

SPECIAL COUNCIL – JUNE 14, 2007

UTILITY COORDINATOR

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works recommends that:

1. That this report be received for information; and
2. That the contract position of Utility Coordinator be converted to a permanent full time position.

Economic Impact

There is no additional economic impact for the Utility Coordinator position as the necessary funds have been accounted for in 2007 Draft Operating Budget.

The Utility Coordinator position (Level J) is estimated to cost the City up to \$110,000 annually, which accounts for the position's salary, benefits, entitlements, computer, equipment and vehicle.

The position is primarily funded from fees collected through Municipal Access Agreements (MAA) with utility companies, Road Occupancy Permits (ROP) and Municipal Consent Applications (MC). Based on the current level of activity by utility companies, it is estimated that the fees will generate \$95,800 annually.

The City has collected approximately \$292,905 in permit and consent fees for years 2004 through to 2006.

Communications Plan

A Communications Plan is not required for this item.

Purpose

To obtain Council approval to convert the 3-year term contract position of Utility Coordinator to a permanent full time position. The Utility Coordinator approves and monitors construction activity by utility companies and others within the City's road rights-of-way.

Background - Analysis and Options

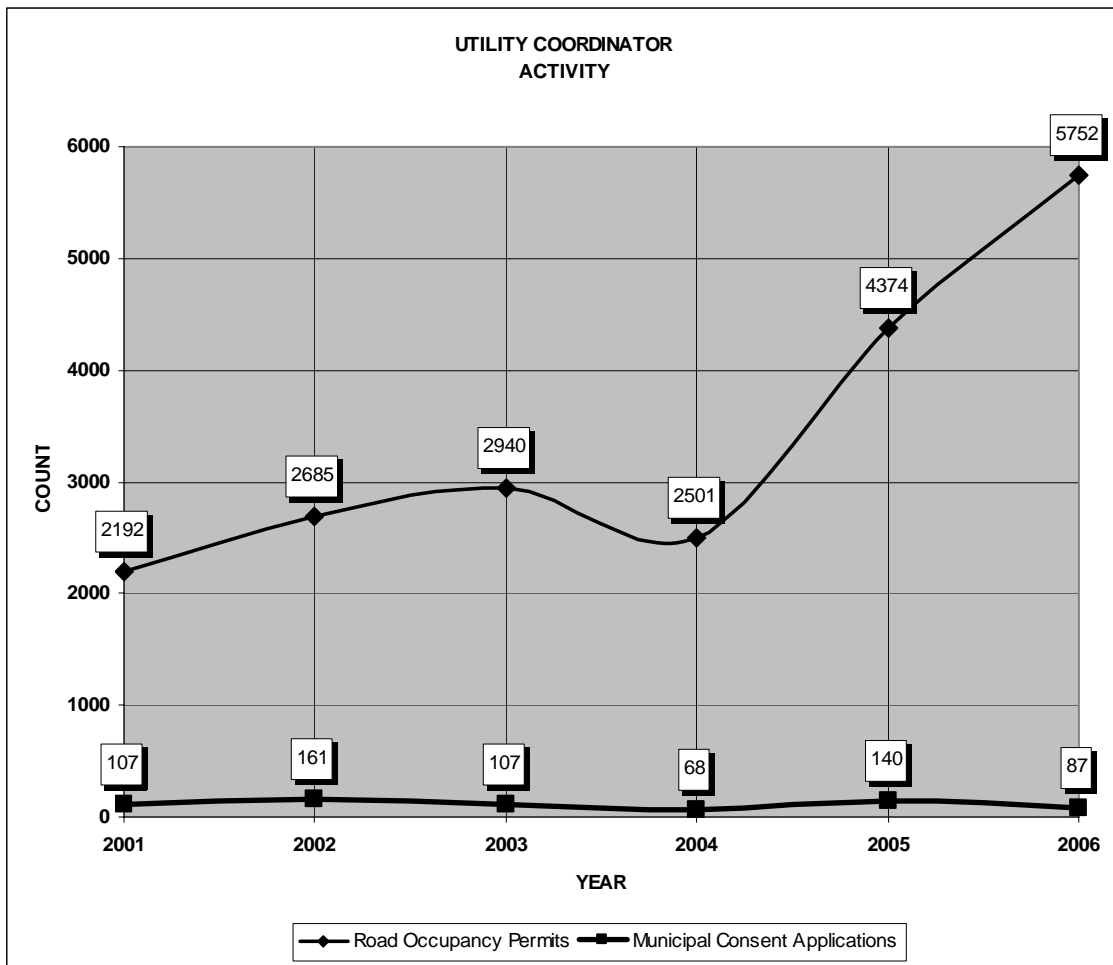
The approval of all construction activity by utility companies (telecommunications, cable, gas, hydro, etc.), their subcontractors and others within the City's road rights-of-way is the responsibility of the Engineering Services Department. Prior to June 9, 2003, this responsibility was divided amongst several staff within the department as secondary job functions. Furthermore, no staff resources were available to monitor and inspect construction activity in the field or to coordinate City and utility capital infrastructure programs through the Vaughan Utility Coordinating Committee.

Item 10, Report No. 46 of the Committee of the Whole (Closed Session) on June 9, 2003, Council approved the new position of the Utility Coordinator for a 3-year term contract. The position was approved on the basis that:

- demand for utility coordination services has exceeded the departments ability to provide through current staff complement and a new compliment was required;
- field construction activities would be inspected regularly;

- complaints from the public would be addressed effectively;
- fees collected through Road Occupancy Permits, Municipal Consent Applications and Municipal Access Agreements would directly offset the cost of the position's salary, benefits, entitlements, computer, equipment and vehicle.

Overall Utility Coordination activity has generally increased from 2001 through 2006. During this period, Road Occupancy Permit activity has grown from 2192 to 5752 annually and the number of Municipal Consent Applications in the same period have held steady ranging from 107 to 87 annually. The chart below outlines the year to year comparison of activity.



Since filling the Utility Coordinator position, approximately \$292,905 in permit and consent fees for years 2004 through to 2006 have been collected as follows:

Company	2004	2005	2006	Total
Bell Canada	\$40,150	\$35,058	\$35,762 ¹	\$110,970
Rogers Cable	\$58,975 ²	\$61,220 ¹	\$51,600 ¹	\$171,795
Other ³	\$3,900	\$3,440	\$2,800	\$10,140
Total	\$103,025	\$99,718	\$90,162	\$292,905

Notes:

¹ – Includes a negotiated bulk Road Occupancy Permit lump sum fee that will be received upon execution of the Municipal Access Agreement;

² – Includes a negotiated settlement with Rogers Cable

³ – Companies such as Allstream, FCI Broadband and Pool/Landscape Contractors.

The City has recently negotiated Municipal Access Agreements with Rogers Communications Inc. and Bell Canada which provide for a 'bulk' Road Occupancy Permit lump sum fee and a Municipal Access Administration fee.

The estimated fees to be collected starting in 2007 are \$95,800.

Electricity utility companies are required to have permits and consents for their activities within the City. They are exempt from paying fees for these services through their governing Electrical Act.

Gas utility companies are also required to have permits and consents for their activities within the City and are also exempt from paying fees for these services through their Franchise Agreement with the City. Gas utility companies pay a tax to the City based on the amount of pipeline plant within the City.

Funds for the Utility Coordinator position are included in the 2007 base budget and there is no additional budget implications. The position has been approved in previous Operating Budgets and staff complement will remain unchanged with its conversion from a contract term to permanent status.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council.

Service Delivery Excellence

We are able to develop and establish service level standards that are sustainable and provide effective and efficient delivery of service in monitoring, inspecting and responding to complaints related to utility construction

Manage our Resources

The City is able to provide for a service that is recoverable through fees collected from the position's function.

Regional Implications

There are no Regional implications.

Conclusion

The Utility Coordinator is an essential position to the staff complement of the Engineering Services Department and funding is already in place to support this position. Having dedicated staff resources to approve and maintain all construction activities within the City's road rights-of-way improves service to both utility companies and the public, specifically in areas of monitoring, records, complaint resolution, health and safety, site restoration.

Without this staff position, the Engineering Services Department will not be able to effectively manage the road rights-of-way through processing permits and consent applications as required by utility companies and therefore justify the associated service fees, nor be able to monitor and inspect construction activity to ensure proper restoration of the City's boulevards.

Attachments

None.

Report prepared by:

Denny S. Boskovski, C.E.T., Supervisor, Infrastructure Management, ext. 3105

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Robinson, P. Eng.
Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works

Gary P. Carroll, P. Eng.
Director of Engineering Services

DSB/mc