
2015 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

City Planning – Policy Staff Working on Transit Related and Social Planning Initiatives

Background:

- At its February 4, 2015 meeting, the Budget Committee requested a Budget Briefing Note from City Planning on the following:
 - the number of policy staff that are currently working on transit-related projects, or Environment Assessments, including but not limited to Feeling Congested, the Downtown Relief Line, Scarborough Subway and Sheppard LRT, and on community "social" planning initiatives, such as Tower Renewal and Community Improvement Plan processes
- This briefing note responds to both the transit-related projects (Part A) and the community "social" planning initiatives (Part B).

PART A – Transit Related Projects

Background:

- Environmental assessment studies for rapid transit projects are completed under the Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP) in Ontario. TPAP studies and other transit planning initiatives in the City are led by staff in the Transportation Planning section of the City Planning Division, in partnership with TTC and Metrolinx as appropriate.

Key Points:

- There are currently eight contract positions in the Transit Implementation unit within City Planning who are working on TPAP studies and other transit initiatives full time (e.g. Relief Line, Scarborough Subway Extension, SmartTrack, etc.). The staff complement includes: Program Managers, Senior Transportation Planners, a Senior Public Consultation Co-ordinator and Planners.
 - Four of the eight positions are funded by TTC capital funding for the Scarborough Subway Extension and the Relief Line projects.

- The work of the Transit Implementation Unit is augmented by the Travel Demand Forecasting unit, which comprises staff responsible for transportation policy development ("Feeling Congested?") and maintaining and applying the City's travel demand forecasting model. There are five permanent staff in this unit, including: Program Manager, Senior Transportation Planner, Planner, and Assistant Planners.
 - This unit expends approximately two-thirds of their time, as an aggregate, on transit-related initiatives.
- There are currently four contract positions in the Metrolinx Rapid Transit Program unit within City Planning who are working full time on facilitating, guiding and assisting with the approvals necessary in the detailed design and roll out of Metrolinx transit infrastructure for the Finch West, Sheppard East and Eglinton LRT projects, to ensure an effective interface with Metrolinx on matters of compliance and quality control. The staff complement includes: Program Manager, Senior Transportation Planner, Planners
 - This group is predominantly funded by Metrolinx.
- These units are supported by transportation planning, community planning, urban design and policy staff in the City's four Districts. These staff resources include a combination of Managers, Senior Planners, Planners and Assistant Planners. These staff expend varying degrees of effort on transit-related initiatives, however as an aggregate it amounts to approximately 10-15 percent of their time.

PART B - Community "Social" Planning Initiatives

Background:

- The Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis (SIPA) section in the City Planning Division plays a key role in supporting city building initiatives led by both City Planning and as a corporate partner. This work includes Official Plan policy development and implementation, leading, partnering or supporting city wide studies including rooming houses, TOcore, growth related studies including the Regeneration studies, transit supportive development, school closures, community infrastructure planning, the new City-wide zoning by-law and energy and environment initiatives, housing policy development and application, leads the corporate response on Provincial Planning Act and Policy changes (OMB Reform, LABS, Greenbelt Plan, Provincial Policy Statements, Growth Plan), and research and information that supports and provides evidence based analysis to support these initiatives.
- SIPA leads the preparation of Community Services and Facilities (CS&F) strategies as a component of growth studies and as a means to fostering liveable and complete communities. This information informs communities, supports Section 37 implementation and provides a resource for other Divisions as well as local community agencies.
- Within this scope are community "social" planning initiatives which include corporate initiatives such as Tower Renewal, Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020, Community Infrastructure Planning, Poverty Reduction Strategy and School Closures.

Key Points:

- City Planning in conjunction with Municipal Licensing and Standards is the co-lead on Rooming Houses.
- The Chief Planner and the Executive Director of SDFA co-chair the Tower Neighbourhood Renewal Inter-Divisional Committee.
- The Committee oversees the work of three Workgroups:
 - #1: Activating Pilot Projects in Residential Apartment Commercial (RAC) Zones
 - #2: Encouraging Private Sector Investment in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas
 - #3: STEP / Champion Site
- In 2013/2014, City Planning led the site analysis and prepared zoning by-law amendments for 400+ sites that were rezoned to Residential-Apartment Commercial (RAC) by City Council in June 2014.
- SIPA staff participate in each workgroup as workgroup members and to ensure consistency with the City's Official Plan, Zoning Bylaw and related policies and city-building objectives.
- SIPA's staff resources for the identified initiatives include: four staff for Tower Renewal; two staff for Toronto Strong Neighbourhood Strategy 2020; two staff for Community Infrastructure Planning and two staff for the Poverty Reduction Strategy. The amount of staff involvement varies by initiative and associated activities over the course of these initiatives. City Planning staff involvement - especially at the District level – will increase as the Tower Renewal Office advances with detailed project planning. It is estimated that at least 10 percent of staff time is spent helping to advance these initiatives.

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Date: February 9, 2015