the key community representatives (Community Association Land Use Chairs) and the City.

## 3.0 Issues & Analysis

### 3.1 Proposed Objectives

Since the City has identified the importance of good development processes, the Development Summit will be most effective with clearly defined objectives as part of the work plan.

Council, City staff and the development community have different roles and responsibilities in the development process in Victoria. The Land Use Committees of Victoria's Community



Associations are also involved in the review of some types of planning applications. It will be important that there be a good cross-section of developers and builders active in Victoria, both through industry associations such as the Urban Development Institute and Home Builders' Association but also individual firms.

The system works best when all players understand not only their own roles and responsibilities, but also those of the other players in the relationship. All players need, as well, to understand and be sensitive to the pressures and realities faced by others. The Summit would provide an opportunity for sharing information and perspectives on these points.

As identified in the Council direction, the Summit is about building relationships primarily between the City and the development community as well as involving the Community Association Land Use Committee Chairs. The discussions at the event, it is expected, will help participants define some terms by which the parties agree to interact with and support one another. Some terms may be written as broad principles to guide behaviour and approaches; others may be more targeted and could require the parties to make specific changes to what they do. All can be written into a summary document to guide the parties' interactions moving forward.

The following objectives for the Summit are proposed:

- To understand any concerns or problems raised regarding services, including their scale and prevalence, and to identify key issues.
- To understand the roles and responsibilities as well as the perspectives, pressures and realities of all parties involved.
- To provide opportunities to identify changes that might improve the processes, information and understanding as well as relationships.
- To consider and agree on broad principles to guide behaviours and approaches for moving forward.
- To analyze input and prepare an Action Plan for improvements with timelines for Council's approval.

### **3.2 Proposed Approach**

It is recommended that an external consultant or consultant team be engaged to assist in the Development Summit since this additional resource can enable a timely and focused response as well as enabling the discussions to involve fully the representatives of the development and building industry and the City as participants as well as the community representatives. The consultant would be responsible for leading and facilitating the session to ensure that the session is organized and structured to be highly effective in achieving the proposed objectives. In advance of the session, the consultant would gather any necessary information and advice useful to the project. The consultant would also summarize the input received and prepare a report with analysis, findings and recommendations for action with timelines for consideration by Council.

### **4.0 Timing and Resource Implications**

To convene the Development Summit, the necessary initial stages related to hiring a consultant and then organizing the meeting will be challenging and involve focused involvement of key staff with relatively short lead times for the participants to accommodate the meeting in their schedules.

However, there is merit in trying to hold the Development Summit in late June 2014 to move forward with the participation of the community and industry representatives before the summer. This will require expedited processes to enable the convening of the Summit. Moving forward to formulate and implement the approved Action Plan resulting from the Development Summit will be important and will involve varying staff resources, based on the outcomes.

There will be some trade-offs involved in that the staff resources devoted to this important initiative for overall improvement would have an effect on the timing of some current applications and projects related to the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw*, the *Building Bylaw*, the Delegation Workshop and other process improvements. The input received through the Development Summit will be helpful in refining some of these initiatives, particularly related to delegation and process improvements. Support will also be needed from key departments involved in the development process as well as Communication and Civic Engagement and Finance.

The costs for the assistance of the external consultant would be estimated to be up to \$25,000 and is within the existing 2014 corporate consulting budget.

## **5.0 Options & Impacts**

This report sets out a proposed work plan to foster a productive Development Summit discussion and subsequent analysis and action plan. The key option for Council to determine is whether to direct that this work plan item proceed as proposed or not. As presently proposed, the target for the Development Summit meeting is late June 2014 on an expedited basis. Otherwise, Council may consider setting a September 2014 or later date.

## **6.0 Relevant City Policy**

The ongoing improvement of development-related processes is consistent with the overall policy framework established in the *Official Community Plan* and its Implementation Strategy.

The City has identified improved development-related processes in achieving customer service enhancements and economic development priorities so the Development Summit is consistent with those goals.

## **7.0 Financial and Staff Capacity Assessment**

The immediate implications in organizing and following up on this initiative involve trading-off resources available to deal with current applications and other process and regulatory improvement projects as well as implications for supporting departments identified above for the longer-term benefit of improved processes and shared understandings and commitments. The costs for the consultant and related costs for the Summit are available from the 2014 budget.

## **8.0 Conclusions**

This report provides an expedited work plan approach to the Council direction for consideration. If the proposed target date of late June 2014 cannot be met, Council will be advised and an alternate target date proposed.

## **9.0 Recommendation**

That Council direct staff to undertake the Development Summit work plan as proposed with a target date for holding the Summit in late June 2014.