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Dept.
Manager

GM/
Director

CAO

The District of North Vancouver
INFORMATION REPORT TO COUNCIL

November 21, 2024
File: 08.3060.00/006.000

AUTHOR:

SUBJECT: Project Update - Development Approvals Process Review (DAPR): Commencing Implementation

REASON FOR REPORT

To provide an update on the Development Approvals Process Review **(**DAPR) project as it moves from the review and planning stage to the implementation stage.

SUMMARY

The in-depth review of the development approvals process is now complete. The consultant conducting the analysis has delivered their final report including recommendations for improvement and a detailed proposal for how to implement and sustain meaningful change.

There are a number of recommended changes to be implemented in priority order followed by a program of continuous improvement. Work on implementation activities has begun with an anticipated program launch to staff in early 2025. Progress reports will be provided to Council biannually throughout implementation, with the first implementation update anticipated in July.

BACKGROUND

In September 2023 the District engaged KPMG (the "consultant") to conduct a detailed review of the development approvals process, and to provide recommendations based on findings and industry best practices. Staff provided a project update to Council on [July 22, 2024](http://app.dnv.org/OpenDocument/Default.aspx?docNum=6335544)[1] at which time the consultant presented key strengths and challenges found during their research, and a summary of recommendations.

The consultant has now delivered the DAPR Final Report providing a proposed implementation roadmap with detailed action items as well as recommendations for resourcing, project governance, change management, and communications (see the

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[1] http://app.dnv.org/OpenDocument/Default.aspx?docNum=6335544

Executive Summary in **Attachment 1**). The final stage of the DAPR project, implementation, is now to commence.

DISCUSSION

Implementation Plan

The consultant's proposed implementation roadmap includes priority actions for each of the 15 key recommendations developed using the evidence base collected through engagement, review, and analysis. The activities are organized in a logical and prioritised sequence with each step layered to reinforce earlier work and support subsequent activities.

Transformational and cultural change is required at the outset and will be sustained across the project timeline by steps guided by the District's value to *enhance (customer) service delivery culture*. This foundational work enables subsequent activities to *improve process efficiency and efficacy*, and ultimately to *better leverage technology and innovation*.

This roadmap has been translated into an internal implementation plan which will remain responsive to operational priorities and complementary organizational initiatives. Some of the implementation activities are already underway through the *action while planning* model employed through the DAPR review stage.

Commencing Implementation

Work on the implementation plan has already commenced and the program launch with staff teams is planned for early 2025.

Two of the activities already underway are in preparation for launch: establish project teams and create a Service Delivery Charter. Creating a culture of continuous improvement is another activity that has already begun, this requires a significant push at the start followed by sustained effort.

Implementation Teams
Sponsored and guided by the executive-level DAPR Steering Committee[2] and led by the Section Manager, Administration and Continuous Improvement, implementation teams are now being assembled. The Design Team includes managers from departments participating in development approvals and those providing expertise in specific project activities[3]. This team will determine approach across the development approvals continuum to maximise coordination, effectiveness, and efficiency in each implementation activity. The Process Improvement Team is comprised of dedicated

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[2] The Steering Committee is comprised of executive team members from Community Planning and Housing, Digital Services and IT, Development Services, Engineering – Infrastructure Services, Engineering – Public Works, and Human Resources
[3] Departments bringing specific expertise beyond development approvals processing include Business and Economic Development, Communications, Digital Services and IT

resources[4] and departmental experts identified as *process improvement champions* and *technology champions*. This staff team will be the core production team exploring solutions, socializing changes, and encouraging ongoing flow of ideas between the staff teams in each department and the implementation teams.

Service Delivery Charter
Working with Human Resources, efforts are already underway to formalize and elaborate the corporate value of service excellence in written standards to guide and inform all subsequent implementation actions. From this work, a program of staff training will be established as well as measures to enable ongoing monitoring and improvement.

Culture of Continuous Improvement
Staff have heard Council's comments on the importance of the foundational shift of internal culture. Change management expertise will be engaged to establish a framework to bring innovative thinking to every aspect of development approvals process.

As a fundamental step in effecting lasting change, this work will include training for the implementation team to build the capacity to accomplish individual implementation steps and to support their respective teams through periods of transition and improvement.

To further expand this shift, working with Communications, a comprehensive project communications plan will be developed to ensure staff across the organization and interested external stakeholders are consulted and informed at every appropriate opportunity.

Digital Services and IT are represented in the implementation team to ensure that this approach is consistent with and complements the continuous improvement goals in the Digital Strategy.

Accountability

To ensure accountability and regular feedback, progress reports will be circulated to the Steering Committee quarterly and to Council biannually. Further, the project communications plan being developed will include strategies to demonstrate progress, sustain momentum, and collaborate throughout implementation.

Concurrence

This report has been reviewed by Digital Services and IT, and Financial Planning.

Financial Implications

In 2023, Council committed $210,000 toward consultancy on the DAPR project. With the review work complete, there is $100,000 remaining for services required to achieve

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[4] Some critical resources are subject to approval in the 2025 budget

specific implementation actions. In addition, there is $150,000 LGDAP grant funding allocated to early implementation activities.

Conclusion

The consultant has completed the in-depth review of the development approvals process and delivered their final report with recommendations and detailed proposal to implement and sustain meaningful change over three years. Work has commenced on early implementation activities and will launch the implementation project with staff in early 2025. Progress updates will be provided to Council every six months throughout implementation, the first implementation update planned in July.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Stalham
Section Manager, Administration and Continuous Improvement

Attachments:
- Attachment 1: Consultant's DAPR Final Report Executive Summary

REVIEWED WITH:		
☐ Business and Economic ____	■ Finance ____	External Agencies:
☐ Bylaw Services ____	☐ Fire Services ____	☐ Library Board ____
☐ Clerk's Office ____	☐ Golf ____	☐ Museum and Archives ____
☐ Climate and Biodiversity ____	☐ Housing ____	☐ NSEM ____
☐ Communications ____	☐ Human Resources ____	☐ NS Health ____
☐ Community Planning ____	☐ Integrated Planning ____	☐ NVRC ____
☐ Development Engineering ____	■ ITS ____	☐ RCMP ____
☐ Development Services ____	☐ Parks ____	☐ Other: ____
☐ Engineering Infrastructure ____	☐ Real Estate ____	
☐ Engineering Public Works ____	☐ Solicitor ____	
☐ Environment ____	☐ Transportation ____	
☐ Facilities ____		

Attachment 1   Consultant's DAPR Final Report Executive Summary

Objectives and structure of this report

The District of North Vancouver ("the District" or "DNV"), like many other local governments across BC, is facing increasing pressures related to population growth, sustainability, and affordability. With the Province's housing targets and new legislative requirements, development approvals processes are under increased pressure to be faster and more effective.

In response to these challenges, the District retained KPMG to conduct an analysis of the District's development approvals processes to identify opportunities for improvement and provide the District with an implementation roadmap and a change management approach to execute the opportunities identified.

This report contains 15 key recommendations for the District's consideration. The recommendations are grounded in a robust evidence base guided by KPMG's proprietary assessment methodology and Target Operating Model (TOM) framework that includes the following layers:
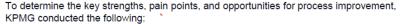
Processes	Technology & Information	Performance Management & KPIs
Organization, People, & Culture	Stakeholder & Staff Experience	Legislation & Policy

To determine the key strengths, pain points, and opportunities for process improvement, KPMG conducted the following:

- A review of DNV's applicable policies, bylaws, and documents.
- Interviews, surveys and focus groups with DNV staff and external stakeholders.
- A scan of comparator jurisdictions to identify lessons learned.
- A review of the DNV's core technologies and website; and,
- Future-state opportunity and process mapping workshops.

This report summarizes the current state of the development approvals processes, presents recommendations for consideration by the District, and outlines a future state roadmap with prioritized actions for each of the 15 recommendations. The implementation roadmap details a step-by-step guide, potential resources and a recommended governance structure for implementation support. For these recommendations to be successfully implemented, they should be supported and led by leaders, senior management, and delivered by dedicated resources. This cannot be seen as an ad-hoc activity for individuals or teams that may already be overburdened. A high-level change management and communication framework is also outlined to assist in gaining organizational buy-in on the changes. Working with staff and applicants, and fostering inter-departmental collaboration on implementation initiatives will be essential for the success of this implementation.

In addition to this Executive Summary, this report includes seven additional Chapters, including:

- **Chapter 2: Context and Approach:** This chapter includes the project objectives, background information, KPMG's assessment framework and evaluation methodology.
- **Chapter 3: Current State Assessment:** This chapter includes additional information on the five methods of collecting evidence for the review.
- **Chapter 4: Summary of Current State Findings:** This chapter includes a summary of what we heard including what is working well and key challenges or pain points.
- **Chapter 5: Opportunities:** This chapter includes a list of quick wins and opportunities for improvement stemming from the evidence base of the current state assessment.
- **Chapter 6: Future State Process Improvements:** This chapter summarizes the proposed changes identified by DNV staff during future-state process mapping workshops.
- **Chapter 7: Innovation Opportunities:** This chapter includes use cases of artificial intelligence at other municipalities to streamline their development approvals processes.
- **Chapter 8: Implementation Prioritization & Roadmap:** This chapter includes the prioritized roadmap, detailed implementation steps, and implementation considerations.
- **Chapter 9: Change Management & Communications:** This chapter highlights a framework and principles for managing change and communicating with stakeholders of the District.

Document: 6403229

Summary of recommendations

Based on the evidence base collected through the current state assessment, technology review, and future state process mapping, the following recommendations were developed to help ensure the District's development approvals process is efficient, effective, and impactful and meets District's overarching objectives for improvement. These opportunities are detailed in **Chapter 4**.

Assessment Framework Layer	Recommendations
Processes	• Introduce application triaging. • Establish standardized application processes and requirements from pre-application through to completion. • Clarify roles and responsibilities from pre-application through to completion to break down silos. • Improve application submission quality and applicants' understanding of application/process requirements
Organization, People & Culture	• Improve staff training on process-related and non-technology matters. • Create a culture of continuous improvement. • Decentralize and delegate decision-making authority.
Technology & Information	• Provide staff with ongoing training on technology and appoint superusers in the Business Units. • Review and update technology systems and usage. • Simplify and consolidate technology ecosystem and review available technologies.
Stakeholder & Staff Experience	• Increase transparency to share up-to-date information.
Performance Management & KPIs	• Translate existing KPIs and service levels into an integrated performance management framework. • Identify avenues for scoping, designing, and implementing a risk-based approach to development application reviews.
Legislation & Policy	• Update and right-size the legislative framework across the District.

Document: 6403229

Proposed high-level implementation roadmap

The following proposed implementation roadmap aims to support the District with the prioritization and implementation of longer-term recommendations. The following Gantt Chart is a simplification of the roadmap and presents a high-level overview of the proposed sequences for implementation over a 3-year period. To enable a focused and prioritized approach, the proposed roadmap is divided into three themes of recommendation. Additional details on each of the implementation steps, including sub-actions, a step-by-step implementation guide, potential resources, dependencies and timing considerations are discussed in **Chapter 7** of this report.

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