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TRANSPORTATION AND WORKS DEPARTMENT STAFFING SUPPORTING ENHANCED PROGRAM DELIVERY

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, September 2, 2004, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended:

1. Regional Council authorize an increase in the staff complement for the Transportation and Works Department by one permanent full time employee (FTE's) to provide branch support in the area of regulatory compliance; and two FTE's for ongoing support and enhanced coverage at the Region's Water and Wastewater Branch operations control centre.

2. PURPOSE

This report seeks authorization from the Transportation and Works Committee and Regional Council to increase the staff complement of the Transportation and Works Department by one position (Manager, Regulatory Compliance) for compliance management and two additional Control Panel Operators. These positions are being requested prior to approval of the 2005 budget to respond to compliance issues, and provide resources to monitor and support the Water and Wastewater Branch's day-to-day operations.

3. BACKGROUND

The Transportation and Works Department is faced with challenges covering a number of service areas including the infrastructure delivery, solid waste management, water and wastewater service delivery, and integrated transit programs. To ensure the best services and programs are provided to the community, the Transportation and Works Department has completed reviews of several departmental programs over the last two years. Notably, these included the Region's Infrastructure Delivery Review and the Water and Wastewater Branch best practices initiative (OPTimize Works program). These reviews highlighted the challenges the department faces in delivering successful programs to the Region's residents. Recommendations from these initiatives included the need for additional staff.

Council recently authorized an increase to the staffing complement of the Infrastructure Design and Construction (IDC) Branch of the Transportation and Works Department by

three FTE's to allow for program management of the Region's Special Projects and two proposed capital projects "bundles" (one for roads and one for water and wastewater projects). IDC Branch intends to retain private sector parties to deliver the projects identified for each of the "bundles" which have yet to be defined. Refer to Clause 23 of Report No. 6 of the Transportation and Works Committee meeting of June 16, 2004 entitled *Implementation of Infrastructure Delivery Review Key Outcomes*.

In May 2004, staff reported to Committee and Council the conclusions of the OPTimize Works Program – Phase 1 (refer to Clause 4 of Report No. 5 of the Transportation and Works Committee meeting of May 5, 2004 entitled *Water and Wastewater OPTimize Works Program Phase 1 Update and Final Report*). The conclusions identified the need for twelve additional permanent full time employees (FTE's) over time to develop and support the branch's best practices direction. These conclusions are emphasized by the sustained demands placed on branch resources to respond to Regional growth, increasing regulatory compliance including a more stringent training regulation for operations staff, the need to develop a clearly defined asset management program, and the need to implement technology solutions to support the best practices goals. It is proposed that the positions identified in the OPTimize Works conclusions be considered during the 2005 and 2006 budget preparation cycles.

Two Control Panel Operator positions are needed to ensure sufficient coverage for the control panel which operates 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. The Region's water and wastewater operations are remotely monitored at a central control panel location – the Leslie Pumping Station. The control panel receives data and alarms from pumping stations, treatment plants, groundwater supply systems, and other operational facilities.

Work completed in Phase 1 of OPTimize Works confirmed the need to maintain the present control panel program for at least three to five years. Longer term, the demands at the control panel are expected to reduce through the implementation of enhanced automation and control at the facilities. As this automation is realized, some control panel staff will be redeployed to other operations roles.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Rapid regional growth has had tremendous impacts on the department's programs. Management and staff continue to deal with and react to expanding programs, accelerated infrastructure needs, greater legislative and regulatory requirements, and an increasingly sophisticated and demanding public.

4.1 Supporting Regulatory Compliance and System Performance

While OPTimize Works Phase 1 established the baseline for the proposed organization structure, recent compliance issues, regulatory changes, and the servicing capacity crisis have prompted branch management to review the proposed structure. An additional management role is required to alleviate pressure on the existing senior branch management team and enable sufficient coverage to attend to both day-to-day decisions

and crisis situations in an effective and timely manner. Therefore, the compliance-related position is critical for providing management support to the branch related to developing policy documents, managing specific compliance issues, developing overall system audit programs, and implementing contemporary solutions aimed at meeting compliance requirements.

The primary responsibilities of the **Manager, Regulatory Compliance** focus on conducting audits of the Region's water and wastewater facilities to ensure the security of the system, conducting audits of the water and wastewater industry to highlight best-in-class practices, identifying continual improvement opportunities including business process redesign, and developing and coordinating the branch performance measurement program. Duties will include implementing management control processes including organizational changes, and the establishment of policies, procedures, planning, and reporting requirements, and leading the branch through the annual business planning cycle,

4.2 Meeting the Needs of the Control Panel

Two Control Panel Operator positions are required immediately for ongoing support of the day-to-day water and wastewater operations. This role is critical to the Region's water and wastewater operations as the incumbents are the 'eyes' for the system as a whole. There is increased scrutiny of the system, greater system security requirements, the need for rapid yet accurate alarm response and action, and the need for quick action to avert spills.

Several factors make it difficult to find qualified staff to work on the control panel. These include:

- The current 12 hour shift arrangement.
- The disparity between the lower level of pay and the higher level of responsibility.
- The difficulty of control panel operators in obtaining the necessary hands-on experience to achieve Ministry of Environment (MOE) operators certificate levels.
- That filling positions on a casual basis does not promote job security and leaves employees without benefits.

Given the critical nature of the control panel, the Region spends considerable effort ensuring that staff are trained and have the opportunity to earn experience qualifications towards their certificates. However, since some positions are filled on a casual basis, these casual employees often take their skills and training to other municipalities offering more stable employment leaving the Region understaffed. Allowing for the additional two full time control panel positions will help to alleviate the staff turnover in this area.

The **Control Panel Operators** will provide additional support for the Water and Wastewater Operations in connection with system monitoring and control, response and analysis of alarm events. Responsibilities also include dispatch, response to telephone enquiries, analysis of relevant operational data, and maintenance of an incident log for the control panel.

The control panel is staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week with twelve hour shifts over a twelve week schedule. This provides full coverage of operations and minimizes or eliminates impacts from process failures by ensuring awareness and response to system problems. Currently, there are four full time Control Panel Operator positions. In order to fulfill the shift demands and allow for vacation and mandatory training days, two additional positions have historically been filled on a casual basis. These casual positions have become an issue since the actual shift demand is that of a full time position.

The proposed staffing additions outlined in this report are illustrated in *Attachment 1*.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed additional annual salaries including benefits for the positions outlined in the previous section are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1
Transportation and Works Department Proposed Staffing Adjustments

Proposed Position	Number	Annual Salary ¹
Manager, Regulatory Compliance	1	108,000
Control Panel Operator	2	102,000
Reduction in Casual Control Panel Salaries ²	2	(96,900)
Total Annual Salary Including Benefits		\$113,100

1. Estimated salary costs include benefits.

2. Reduction in Casual Control Panel salaries includes base salary plus 14% (4% in lieu of vacation and 10% in lieu of benefits).

Annual costs for information technology including phone, computer, and other communications tools such as Personal Data Assistants (PDA's) or cell phones are estimated at \$8,500 per FTE, and if needed, annual facility leasing costs of \$4,200 per FTE are estimated. The total annual costs for salaries, benefits, information technology, and facility leasing costs are \$151,200 (funded through water and wastewater rates). Additional one-time costs of \$15,000 for furniture (including desks, chairs, and filing cabinets) would be incurred.

Realistically, these positions would be filled near the end of 2004 and would have limited impact on the 2004 budget. These costs can be accommodated within the current approved 2004 budget. Budget burden for 2004 rate supported budget would reflect approximately one quarter of the total annual salaries, annual information technology costs, and annual leasing costs (\$38K) plus the one-time furniture costs (or total of approximately \$53K). This represents an increase in the 2004 Water and Wastewater Branch operations budget of 0.04%.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The nine local municipalities are the direct customers and therefore beneficiaries of improvements made to the Region's service delivery. As outlined in Section 4 above, these positions are necessary to ensure the branch is proactive about providing adequate and qualified staff for its programs, meeting legislative requirements, and maintaining contemporary business practices.

Advancing the positions identified in this report will enable the Transportation and Works Department to continue to enhance its service reliability and provide increased value to the community.

7. CONCLUSION

The Transportation and Works Department continues to face challenges in response to sustained growth, accelerated infrastructure demands, increasing regulatory and legislative requirements, and greater public scrutiny of services delivered. In response, the department completed reviews aimed at overall enhancement of the services and programs provided to the Region's residents. Outcomes of these reviews highlight the need for additional resources to close gaps in the organizational structure. This report seeks authorization from Transportation and Works Committee and Regional Council to hire one permanent FTE for compliance management in the Water and Wastewater Branch, and two FTE's for the Control Panel operation to enhance system monitoring and control prior to the approval of the 2005 budget.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(A copy of the attachment referred to in the foregoing is included with this report and is also on file in the Regional Clerk's office.)