



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON

MEMORANDUM

TO: Patti Bridal, Chief Administrative Officer **FILE:** 6410-04
PC: Kris Satchell, Manager, Information Services **DATE:** November 17, 2023
FROM: Terry Barton, Director, Planning & Community Services
SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS – INFORMATION SERVICES STAFFING

The Planning & Community Services Division is committed to modernizing and streamlining efforts to accelerate the construction of homes of people in need in collaboration with Provincial legislative changes. The current process for approving developments has a major impact on how quickly housing projects are built. While the Vernon development approval process plays an important role in ensuring community interests are met and developments are healthy and safe, it can also result in complex, lengthy and expensive processes with significant uncertainties for developers. Expectations of development has also significantly changed over the past decade with increased competition for available building sites, financial restrictions and increased construction costs, all creating greater risk and heightening the need for more certainty from the outset of the development process.

To address challenges and identify opportunities for process improvements in the current development approvals process, the Administration proposes to initiate a process improvement project aimed at eliminating barriers and providing enhanced services and solutions through the utilization of information technology. Technology offers the opportunity to collaborate efficiently and effectively, better manage documents and files, improve customer service and convenience, and offers ways to be more efficient with processes, workflows and referral comments.

As a first step, Staff are recommending proceeding with the hiring of a dedicated Information Services staff member (two-year term) from existing funding approved by Council for process improvements in 2021. With this staff resource in place and commitment as a strategic project in both the Planning & Community Services Division and the Information Service Department, an estimated two-year process improvement process would be initiated.

The Administration continues to work with the Province in reviewing and understanding draft legislative changes to housing and further strategic action will be coming forth to Council in the coming months.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receive for information the memorandum titled "Development Applications Process Improvements – Information Services Staffing", dated November 17, 2023, and respectfully submitted by the Director, Planning & Community Services;

AND FURTHER, that Council authorize Administration to establish and recruit a 2-year term full-time Business Analyst, Applications position funded from the previous approved Development Application Process Review budget.

Respectfully submitted:



Terry Barton
Director, Planning & Community Services

Approved for the Agenda by the CAO

