



# Governance & Services Committee

**TO:** Governance and Services Committee

**FROM:** Todd Cashin  
Director of Community Services

**DATE:** May 13, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Service Review - Building Inspections Program

---

**Purpose:** To present a service review for the Building Inspections Program.

## Executive Summary:

The Regional District has adopted a policy of reviewing the services it delivers with a non-statutory approach based on a 5-year cycle. This will be the second time the Building Inspections Service will undergo this review since the policy was adopted in 2014. On this second cycle, more emphasis will be put towards reviewing and modernizing the language not only in the establishing bylaw but also in all associated bylaws and policy.

In preparing this update, staff reviewed the program's mandate, goals and activities to confirm that the program continues to: meet the expectations of the Regional Board; maintain the safety of people and buildings; protect the environment; encourage energy efficiency improvements and meet the needs of the public.

The services within the Building Inspections Program generally meet the current mandate however, there are areas the Board of Directors may wish to expand.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

**THAT** the Governance & Services Committee the Building Inspection Service Review Update report dated May 13, 2021;

**AND THAT** the Governance & Services Committee recommends the Regional Board continue to support the current service delivery model of the Building Inspections program;

**AND FURTHER THAT** the Governance & Services Committee recommends the Regional Board approve first and second readings to a new RDCO Building Bylaw No. 1482 and RDCO Development Application Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 1483, and refer these bylaws to the development community for comment before bringing them back to the Board for further reading and adoption.

Respectfully Submitted:



Todd Cashin  
Director of Community Services

Approved for Committee's Consideration



Brian Reardon, CAO

---

### Implications of Recommendation:

Strategic Plan:	Supports the Regional Board's Strategic Priorities, objectives and initiatives:  Sustainable Communities: We will initiate and support efforts to create a healthy built environment in which all people throughout the region enjoy a high quality of life with access to safe neighbourhoods including a diverse range of housing options.  Environment: We will initiate and support efforts to reduce our environmental footprint, adapt to climate change and connect with nature.
Policy:	The review was conducted in accordance with the RDCO Service Establishment Bylaw Review Schedule.

---

### Background:

The Regional Board adopted a five-year cycle of service reviews on January 16, 2014. The Inspections Services Review Update was scheduled for review in 2020 and has been completed.

Over the last five years, building inspections has managed to be financially self-supporting with its funding model of building permit fees and operating reserve fund.

The Building Inspections Program currently has 2.65 FTE's, comprised of Building Inspectors, administrative support and management oversight. Recruitment is currently underway for one FTE Building and Plumbing Inspector. The mandate of Building Inspections is to:

- Provide building inspections services for the electoral areas;
- Provide land use bylaw enforcement services for the electoral areas;
- Ensure compliance with applicable codes and regulations in order to increase the safety and health of the community;
- Support responsible environmental protection and energy efficiency in new construction; and
- Maintain records of all historic and current building permit documentation.

### Concerns Regarding Current Provision of Service:

- Maintaining a consistent level of service despite disruptive events, economic upturns that may result in increased demand for the building inspections service, or economic downturns in the construction industry that may result in reduced revenue is an ongoing concern.

- The number of structures being built in the electoral areas without permits exceeds the ability of building inspectors to monitor and enforce.
- Bylaws and policies require updates:
  - Building Bylaw No. 835 requires an update;
  - Building Inspections policies are outdated and additional policies are needed; and
  - Building permit fee schedule requires amending to reflect increased costs.
- Online services are limited, but are needed to improve customer experience and resiliency to disruptions causing office closures.
- Improved software integration needed to produce customized reporting and to streamline data entry and information access to optimize staff resources.

### **Current Initiatives to Improve Service:**

The services within the Building Inspections Program currently meets its mandate; however, the 2020 review has identified a few areas of improvement for consideration. The following initiatives are currently underway:

1. Building Bylaw
  - A new Building Bylaw has been prepared to replace Building Bylaw No. 835 (see draft bylaw attached).
2. Development Application Fees and Charges Bylaw
  - An updated fee schedule has been prepared and will be included in a new Development Application Fees and Charges Bylaw (see draft bylaw attached).
3. Bylaw Compliance Policy
  - Under development in coordination with the Bylaw Services team.
  - Will provide policy guidance regarding bylaw compliance priorities to efficiently allocate staff resources in order to address public health and safety.
4. Development Approvals Process Improvements
  - Staff are preparing an UBCM grant application for process improvements.

## Financial Considerations:

The following table provides increase examples for a select number of fees and charges:

<b>BUILDING PERMIT FEES</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
1. Building Permit Application fee For projects with a valuation less than \$100,000	\$100	\$100	\$175	\$180	\$180	\$185	\$190
2. Building Permit Application fee For projects with a valuation more than \$100,000	\$100	\$100	\$500	\$510	\$520	\$530	\$540
3. Building Move For placing a moved on dwelling on a property	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$410	\$415	\$425	\$435
	+ 1.2% of the other construction costs						
4. Solid Fuel Burning Appliances	\$100	\$100	\$175	\$180	\$180	\$185	\$190
5. Temporary Building or Structure	\$100	\$100	\$175	\$180	\$180	\$185	\$190
6. Swimming Pool	\$100	\$100	\$175	\$180	\$180	\$185	\$190
7. Re-inspection fee	\$75	\$75	\$150	\$155	\$155	\$160	\$165

As part of the 2021 budget, the Regional Board approved increasing existing staff levels in Inspections Services by an additional 0.5 FTE to assist with proactive bylaw enforcement.

## Alternative Recommendation:

**THAT** the Governance & Services Committee receive for information the Building Inspections Service Review Update report;

**AND THAT** the Governance & Services Committee recommends the Regional Board continue to support the current service delivery model of the Building Inspections program; not moving forward with initiatives to improve service.

Attachment(s):

- Building Inspections 2020 Review
- Building Bylaw No. 1482
- Development Application Fees & Charges Bylaw No. 1483