



# Staff Report

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## Administration

**Report To:** Committee of The Whole  
**Meeting Date:** November 3, 2020  
**Report Number:** FAF.20.092  
**Subject:** Approval of Capital Projects Communications Assistant  
**Prepared by:** Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer

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### A. Recommendations

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THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.20.092, entitled "Approval of Capital Projects Communications Assistant";

AND THAT Council authorize staff to proceed with the hiring of a Capital Projects Communications Assistant as outlined in the 2020 Approved Budget.

### B. Overview

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The hiring of a Capital Projects Communications Assistant was considered and approved through the 2020 Budget process. However, as the financial impact is over \$50,000, the approval requires the consideration of Council prior to moving forward with filling this position.

### C. Background

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Staff proposed the new Capital Projects Communications Assistant position in the 2020 Budget as an addition to provide dedicated staff resources related to communications for capital projects.

Over the past year, a significant amount of the Town's communication focus and time was directed to COVID-19 specific communication efforts. The approval of the Capital Project Communications Assistant position was not brought forward earlier in the year because the Communication and Economic Development Team did not have the capacity to focus on the recruitment process for this much needed position until now.

It is anticipated that the recruitment process will be completed by early January 2021 providing that Council approves this report at the November 16, 2020 Council meeting.

## **D. Analysis**

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During the 2020 budget deliberations, Council reviewed and considered a variety of staffing options to support the Communications and Economic Development Division. Ultimately, Council approved the addition of a full-time Communications and Economic Development Coordinator position which was successfully filled in August of 2020.

Earlier in 2020, the existing Communications and Economic Development Coordinator position was changed to the Manager of Communications and Economic Development to better reflect the work being performed by this position. This change allowed for a coordinator level role to be hired to support the Division.

In addition, Council approved a full-time Capital Projects Communications Assistant position. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the recruitment process was delayed. The timing of this report, and the anticipation of its approval by Council, will allow staff to initiate the recruitment process and allow for a potential start date to be scheduled for February 2021.

As a workplan and focus for the Capital Projects Communications Assistant position, staff are proposing the following capital projects/plans;

- Thornbury West Side Servicing and Road Reconstruction project
- Tyrolean Village and Birchview Watermain and Sanitary Works
- Prices Subdivision Servicing and Drainage
- Thornbury Wastewater Treatment Plan Expansion
- Master Drainage Plan
- Transportation Plan

The Communications and Economic Development Division will work closely with the Operations Department on these projects.

This position will have a workspace allocation at the King Court Office location.

## **E. Strategic Priorities**

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### **1. Communications 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.

### **3. Community**

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

#### **4. Quality of Life**

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

#### **F. Environmental Impacts**

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It is anticipated that the staff within the Communications and Economic Development Division will develop ongoing relationships with the Town's various Committees of Council including the Sustainability Advisory Committee.

#### **G. Financial Impact**

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The position will be fully funded by the capital projects through time tracking.

#### **H. In consultation with**

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Tim Hendry, Manager of Communications and Economic Development

Shawn Carey, Director of Operations

Chair of the Communication Committee

Sam Dinsmore, Manager of Accounting and Budgets

Senior Management Team

#### **I. Public Engagement**

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The topic of this Staff Report has been subject to a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Center which took place through the 2020 Budget deliberations.

Comments regarding this report should be submitted to Tim Hendry, Manager of Communication and Economic Development at [communications@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:communications@thebluemountains.ca).

#### **J. Attached**

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1. 2020 Proposed Staff Information Sheet from the 2020 Approved Budget

Respectfully Submitted,

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Shawn Everitt  
Chief Administrative Officer

For more information, please contact:  
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## Proposed Addition - Communications and Economic Development

### **Communication Staffing Addition for Capital Projects**

#### **Business Need**

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Over the past few years, it has become evident that there would be a significant benefit to having dedicated communications staff members assigned to various capital projects to manage public engagement and public consultation.

The Operations Department has identified 115 capital projects and programs (\$117.8M) within the 5-Year Capital Project Forecast. In 2019, there are 23 planned capital projects, in varying stages of completion that would benefit from dedicated communications support.

To date, communication and public engagement efforts related to capital projects are typically led by external engineering consultants and internal operations staff. Despite significant effort, there is a need to improve and strengthen communication efforts related to the delivery of capital projects.

#### **Options or Solutions Analysis**

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##### **1. Hire a Full-Time Capital Projects Communications Assistant**

This option would allow for dedicated staff positions to manage communications and public engagement related to major capital projects. It is estimated that the staff position would be able to conduct communications plans for approximately five capital projects per year. Working with the Project Managers, this position will be able to coordinate all aspects of public consultation and public engagement.

#### **Financial and/or Non-Financial Benefits**

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The position will be fully funded by the capital projects. For example, each capital project would fund part of the employee's salary and benefits.

The key benefit of additional staffing resources will be dedicated attention to coordinate communications and public engagement campaigns related to major capital projects.

#### **Risk Analysis**

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Insufficient communications staffing and/or the status quo as related to capital projects will result in the current communications breakdown.

#### **Recommendation**

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Staff recommends that the 2020 budget include a Capital Projects Communications Assistant position. This option will provide a dedicated staff position to manage communications and public engagement related to major capital projects.

## Implementation Plan

The hiring of additional staff position would be administered by the Town Human Resources Department. The addition of the full-time staff member would be advertised after the budget is approved.

## Budget

The base funding for this position will be current year revenues which staff are showing as 75% Taxation and 25% Water and Wastewater Fees however using timesheet tracking the position will be billed back to the projects and funding using the most appropriate source.

Description	Total	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Expenditures</b>						
Full Time Salaries	<b>\$324,858</b>	\$49,909	\$67,208	\$67,880	\$69,238	\$70,623
Full Time Benefits	<b>\$107,489</b>	\$15,010	\$22,463	\$22,878	\$23,335	\$23,803
IT Software/Hardware	<b>\$15,000</b>	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Operating Costs	<b>\$15,000</b>	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
<b>Expenditures Total</b>	<b>\$462,347</b>	<b>\$70,919</b>	<b>\$95,671</b>	<b>\$96,758</b>	<b>\$98,573</b>	<b>\$100,426</b>
<b>Funding</b>						
Taxation	<b>\$346,761</b>	\$53,189	\$71,753	\$72,569	\$73,930	\$75,320
Water and Wastewater User-Fees	<b>\$115,586</b>	\$17,730	\$23,918	\$24,189	\$24,643	\$25,106
<b>Funding Total</b>	<b>\$462,347</b>	<b>\$70,919</b>	<b>\$95,671</b>	<b>\$96,758</b>	<b>\$98,573</b>	<b>\$100,426</b>

Staff are recommending that the base funding source for the two positions be current year revenues and through time tracking their expenses can then be billed back and funded by the project (whether it is capital or operating). The main reason for this suggested switch is some projects may not have appropriate funding for this type of staffing expense. An example of this is the Tyrolean Village Watermain Replacement and Wastewater Servicing Extension, staff do not feel that it is appropriate to charge back to the property owners the cost to communicate the project to them and therefore a more appropriate source needs to be identified.

The chart below looks at each position and allows their time to projects and calculates the cost and funding source.

Communication Specialist	Allocation %	2020 Cost	Funding Source
<b>Projects</b>			
Tyrolean Village Works	40%	\$28,500	2020 Water and Wastewater User-Fees
Sustainability Initiatives	15%	\$11,000	2020 Taxation (Sustainability Committee Budget)
Tree Preservation By-law	15%	\$11,000	2020 Taxation (Planning Division Budget)
Westside Water EA	10%	\$7,000	2020 Water User-Fees
Eastside Water EA	10%	\$7,000	2020 Water User-Fees
TWWTP Expansion	10%	\$6,419	2020 Wastewater User-Fees
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$70,919</b>	