



Memorandum to Council

To: Mayor and Council File No: 6750-01
Date: April 28, 2025
From: John Perrott, Manager, Economic Development and Partnerships
Subject: 2025 Development Activity Update

Purpose:

This memorandum provides Council with a summary of 2024 development and construction activity, as well as data from the first quarter of 2025.

Recommendation:

THAT Council receive the memorandum titled 2025 Development Activity Update, dated April 28, 2025.

Background:

Under the Economic Development and Partnerships Department, the Planning and Community Services (PCS) Division continuously tracks a number of data sources in an ongoing effort to understand economic trends and activity in Vernon. This information is used for internal and external purposes, including background information for City reports and studies, sharing with partner organizations, and presenting to investors and local business groups.

In 2024, PCS identified and implemented a number of process improvements focused on reducing processing times and increasing reliability in permitting. These process improvements included:

- Council delegation of issuing, amending or cancelling minor variances to staff has reduced Development Variance Permit processing times from 8-10 months to 6-8 weeks. Of the 21 minor variance applications received in 2024, 19 were approved under this new process, resulting in saved time, energy, and cost for the development community.
- A new online [Current Development Application Map Viewer](#) that allows members of the public to learn about development activities occurring in the community
- A new file circulation process that has reduced review times for most files from 30 days to 10 days.
- Continual improvement on team culture that features customer service and responsive file direction.

- Adoption of a new Zoning Bylaw that modernized and streamlined use categories and the number of zones, which reduced the amount of rezoning applications.
- Completion of an archiving project which digitally scanned all paper files and development applications from the last 20 years which were held in file cabinets. This resulted in both space savings in the CSB building, and increased customer service response times for record requests as these files are now digitally accessible.

These improvements have contributed to a stronger start to development and construction activity in 2025 due to faster and more predictable development application process. In the first quarter of 2025, there was \$54.4M of new investment compared to \$20.0M in 2024 and 53 new residential units approved for construction compared to 20 in the first quarter of 2024.

Further process improvements that are underway by the PCS Division to support continued community investment include:

- Minor updates to the Zoning Bylaw.
- Development of a new Official Community Plan and Transportation Plan.
- Development of business systems to track important planning and development metrics and indicators including the number of 1, 2 and 3-bedroom units, the length of new sidewalks installed and trees planted by the private sector, and the number of rental units built.
- Introduction of a new Short-term Rental program, consistent with Provincial legislation, with corresponding updates to the Business Licencing Bylaw.
- More detailed environmental mapping along stream corridors which will better position the City to negotiate with the Province for the ability for the City to review and approve its own environmental Development Permits. This is anticipated to further improve development application processing times by reducing an additional approval process for developers.

Communication:

A presentation will be provided to members of Council which includes additional details on development and construction activities, real estate insights, population updates, and employment indicators. The attachments will be posted to the [City's Economic Development Resources web page](#) following the presentation to Council.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - 2025 Q1 Development & Real Estate Update

Attachment 2 - 2025 Q1 Development Activity Update Presentation

Reviewed by: Terry Barton, Director, Planning and Community Services

Reviewed by: Kevin Poole, Director, Corporate Administration

Approved by: Peter Weeber, Chief Administrative Officer