



STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor Keis and Members of City Council
FROM: Chris Heineman, City Administrator
DATE: June 24, 2019
RE: Planning & Code Enforcement Transition

BACKGROUND:

Staff received a resignation letter from Associate Planner/Code Enforcement Officer Jessica Jagoe on May 8, 2019. Jessica had served in many capacities since 2000 for a total of 19 years of service for the City of Little Canada. Following her resignation, staff has taken a significant amount of time to review both the current and long-term staffing needs in this area.

For most of the past 30-years, the City of Little Canada has utilized Northwest Associated Consultants (NAC) to serve the city's planning needs. Since 2016, the City of Little Canada has been transitioning away from consultant services in this area and has utilized NAC only for specific projects such as the 2040 Comprehensive Plan since 2018. In the short term, staff may once again utilize NAC for assistance on planning projects on an as-needed basis.

During the initial weeks of this transition process, existing staff members have filled in for both planning and code enforcement responsibilities. These responsibilities have primarily fallen on the shoulders of the City Administrator and the City Clerk, however, the employee who has been the most significantly impacted is City Clerk Heidi Heller who has taken on a significant level of additional duties outside of the City Clerk job description. Heidi has prior planning experience, and many of the questions related to planning or zoning can be addressed without the use of an outside consultant.

Many cities have a compensation policy for employees who temporarily perform work outside of their job classification. Finance Director Brenda Malinowski conducted a survey of nine nearby communities, and most provide an additional 5-10% of the respective employee's present salary. For the short-term, Brenda and I are recommending a temporary 10% salary increase (\$307 per pay period) for Heidi until replacement position(s) are hired.

During the recent strategic planning process, one of the four strategic directions under core government section that was established was *Creating Operational Efficiency*. This included a specific focus on optimizing the organizational structure. As one of the first steps in this process, staff is recommending that the critical duties of this position be restructured to address the city's long-term organizational needs.

There are many municipal models to consider, but the most common organizational structure to address local planning and development concerns is by establishing a Community Development Department. Staff is recommending that a full-time Community Development Director or Manager be hired to lead this department. In addition, a part-time position (approximately .5 FTE) should be hired to address code enforcement and rental licensing issues.

Full-Time Position

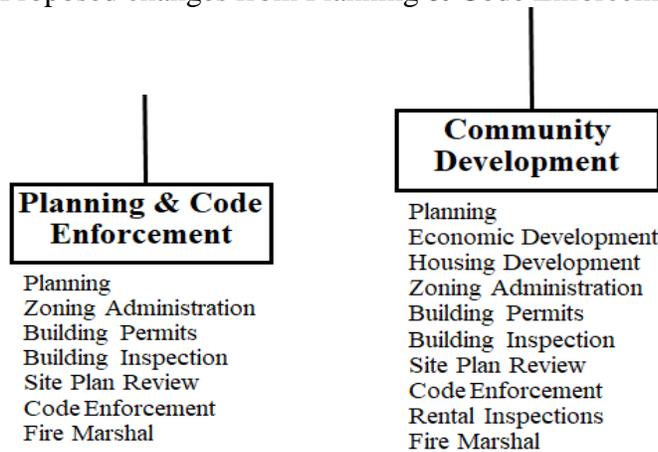
A full-time Community Development Director position typically includes the responsibility of managing or directing planning, economic development, and housing development activities. In a community such as Little Canada, it is difficult to justify a full-time City Planner position without incorporating other duties and responsibilities into the position description. While the previous Planning and Code Enforcement position had responsibilities in several areas, it was not technically a supervisory position. By expanding the scope of the position to include traditional community development responsibilities, we will be able to restructure this position into a more traditional (and more desirable) position that will attract experienced and high-quality candidates.

Part-Time Position

One of the important ongoing responsibilities of a Community Development Department is zoning code enforcement. Code enforcement tends to require a different skill set than planning and economic development and works well as a part-time position. In addition, this position could include housing inspection duties that have been contracted out for the past ten years.

The City of Little Canada Municipal Code requires that all single family and multi-family residential dwelling units obtain a Rental Housing License (Ordinance 3200). Current licenses will expire on June 30, 2019, and staff is in the process of reviewing the rental licensing and inspection requirements. By bringing the housing inspection role in-house, we will be able to fund a significant portion of this part-time position with no additional increase to the General Fund.

A copy of a revised version of the City of Little Canada organizational chart is attached for your review. Proposed changes from Planning & Code Enforcement to Community Development are detailed below:



RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff recommends that City Council review the proposed organizational chart and consider approval of the following motions:

- 1) *Motion to direct staff to move forward with the development of a job description for a part-time position related to zoning code enforcement and rental housing inspections.*
- 2) *Motion to approve additional compensation to the City Clerk for working out of class during the Planning & Code Enforcement Transition process.*