



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

STAFF REPORT

To: Council
From: City Manager (CAO)
Subject: Appointment of Approving Officer

File No.:
Date: August 30, 2023

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to appoint a new Approving Officer, Marianne Wade Director of Development Services.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Courtenay has traditionally appointed an Approving Officer in accordance with the Land Title Act, in order to approve subdivision plans and related documents. This position is an Officer of the Corporation and is appointed by Council. Recognizing the need for back up and for the Approving Officer and to ensure the efficient processing and approval of Subdivisions, Council appointed the City Manager (CAO) as the Deputy Approving Officer at their regularly scheduled Council Meeting on August 29, 2022. The appointment of two positions ensures coverage and the timely approval of these often time sensitive documents.

Currently, the City has a vacancy in the Approving Officer position as the previous staff person who was appointed by Council in October of 2016 was left the employ of the municipality. In order to provide coverage and continuity in this important process it is recommended that Council consider the appointment of a new Approving Officer.

DISCUSSION:

There is a need for the City to have this position filled to meet its legislative requirements and approve subdivision and strata plans and related documents and to enable the Deputy Approving Officer to be the alternate when the Approving Officer is not available.

With the departure of the previous Approving Officer, the City has continued to review and approve subdivisions through the appointment of a Deputy however oversight and overall responsibility for the process and approval of subdivisions and related documents is required and align with the City's traditional approach in accordance with the Land Title Act.

The recommendation is to appoint Marianne Wade as the Approving Officer to fill this formal role. As a professional planner, they have significant years of experience with the subdivision approving process, have fulfilled the statutory role of Approving Officer previously and sit as a member of the Local Government Management Association's Approving Officer advisory committee. As the Director of Development Services the subdivision approval group is part of the overall responsibility of the department and this is a logical alignment with the services the department provides and its coordination role of development approvals in the City.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

Section 77 of the Land Title Act States:

- (1) For land within a municipality, the municipal council must appoint a person as an approving officer.
- (2) An approving officer appointed under this section must be
 - (a) the municipal engineer,
 - (b) the chief planning officer,
 - (c) some other employee of the municipality appointed by the municipal council, or
 - (d) a person who is under contract with the municipality.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

The role of the Approving Officer is statutory in nature and the Deputy Approving Officer position acts in place of the Approving Officer should they be unavailable.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

Appointment of the Approving Officer aligns with Council's Strategic Priority to focus on organizational and governance excellence. This is within Council's area of control and will support improving efficiencies in the subdivision approval process in addition to meeting the fundamental statutory obligations of the Land Title Act.

OPTIONS:

1. THAT Council rescind the appointment of Rich Feucht as Approving Officer and Appoint Marianne Wade as the Approving Officer
2. THAT Council provide alternative direction to staff.

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