

Town of Riverview

COUNCIL REPORT FORM



Presented to: Mayor and Town Council

Presented by: Colin Smith, CAO

Date: October 23, 2023

Subject: Service Agreement

BACKGROUND

The Town is at the point that it needs to renew its current agreement with the Regional Services Commission for planning and building inspection services for another three-year term.

The Town made the decision in 2017 to transition its planning and inspection services from the City of Moncton to the Service Commission after a detailed analysis of the service options available to the Town was completed. It was determined at that time that the Commission would be the best service provider for the Town. In 2018 the Town entered into a three-year agreement with the Service Commission, and we have been operating under the terms of that agreement beyond that initial three-year period because we were satisfied with the arrangement, and the two parties did not have an opportunity to formerly review the agreement together due to Covid (i.e., other priority issues) and time commitments because of local government reform.

Since the transition to Plan 360, the Town overall has been very satisfied with the services we have received from the Commission, and currently both Council and staff feel there is continued benefit to the Town to continue receiving those services with the Commission. At the time of establishing the agreement Riverview had negotiated specific requirements for these services including the need for a dedicated planner and inspector for Riverview as well as having planning staff presence in Riverview.

Over past few years due to the growth in municipal assessed values in the region the cost differential between what Riverview was paying for services and the other municipalities who received services from Plan 360, reduced significantly. Therefore, the Regional Service Commission has requested that the Town agree to modify the terms of the Town's planning and building inspection services agreement with Plan 360 so that the Town's financial contribution for those services is calculated consistently with how the Commission charges all the other municipalities for these services. This will not change the specific terms of the agreement that the Town has in place with Plan 360. Plan 360 is still committed to having a dedicated Planner and Building Inspector for the Town (with additional support from the regional office, as required). This just aligns its cost allocations system for all municipalities, which is reasonable. This change will result in additional costs for the Town that will be reflected in the updated 2024 budget. As part of agreeing to this change in service billing, Plan 360 has committed to include the anticipated

additional costs due to the 2024 municipal plan review process (\$100,000 or so) in the Plan 360 budget allocation.

In the original agreement it was agreed that Plan 360 staff would have an office located at the Town Operational Centre. Prior to Covid 19, staff were located at the Operation Centre, however once employees were required to work from home and in an online environment that practice was in place for a longer period. And when they returned to the office, partially due to staff rotation requirements with Plan 360 (staff shortages) and the small volume of residents and developers who went to the Operation Centre the service was minimum, Plan 360 staff have mainly worked from their Moncton office. As part of the agreement renewal, Plan 360 is working on a plan to reestablish an office presence in Riverview during the work week. What we have learned over the past five years, is office presence is less of a requirement due to the fact most applications are done online; however, Plan 360 will work with the Town to have a dedicated office time schedule for residents to come to the office.

Staff is recommending that Council accept the Commission's rationale as to why the cost structure for our services needs to be in line with the other municipal partners and approve an updated service agreement and support the additional budget allocation.

CONSIDERATIONS

Legal: Section 68(1). of the Local Government Act outlines the type of items Council can discuss in closed session. Council discussed this item during a closed session on September 25, 2023, per Section 68(1) (a) (c):

- a) information of which the confidentiality is protected by law,
- c) jeopardize negotiations leading to an agreement or contract,

Financial: Additional costs. In comparison to what this service would cost the Town on its own or from Moncton, the proposal is still the most cost-efficient solution for the Town.

Policy: n/a

Stakeholders: n/a

Strategic Plan:

- Thriving Community
- Building a Sustainable Community

Interdepartmental Consultation: N/A

Communication Plan: N/A

Recommendation of Staff

That Council approved the renewal of the Planning and Inspection Services agreement for a three-year term, with options to renew, per the Council report form of October 23, 2023. And further that Council give direction for the Mayor and Town Clerk to sign all related documentation.