

2020 Year End Report – Building Standards

ISSUE

This report highlights work completed in 2020, by the Building Standards Department (Building Standards).

BACKGROUND

Building Standards provides exceptional customer service to the citizens and visitors of Saskatoon. They ensure homes, businesses and other buildings are constructed to design and meet all necessary federal, provincial and municipal codes; thereby giving Saskatoon residents the ability to live, work and play in safe, comfortable structures. They are also committed to helping homeowners, professional consultants, business owners, developers and contractors navigate the city's construction standards and permitting system to help in keeping their projects on track and up to code.

CURRENT STATUS

Building Standards offers a variety of programs and services related to the building construction industry, including the following:

- 1) Residential Building Permit Program;
- 2) Commercial Building Permit Program;
- 3) Building Inspection Program;
- 4) Plumbing Permit and Inspection Program; and
- 5) Property Information Disclosure Program.

This Report provides an overview of initiatives undertaken in 2020 and highlights 2021 activities (see Appendix 1).

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

In summer of 2019, Building Standards kicked-off the Cornerstone Project. The intent of this project is to consolidate initiatives from the City of Saskatoon (City) Strategic Plan, Building and Development Permit Operational Review, Infill Roundtable and Development Civic Service Review, into one actionable project with clear deliverables.

The goal of the project is to become a national leader in building and development permit timelines, which will see planned improvements to the building and development permit program and permitting practices within Building Standards, Planning and Development and Community Standards Departments. This will be done through:

- 1) use of tools to aid in delivering improved customer service throughout the permitting process;
- 2) creating a system for online submission of permit applications;
- 3) concurrent digital plan review; and
- 4) streamlining business processes.

Building Standards created an Advisory Group for strategic engagement, made up of industry representatives from all areas to build bridges between industry, the Cornerstone Project Team and City Administration. The Advisory Group meets regularly throughout the project to provide advice, input and recommendations to the Project Sponsor and Cornerstone Project Team regarding business process changes and project deliverables.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Revenue received from operations was \$4.6 million, which was 24% lower than the operating expenses of \$6.0 million. The COVID-19 pandemic had a large impact on the demand for construction in 2020. The decrease in revenues reflects the reduced demand for commercial construction. The shortfall in revenue resulted in a \$1.4 million dollar transfer from the Building Permits and Inspections Stabilization Reserve, leaving a balance of \$2.1 million.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no options, policy, financial, environmental, privacy, or CPTED implications or considerations. A communication plan is in place.

NEXT STEPS

Throughout 2021, Building Standards will continue to focus efforts on achieving objectives of the Cornerstone Project.

APPENDICES

1. 2020 Building Standards Year-End Report

REPORT APPROVAL

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