

Audit Committee Report

DATE: Monday, September 30, 2024

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUDIT

FROM:

Kevin Shapiro, Director of Internal Audit

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

To communicate the findings from the Development Planning Audit.

Report Highlights

- The Development Planning Department manages city building through the implementation of Provincial Policy, and Regional and City Official Plan Policy, the 2022-2026 Term of Council Strategic Priorities and the City's Growth Management Strategy to achieve a balance of good planning practices and environmental protection. The Department provides a public service function by facilitating input from the public, agencies, City departments, and other levels of government and stakeholders into the development approval process and being a source for land development information.
- While the department has made significant progress on several initiatives over the past number of years, opportunities were identified to improve management oversight and ensure risks related to the development planning processes are efficiently and effectively mitigated.
- Management has developed action plans which will mitigate the identified risks and address the recommendations outlined in the report.
- Internal Audit will follow up with management and report on the status of management action plans at a future committee meeting.
- This audit was conducted in conformance with the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*.

Recommendation

1. That the Internal Audit Report on Development Planning be received.

Background

The objective of the audit is to evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal controls, processes and procedures in place to mitigate the business risks associated with the management and administration of Development Planning.

The audit approach included a review of the strategic goals, objectives and oversight of the business unit, review of relevant programs, legislation, policies and procedures, use of technology, and interviews with staff and management.

The audit scope included department related activities that occurred from January 1, 2022, to October 31, 2023.

This audit was conducted in conformance with the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*.

Previous Reports/Authority

Not applicable.

Analysis and Options

As one of the fastest-growing cities in Canada with an ever-increasing population, Vaughan is a place people want to call home. To ensure this dream can be a reality, the City of Vaughan is committed to forward-looking planning that supports building complete communities and ensuring residents aren't priced out of the neighborhoods they grew up in.

As of 2022, Vaughan had a population of more than 344,000 people and 240,100 jobs. Now through 2051, those numbers will grow by 228,800 more people, bringing the total expected population to more than 573,000. By that time, there will be 111,400 more jobs created here, raising the total expected employment figure to about 351,500 jobs. This anticipated growth over the next few decades will account for almost one-third of York Region's collective growth.

On March 21, 2023, Vaughan Council approved a staff report that commits the City to achieving the Province's Housing Pledge. The City's provincially mandated housing target is 42,000 new homes by 2031. On October 5, 2023, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that Vaughan will receive \$59 million to build more housing units as part of the federal Housing Accelerator Fund. The Government of Canada and City of Vaughan have agreed to expedite the creation of more than 1,700 new housing units

and incentivize thousands of additional homes over the next three years. This is the most significant housing investment in Vaughan's history.

The Development Planning Department is responsible for the planning and general design of the City through the land use planning process.

Land use planning enables the City to establish goals and objectives for growth and development. This is accomplished by having regard for important social issues, together with environmental and economic considerations which provide for sustainable and healthy communities. Through this process, the interests and objectives of individual property owners are balanced with the greater interests and objectives of the City.

The Development Planning Department staff provides professional planning advice and information with respect to current land use issues and undertakes the review and processing of a variety of Development Applications, including Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, Draft Plan of Subdivision, Draft Plan of Condominium, Part-Lot Control Exemption and Site Plans submitted to the City. Development Planning Department staff are available to provide assistance to the public and the development industry on planning-related issues, processing of development applications and the planning legislative process.

The Development Planning Department manages city building through the implementation of Provincial Policy, and Regional and City Official Plan Policy, the 2022-2026 Term of Council Strategic Priorities and the City's Growth Management Strategy to achieve a balance of good planning practices and environmental protection. This is achieved through the comprehensive analysis and review of development planning, heritage and Committee of Adjustment applications submitted by private landowners and through the preparation and implementation of urban design guidelines, streetscape plans and management of capital projects.

The Department provides a public service function by facilitating input from the public, agencies, City departments, and other levels of government and stakeholders into the development approval process and being a source for land development information.

The Department's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) team creates, maintains and undertakes analysis of digital data and creates complex digital mapping and solutions.

Financial Impact

There are no direct economic impacts associated with this report.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

Not applicable.

Conclusion

While the department has made significant progress on several initiatives over the past number of years, opportunities were identified to improve management oversight and ensure risks related to Development Planning are efficiently and effectively. The following opportunities were identified:

- Continue transforming the Development Planning and Cultural Heritage Processes and Policies in response to the new legislations.
- Expedite the migration to one system to collect/monitor development activity for business enhancement.
- Improve management oversight to ensure the completeness of application documentation and the timely updating of application status.
- Establish Key Performance Indicators to measure department performance by benchmarking against peer municipalities and industry standards.
- Leverage advances in technology to enhance various business processes, records management, and online services.

For more information, please contact: Kevin Shapiro, Director of Internal Audit, ext. 8293.

Attachments

1. Internal Audit Report – Development Planning.
2. Presentation Materials.

Prepared by

Kevin Shapiro, Director, Internal Audit, ext. 8293.