



# Staff Report

## Planning & Development Services – Planning Division

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**Report To:** Committee of the Whole Meeting  
**Meeting Date:** November 1, 2022  
**Report Number:** PDS.22.129  
**Title:** Information Report – PDS Staffing Updates  
**Prepared by:** Adam Smith, Director of Planning & Development Services

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### A. Recommendations

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THAT Council receive Staff Report PDS.22.129, entitled “Information Report – PDS Staffing Updates”

### B. Overview

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The intent of this report is to provide Council with an update on the staffing changes in Planning and Development Services in 2022.

### C. Background

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In 2022, there has been significant staff movement within Planning and Development Services. This has been driven by a combination of existing staff pursuing new opportunities and the creation of positions aligned with service demands. The following is a brief update of staffing by Division:

#### Planning Division

During a six month period, the Planning Division experienced turnover that affected the majority of the positions in the Division including:

- Manager of Community Planning
- Intermediate Planner
- Planner
- Planner (contract)\*backfill due to Official Plan Review

In addressing the high-level of turnover, staff prioritized recruitment and identified short-term solutions to continue to meet service standards. This included retaining Michael Benner, former Director of Planning and Development Services in the capacity of Senior Planner for a 3-month contract. Further, the Town has deepened its partnership with the County of Grey in the review of major concurrent applications including the Blue Meadows Draft Plan of Subdivision/Zoning

By-law Amendment and the 24 Alfred Street Draft Plan of Subdivision/Zoning by-law Amendment.

Alongside these short-term measures and current to the timing of this report, the following vacancies have been addressed as illustrated below:

- Manager of Community Planning – Shawn Postma (September 2022)
- Planner I – Carter Triana (October 2022)
- Planner I (contract) – Nicole Schroder (October 2022)

Active recruitments are underway for the full-time permanent positions of Senior Planner and Intermediate Planner.

The Senior Planner position is vacant because of Shawn Postma's promotion to the Manager of Community Planning position.

#### Building Division

The Building Division has had the following positions in active recruitment for the year:

- Building Inspector (contract)
- Building Inspector (full-time, permanent)
- Building Inspector II (full-time, permanent)

The Building Inspector II position is a conversion from the previous Lot Development Technologist position following the staff member's departure. Doing so, broadened the duties related to the position thus maximizing efficiencies in the Division. Dylan Eaton was the successful candidate for this role.

The Building Inspector (full-time, permanent) position was vacant because of Dylan Eaton's promotion to the Building Inspector II position.

#### Development Engineering Division

In 2022, Development Engineering has been recruiting for a number of positions based on staffing additions approved in the budget and turnover during the year. This includes:

- Development Engineering Reviewer (2 positions, contract)
- Development Engineering Reviewer (full-time, permanent)
- Administrative Assistant (contract)

Since that time Jenna Robinson has been hired for the Administrative Assistant position and Evan Hancock for the full-time, permanent Development Engineering Reviewer position. Initially, a contract position was classified as a Development Engineering Technician but that has since been converted to another Development Engineering Reviewer due to the high volume of development applications and associated demands for engineering review and approval. These remaining contract positions are in active stages of recruitment.

## D. Analysis

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The Planning and Development Services Department has been steadily making progress in recruiting for positions that are both newly created and vacant due to turnover. However, the current labour market, particularly within the context of development, is extremely challenging.

The Town of the Blue Mountains exists in one of the fastest growing regions in Canada creating a high-demand market for expertise in facilitating this growth including but not limited to land-use planners, engineers and building officials. Based upon recent turnover trends, the movement of staff between municipalities is illustrative of the competition for talent.

Accentuating the demand for staffing is the increasing pressures placed on municipalities to deliver on provincial priorities related to housing and economic growth. This is reflected in recent legislative changes including Bill 109, More Homes for Everyone Act. Municipalities are now required to gradually refund application fees for decisions not made within statutory timelines as illustrated in the chart below for Zoning By-law Amendments, Official Plan Amendments and Site Plan applications:

	No Refund	50% Refund	75% refund	100% Refund
<b>ZBA</b>	Decision made within 90 days	Decision made within 91 and 149 days	Decision made within 150 and 209 days	Decision made 210 days or later
<b>OPA/ZBA</b>	Decision made within 120 days	Decision made within 121 and 179 days	Decision made within 180 and 239 days	Decision made 240 days or later
<b>SP</b>	Decision made within 60 days	Decision made within 61 and 89 days	Decision made within 90 and 119 days	Decision made 120 days or later

Beyond implications for service delivery, staffing shortages now carry significant financial risk for municipalities.

Moving forward into 2023, Planning and Development Services will continue to explore ways in which statutory obligations on development applications can be met. This includes budgeting for external consultant support to be used as a means to complement staff in the review of major files.

## E. Strategic Priorities

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### 1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

## **2. Organizational Excellence**

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

## **F. Environmental Impacts**

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There are no environmental impacts associated with this report.

## **G. Financial Impacts**

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There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

## **H. In Consultation With**

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Sarah Traynor, Manager of Human Resources

## **I. Public Engagement**

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The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Adam Smith, [directorplanningdevelopment@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:directorplanningdevelopment@thebluemountains.ca)

## **J. Attached**

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N/A

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Smith  
Director of Planning & Development Services

For more information, please contact:  
Adam Smith, Director of Planning & Development Services  
[directorplanningdevelopment@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:directorplanningdevelopment@thebluemountains.ca)  
519-599-3131 extension 246