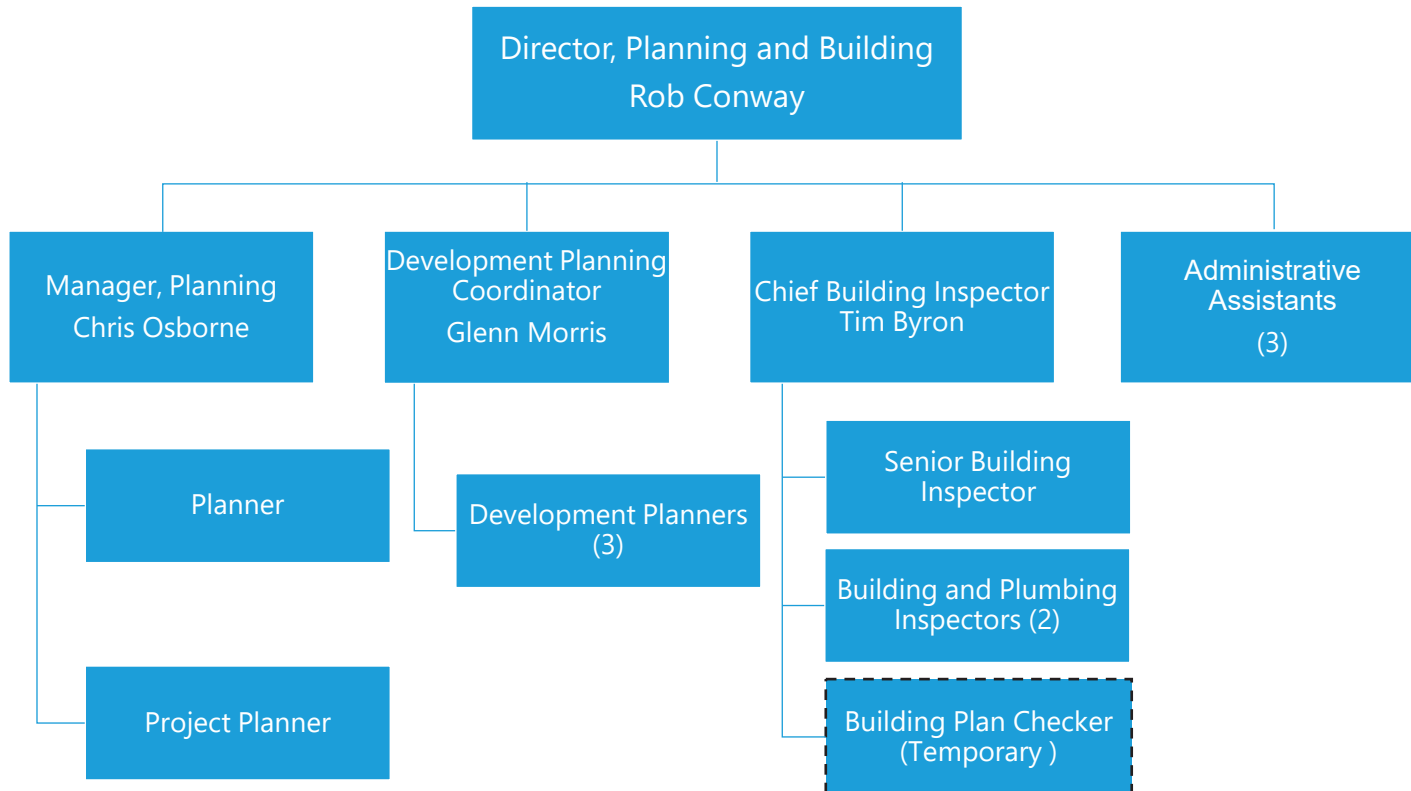


# PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT 2024 BUSINESS PLAN

Committee of the Whole

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE





## STAFFING LEVELS

16

Total positions  
as of  
September 6, 2023

15 Full Time, Permanent (1 Vacant)

1 Full Time, Temporary

(Exempt 5; CUPE 11)





## DEPARTMENT FOCUS

The Planning and Building Department provides information and support relating to services associated with community planning, land use and sustainable land development.

We prepare and maintain plans, regulations and policies for the responsible development of North Cowichan's communities and are responsible for the review and administration of planning and building approvals.

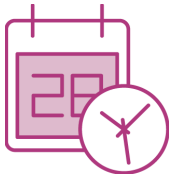
PLAN-4





## CORE BUSINESS

The Department is organized into four teams:



**COMMUNITY  
PLANNING**



**DEVELOPMENT  
PLANNING**



**BUILDING  
INSPECTIONS**



**ADMINISTRATIVE  
SUPPORT**

# COMMUNITY PLANNING

## 2.6 FTE (Manager, Planning; Project Planner; Planner)

- Responsible for land use plans and policy
- Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw update
- Supports community partnership initiatives and emergent policy issues (e.g. affordable housing, telecommunication tower policy, harmonization with ALC regulation)
- Assists with complex development applications
- Coordinates and collaborates on regional planning projects (e.g. Cowichan 2050, childcare, housing needs assessments)
- Development and implementation of Local Area Plans and Secondary Plans
- Provides planning support on a range of municipal initiatives (e.g. affordable housing projects, master transportation plan, infrastructure planning)
- Environmental planning in collaboration with Environment Services staff, including implementation of the Climate Action and Energy Plan and Biodiversity Protection Policy.
- Coordinates and prepares grant applications
- Maintain and develop external relationships and conducts public engagement on projects and policies
- Community outreach

## DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

### 4.4 FTE (Development Planning Coordinator; 3 Development Planners; 0.4 Planner)

- Administers and maintains Zoning Bylaw and other development related regulations and policies
- Provides information and advice to land owners and developers
- Receives and processes development applications
- Works with applicants and land owners to achieve compliance with policies, regulations, and guidelines
- Responds to public information requests of all sorts
- Reviews and comments on building permit and subdivision applications, business license applications, special event applications, liquor and cannabis license applications
- Processes Agricultural Land Commission applications
- Enforcement and compliance
- Communications with agencies and external agencies



## BUILDING INSPECTIONS

5 FTE (Chief Building Inspector; 3 Building and Plumbing Inspectors; Plan Checker)

- Administers building, fire, health and life-safety standards and regulations
- Provides technical information to designers, builders and home owners
- Business license approvals regarding building standards
- Reviews and approves building, sign and plumbing permit applications
- Conducts inspections for compliance with BC Building Code, Building Bylaw and other applicable regulations
- Enforcement and compliance
- Promotion and implementation of the BC Energy and Zero Carbon Step Codes
- Construction industry outreach

## BUILDING PERMIT STATISTICS

| Year  | Building Permits | Commercial | Residential | Other | Residential Units Created | Total Value of Construction |
|-------|------------------|------------|-------------|-------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2017  | 294              | 36         | 198         | 60    | 162                       | \$47M                       |
| 2018  | 336              | 30         | 194         | 112   | 378                       | \$67M                       |
| 2019  | 263              | 20         | 171         | 70    | 340                       | \$85.8M                     |
| 2020  | 301              | 29         | 202         | 70    | 221                       | \$64.2M                     |
| 2021  | 329              | 15         | 232         | 82    | 291                       | \$116.9M                    |
| 2022  | 251              | 17         | 156         | 78    | 492                       | \$161.4M                    |
| 2023* | 163              | 12         | 88          | 38    | 69                        | \$291.3M                    |

\* to September 30, 2023

# BUILDING PERMIT STATISTICS

## Dwelling Units

| New Residential Units | Single Family + Accessory Dwelling | Duplex | Suites | Multi-Family + Apartment | Total |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------------------------|-------|
| 2017                  | 130                                | 14     | 14     | 12                       | 170   |
| 2018                  | 149                                | 26     | 15     | 186                      | 376   |
| 2019                  | 132                                | 20     | 14     | 174                      | 340   |
| 2020                  | 154                                | 19     | 8      | 39                       | 221   |
| 2021                  | 180                                | 28     | 4      | 69                       | 281   |
| 2022                  | 100                                | 6      | 6      | 380                      | 434   |
| 2023*                 | 49                                 | 10     | 8      | 2                        | 69    |

\* to September 30, 2023



## DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION STATISTICS

|       | Rezoning | Development Permits | Development Variance Permits | ALC Applications | Temporary Use Permits | OCP Amendments | Total     |
|-------|----------|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| 2017  | 29       | 29                  | 10                           | 7                | 3                     | 1              | <b>79</b> |
| 2018  | 31       | 26                  | 12                           | 5                | 11                    | 1              | <b>86</b> |
| 2019  | 19       | 42                  | 3                            | 1                | 1                     | 1              | <b>67</b> |
| 2020  | 17       | 30                  | 9                            | 6                | 1                     | 3              | <b>66</b> |
| 2021  | 20       | 43                  | 12                           | 4                | 1                     | 1              | <b>81</b> |
| 2022  | 17       | 27                  | 10                           | 7                | 1                     | 3              | <b>65</b> |
| 2023* | 7        | 17                  | 7                            | 4                | 6                     | 4              | <b>45</b> |

\* to September 30, 2023

## TRENDS FOR 2024 – Building Division

- New construction slowing due to high interest rates and construction costs.
- Building permit applications expected to dip in 2024 but long term trend is expected to be upwards.
- Phased permits for Cowichan District Hospital Replacement Project issued in 2023 and will continue in 2024/2025.
- Project delays resulting from Contaminated Sites Regulation and ALC Soil deposit and removal regulations.
- New procedures and industry education required for implementation of BC Energy Step Code and Zero Carbon Step Code in 2024.

## TRENDS FOR 2024 – Planning Division

- OCP implementation and new Zoning Bylaw the over-arching 2024 departmental priority.
- Provincial Housing Target Order expected in late 2023 or mid-2024 that will impact resourcing and priorities in 2024 and beyond.
- If a grant from the Housing Accelerator Fund is received commitments made in application will be prioritized.
- Ongoing implementation of the BMLAP is necessary to manage major land use applications in that area.



PLAN 14

# CLIMATE EMERGENCY PRIORITIES



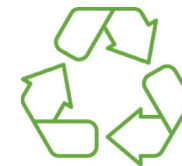
# CLIMATE EMERGENCY PRIORITIES

## Planning and Building



### **PRIORITY 1:**

Support Environment Staff in the implementation of the Climate Action and Energy Plan



### **PRIORITY 2:**

Strengthen environmental policy in all land use planning



# 2024 BUSINESS PLAN





## PROJECTED BUSINESS PLAN DELIVERABLES - PLANNING

| Actions / Projects   | Start Date |
|--|------------|
| Zoning Bylaw review and update   | 2023       |
| Bill 44 – Housing Statutes (Residential Development) Amendment Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zoning Bylaw amendments for small scale, multi-family housing</li> <li>• Interim Housing Needs Assessment</li> <li>• Potential OCP amendments</li> <li>• Other bylaw amendments??</li> </ul> | 2023       |
| Affordable Housing Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community amenity contribution policy</li> <li>• Accessory dwelling unit strategy</li> <li>• Real estate acquisition and disposition policy</li> </ul>   | 2022       |
| Bill 46 – Housing Statutes (Development Financing) Amendment Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenity Cost Charges?</li> </ul>   | 2024       |

## PROJECTED BUSINESS PLAN DELIVERABLES - PLANNING

| Actions / Projects                                  | Start Date |
|---|------------|
| Provincial Housing Target Order Compliance          | 2024       |
| Sherman Road Affordable Housing Project             | 2018       |
| Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan*               | 2023       |
| Elliott Street Affordable Housing Project*          | 2023       |
| <i>* Assumes HAF and/or CHF/PDF grants received</i> |            |
| Support to Agricultural Advisory Committee          | 2023       |
| Bell McKinnon Local Area Plan Implementation        | 2023       |

## PROJECTED BUSINESS PLAN DELIVERABLES - PLANNING

| Actions / Projects  | Start Date |
|---|------------|
| Improvements to development application processing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development procedures bylaw</li><li>• Continued focus on reducing caseload backlog</li><li>• Development applications business process review</li><li>• Bylaw amendments</li></ul> | 2023       |
| Other OCP implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Land Clearing Bylaw</li><li>• Noise Bylaw Review</li><li>• Other projects, as directed by Council</li></ul>   | 2025 -     |

## PROJECTED BUSINESS PLAN DELIVERABLES - BUILDING

| Actions / Projects                                     | Start Date |
|--|------------|
| Implementation of BC Energy and Zero Carbon Step Codes | 2023       |
| Review and update Building Bylaw                       | 2024       |

# OPERATING BUDGET -SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUESTS

## NET NEW STAFFING REQUEST

| Position                            | Rationale   | Implications of Deferment  | Projects Deferred  | Budget Impact  |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Development Planning Manager</b> | Development applications are processed by development planners but require involvement and oversight from senior staff. Much of this function is currently provided by the Director of Planning and Building. Creating a new position that is specifically tasked with managing development applications will create structural capacity in the Department to increase productivity, reduce application processing timeframes and free-up senior staff resourcing for other Council priorities. | Continued reliance on contractors to process development applications (subject to budget approval)<br><br>On-going reliance on senior staff for managing development application files and reduced capacity for other projects/priorities. | Development application process review & implementation. | \$166K (benefits included) potential start date of April 2024.<br><br>Funding Source:<br>Taxation \$127K |

# OPERATING BUDGET -SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUESTS

## NET NEW STAFFING REQUEST

| Position                   | Rationale   | Implications of Deferment  | Projects Deferred   | Budget Impact   |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Planning Technician</b> | <p>Development and community planning staff spend considerable time responding to routine public inquiries and reviewing and commenting on basic permit and license applications.</p> <p>Shifting this work to a dedicated planning technician would allow development planners to use more of their time for higher level work and improved service levels for building permits, business licenses and subdivision applications.</p> <p>Provincial legislation to facilitate Small Scale, Multi-Family Housing (Bill 44) is expected to generate much interest from property owners and the public, resulting in increased demands on front line planning staff.</p> | <p>Reduced service levels in the form of longer application processing times and restricted access to planning staff.</p> <p>Higher levels of non-compliance and applicant frustration, as the availability of planning staff to inform and work pro-actively with land owners and the public will be reduced.</p> | <p>If community planning resources are shifted to prioritize housing and development, and service to the public, capacity for undertaking planning projects will be impacted.</p> | <p>\$100K (benefits included) potential start date of April 2024.</p> <p>Funding Source: Taxation \$77K</p> |

# OPERATING BUDGET -SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUESTS NET NEW STAFFING REQUEST

| Position            | Rationale   | Implications of Deferment   | Projects Deferred  | Budget Impact   |
|---------------------|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Plan Checker</b> | <p>Council authorized the hiring of a plan checker in 2021 for a two year term. The position was intended to improve customer service by assisting applicants with preparing permit applications and helping implement department initiatives such as electronic permitting and the BC Energy Step Code.</p> <p>The position has been effective at improving work flows and application processing times by facilitating more complete application submissions and faster turn-arounds when incomplete or non-compliant applications are submitted.</p> | <p>Duties currently undertaken by Plan Checker will be assumed by building inspectors. This will reduce the time available for building inspections, permit processing and applicant support.</p> | <p>Less resourcing for implementation of BC Energy Step Code and Zero Carbon Step Code.</p> <p>Other departmental operations impacted are bylaw enforcement, public access to building files and issue management.</p> | <p>\$107K (benefits included)</p> <p>Funding Source: Building Inspection fees and taxation.</p> |



# OPERATING BUDGET – SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUEST

| Actions / Projects                     | Budget   | Rationale  |
|--|--|--|
| Development Application Service Review | <p>\$100,000</p> <p>Funded from appropriated surplus</p> | <p>A comprehensive review of the development application review and approvals process is proposed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify opportunities for efficiencies and streamlining</li> <li>• Promote better land use outcomes consistent with OCP</li> <li>• Achieve processes that are more predictable, effective and understandable for applicants, staff, the public and Council.</li> <li>• Better align Municipality's processes with Provincial housing legislations and Housing Target Order.</li> </ul> |

# OPERATING BUDGET

|                         | 2023 Budget         | 2024 Budget         | \$ Change        | % Change  | 2023 YTD*           | Supplemental      | \$ Change         |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>REVENUE</b>          |                     |                     |                  |           |                     |                   |                   |
| Building Permit Fees    | \$ 708,104          | \$ 777,464          | \$ 69,360        | 10%       | \$ 1,488,664        |                   |                   |
| Development Fees        | \$ 191,660          | \$ 195,488          | \$ 3,828         | 2%        | \$ 88,297           |                   |                   |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>   | <b>\$ 899,764</b>   | <b>\$ 972,952</b>   | <b>\$ 73,188</b> | <b>8%</b> | <b>\$ 1,576,961</b> |                   |                   |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>         |                     |                     |                  |           |                     |                   |                   |
| Building Inspections    | \$ 730,622          | \$ 795,877          | \$ 65,255        | 9%        | \$ 611,558          |                   |                   |
| Planning Administration | \$ 1,842,145        | \$ 1,793,195        | \$ (48,950)      | (3%)      | \$ 1,289,512        | \$ 204,000        | \$ 155,050        |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>   | <b>\$ 2,572,767</b> | <b>\$ 2,589,072</b> | <b>\$ 16,305</b> | <b>1%</b> | <b>\$ 1,901,069</b> | <b>\$ 204,000</b> | <b>\$ 220,305</b> |

\* to October 20, 2023

## KEY STATISTICS

|   | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023* |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Number of development applications received                       | 67    | 66    | 81    | 65    | 45    |
| Number of building inspections completed                          | 2,469 | 2,676 | 2,893 | 2,318 | 1,680 |
| Estimated number of planning inquiries                            | 5,900 | 5,740 | 7,789 | 6,486 | 5,019 |
| Community engagement reach of building newsletter                 | 136   | 186   | 231   | 260   | 275   |
| Percentage of new housing units within Urban Containment Boundary | N/A   | 48.6% | 45.3% | 90%   | 68%   |

\* to October 21, 2023