

Development Services

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Department Overview

Mission Statement

The Development Services Department is responsible for the planning and development of the community following the direction provided by City Council. The department prepares policies, plans, and bylaws to manage growth, including the Official Community Plan (OCP) and Zoning Bylaw, and processes development applications that implement the OCP. The department also processes building permits for a range of building and development types, sizes and complexity, conducts building permit inspections through the phases of new building construction and tenant improvements, and issues business licenses, all to ensure public health and safety according to the B.C. Building Code and municipal bylaws and in support of local businesses. The department also assists in advancing economic development objectives in line with the City’s Economic Development Strategy.

Organizational Chart

The Development Services Department includes 4 exempt staff and 5 union staff for a total of 9 full-time equivalent staff (“FTE”).



Services

Administrative

- Prepares staff reports for Committees, including the Advisory Design Panel (ADP), and Council on development applications and community planning topics, among other items.
- Prepares departmental work programme and annual operating and capital budgets.
- Directs the work of consultants hired on contract basis for special projects.
- Prepares documentation, establishes and collects DCC's, amenity contributions and other related fees, administration of security deposits.

Planning

- Manages the processing and formal approval of development applications relating to the Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaw, Subdivision Applications, Development Permits, Development Variance Permits and Land Use Contract Applications.
- Provides land use planning advice to City Council and implements Council directions on policy and development matters.
- Undertakes long range and policy planning work including the preparation and review of Official Community Plans and other plans.
- Maintains mapping and geographic information systems in support of planning function.
- Maintains addressing and property information in City's Tempest Land system.
- Works with external agencies such as SD35, TransLink, Metro Vancouver and the Province, among others, in sharing data and planning and implementing major projects.
- Prepares and implements sustainability plans including annual GHG emissions reporting.

Building & Licensing

- Manages the City's plan review and building inspection functions to ensure public safety, health and accessibility to meet regulatory requirements.
- Processes building permits for a range of building types, sizes and complexity.
- Conducts building permit inspections through the phases of new building construction and tenant improvements.
- Reviews, issues and inspects business license applications.
- Collects building statistics for the City and outside agencies including CMHC.

Economic Development

- Maintains current demographic and development data.
- Assists in promoting economic development initiatives.
- Encourages and promotes commercial, industrial and multiple-family residential development opportunities to developers and investors.

Customers

The Development Services Department serves the residents, business owners, property owners, builders, design professionals, other City departments, other levels of government, community groups and other related organizations.

2024 Service Highlights and Achievements

Planning

- Processed 25 new development applications for 1,059 multifamily residential units, 6 single family lots, 5,197 square metres (55,941 square feet) of commercial floorspace.
- Completed update of the Tenant Relocation Plans Council Policy.
- Completed the Glover Road Innovation Boulevard Market Analysis and Development Feasibility study.
- Completed series of Zoning Bylaw updates to align with Provincial Housing legislation, meet Historic Downtown land use and design priorities and incentivize new industrial development.
- Completed update of Amenity Contributions Council Policy.
- Completed draft Cannabis Retail Store Policy.
- Hosted Advisory Design Panel (ADP) meetings to review new development applications prior to Council consideration.
- Completed urban design and public realm review of two large (9-10 acres), multi-phase transit oriented development rezoning applications, involving a potential 3,200 new apartment units at build-out (20 year build time frame).
- Participated in Surrey Langley SkyTrain (SLS) planning and design work with the Provincial Transportation Investment Corporation (TIC) SLS Project team.

Building & Licensing

- Processed 165 new Building Permit applications with a construction value of over \$95 million.
- Processed 474 new Business License applications (2,648 total Business Licenses-2024 year-end).
- Initiated electronic plan application and review.
- Enhanced record management by scanning property file data base, as a means of improving customer service.
- Participated in Problem Property Task Group.

Organizational Development/Communication Initiatives

- Updated Development Services strategic staffing plan and positions to respond to increased development activity and complexity and prepare for the arrival of SkyTrain, including the addition of a new full-time Planning position.
- Filled new Planning Assistant II position.
- Filled fill vacant Plan Reviewer and Supervisor positions with regular Full-time positions in Building and Licensing Division.

Significant Issues and Trends

1. Development Activity

Development application activity remained high due to a strong multifamily housing market, although the increase in material costs and economic uncertainty have started to delay some applications from proceeding to construction. Mixed-use and industrial development has also increased relative to previous years, and new 'missing middle' townhome and plex-home applications have been approved in alignment with the OCP. Increasing rents and pressure on rental housing availability placed a priority on developing and implementing new tenant relocation policies and seeking ways to deliver below market rental housing through both senior government and private developer funded applications. Currently there are 1,055 units under construction and another 2,409 units in process. Land acquisition and assembly activities in multifamily residential and transit oriented core areas continues, along with new inquiries related to the small scale multi unit housing (SSMUH or 'plex-homes') brought in by Provincial legislation in late 2023, resulting in very large numbers of information requests from the public. As noted above, the Departmental staffing vision and position classifications have been updated to ensure Development Services is properly staffed to respond to increasing development application volume and complexity.

2. Business Regulation and Land Use Enforcement

Business licence numbers have remained robust and continue to increase year over year. Department staff also responded to unauthorized businesses and illegal or problematic land uses, and continue to be vigilant in monitoring business activity in the City for Zoning and Business License Bylaw compliance.

3. Nexus of Community/Sustainability/Affordable Housing

The Zoning Bylaw Update will need to be completed and adopted by Council to ensure the vision and policies in the OCP and best practices in urban design and sustainability are being incorporated into 'bricks and mortar' buildings and projects. Public consultation was undertaken in Spring 2024 and a draft Zoning Bylaw is nearly ready for presentation to Council. Completion of the Zoning Bylaw Update is scheduled for late summer/early fall 2025, following a final round of public consultation.

Work on the Glover Road Innovation District Plan continued with the first phase Market Assessment and Development Feasibility being completed in spring 2024. Preparations of the 2nd phase land use planning process were completed in fall 2024 with consultant selection and public consultation scheduled to get underway in spring 2025.

As noted above, an updated Tenant Relocation Plans Council Policy was approved in July 2025, and in fall 2025 work began on the feasibility of below market rental housing being delivered by the private sector through density bonusing and inclusionary zoning policy. Staff also continued their involvement in senior government non-market and below market rental housing initiatives.

Staff also continued to participate in the detailed SkyTrain (SLS) planning and design work with the Provincial Transportation Investment Corporation (TIC) Project team. Completion of the SkyTrain and its future operation will increase transit ridership and decrease vehicle dependence, and spur denser housing and jobs development around rapid transit, which in turn will help to reduce energy use and emissions that cause climate change.

2025 Departmental Priority List

| Planning Division Priorities | Building & Licencing Division Priorities |
|---|--|
| 1. Zoning Bylaw Update | 1. Electronic Application & Plan Review |
| 2. Innovation District Land Use Plan | 2. Building Bylaw Update |
| 3. Inclusionary & Density Bonusing Policy | 3. Construction Management Policy |
| 4. Airport Zoning Regulation (AZR) Review | 4. Inspections & Enforcement Strategy |

Financial Plan Summary & Highlights

| | 2021 Budget | 2022 Budget | 2023 Budget | 2024 Budget | 2025 Budget |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <u>Operating Revenues</u> | | | | | |
| Business Licenses | \$566,100 | \$610,000 | \$667,000 | \$676,000 | \$770,000 |
| Building Permits | \$910,000 | \$1,300,000 | \$1,300,000 | \$1,352,000 | \$1,542,570 |
| Hotel Tax | \$120,000 | \$140,000 | \$220,000 | \$365,000 | \$450,000 |
| Total Operating Revenues | \$1,596,100 | \$2,050,000 | \$2,187,000 | \$2,393,000 | \$2,762,570 |
| <u>Operating Expenses</u> | | | | | |
| Planning, Inspection, Licensing | \$1,195,720 | \$1,279,710 | \$1,377,310 | \$1,548,030 | \$1,587,000 |
| Tourism Langley | \$135,270 | \$155,270 | \$235,270 | \$380,270 | \$465,270 |
| Carbon Neutral Emission Offset | \$20,000 | \$20,000 | | | |
| Total Operating Expenses | \$1,350,990 | \$1,454,980 | \$1,612,580 | \$1,928,300 | \$2,052,270 |
| Net Operating Revenues | \$245,110 | \$595,020 | \$574,420 | \$464,700 | \$710,300 |
| \$ Change from previous year | (\$21,905) | \$349,910 | (\$20,600) | (\$109,720) | \$245,600 |
| % Change | -8% | 142.8% | -3.5% | -19.1% | 52.9% |
| <u>Staffing Level</u> | | | | | |
| Full Time Equivalent Positions (FTE) | 8 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 9 |