

AN UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE BUILDING STANDARDS OPERATIONAL PROCESS STUDY IN SUPPORT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BILL C-124.

Recommendation

Commissioner of Planning recommends:

That this report be received for information purposes only.

Purpose

To provide the Operational & Strategic Planning Committee with an update on the Progress of the Building Standards operational process study in support of the implementation of Bill C-124.

Background - Analysis and Options

Recently, multiple legislative changes have come into effect, which constrain the application, pricing, and reporting of specific permit fees, user fees, licensing, and other charges. The implications of these changes are decreased revenues, increased administrative costs, and exposure to being publicly challenged. The arrival of the Building Code Act – Bill 124 and recent alterations to section 150 of the Municipal Act has sent municipalities scrambling to revamp existing policies, processes, fee calculation methods, and reporting mechanisms in order to comply. After July 1, 2005 the building permit revenues can only be used for supporting the direct and indirect expenditures of the Building Standards Department. This means that any additional revenues above and beyond what is needed to support the delivery of services will no longer be available.

Another implication of Bill 124 is the imposition of mandatory turnaround times. As of July 1, 2005, the Building Code imposes turnaround times of 2 weeks for residential, 4 weeks for industrial and commercial and 6 weeks for post-disaster buildings. Considering that our turnaround times are presently far in excess of the mandated turnaround times, significant changes to the department's processes and staffing may be required.

In the 2nd quarter of 2004, the Finance Department engaged a consultant to *review activity costing of user fees, permit fees and service charges*. As well, \$80,000 was allocated within the 2004 operating budget for the purpose of hiring a consultant to assist the City with *review of processes associated with the department's turnaround times and determination off staffing requirements*. To this end we are in the process of preparing an RFP that reflects the following:

- To review the departmental processes related to turnaround times as imposed by Bill 124.
- To review the staffing needs of the Building Standards Department, vis a vis Bill 124.
- To make recommendations with respect to:
 1. Process changes
 2. Staffing needs
 3. Overtime needs and
 4. Preparation of a report to Council by around December 31, 2004.

In preparation for the implementation of Bill 124, the department has carried out a great deal of background work which will be shared with the consultant and will hopefully reduce both the time and expenditure associated with the preparation of the final report.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report is consistent with strategic objective D-1 Enhance Productivity and Cost Effectiveness. Specifically: D-1-7. “Develop and activity based costing model to substantiate mandated and non-mandated user fees in compliance with Bill C-124” and D-1-21 “Undertake a review to determine the optimum level of service to meet the minimum legislative requirements of the Ontario Building Code”.

Conclusion

The Building Standards Department in taking appropriate action to ensure the legislative changes surrounding Bill C-124 have minimal impact on departmental operation and our stakeholders.

Attachments

None

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Respectfully submitted,

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