

## COUNCIL REPORT

M&C No.	2019-183
Report Date	July 18, 2019
Meeting Date	July 29, 2019
Service Area	Growth and Community Development Services

His Worship Mayor Don Darling and Members of Common Council

***SUBJECT: Growth Reserve Fund Request – Community Standards Program***

***OPEN OR CLOSED SESSION***

This matter is to be discussed in open session of Common Council.

***AUTHORIZATION***

Primary Author	Commissioner/Dept. Head	City Manager
<b><i>Growth Committee</i></b>		

***RECOMMENDATION***

Growth Committee recommends the following resolution for Common Council's consideration:

Common Council authorizes the transfer of \$30,000 from the Growth Reserve Fund to support the enhanced Community Standards Program for the remainder of 2019.

***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

The Enhanced Community Standards Program was established as a pilot in 2017 to address non-life safety compliance issues. The Program focuses on issues that directly impact the aesthetics, enjoyment and pride of neighborhoods, including unsightly premises, garbage issues, zoning infractions and general upkeep of properties which negatively impact property value and quality of life of citizens.

The Program's focus on community standards has gained important momentum in an area that the City of Saint John has historically struggled to achieve compliance. With an additional resource and a focused approach on community standards issues, the program has helped deliver Council's priority of a *Vibrant and Safe* City. The Enhanced Community Standards Program is a strong enabler of growth and is a key driver of a liveable City, which is central to attracting and retaining people and investment to our City.

To continue the success of the Program, Growth Committee recommends a \$30,000 draw from the Growth Reserve Fund to extend funding for the Community Standards Officer Position for the remainder of 2019. The following

report will provide a Program update and will provide 2019 year-end projections should Common Council adopt the funding allocation.

**PREVIOUS RESOLUTION**

N/A

**STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Enforcement of the *Saint John Unsightly Premises and Dangerous Buildings and Structures By-law* aligns with Council's Vibrant, Safe City priority.

**REPORT**

**Enhanced Community Standards Program Results**

The Enhanced Community Standards Program was established as a pilot in 2017 to address non-life safety compliance issues. The pilot program introduced a Community Standards Officer over an entire year (i.e. enhanced service delivery). The Program is a strong enabler of growth and is a key driver of a liveable City, which is central to attracting and retaining people and investment to our City.

Aggressive, strategic targets, a focused, streamlined approach and a talented and dedicated resource with a background in community policing have been key components to the success of the Enhanced Community Standards Program. Since 2017, the results of the Program have exceeded all expectations in resolving community standards issues, which in turn, has generated enthusiasm and positive feedback from the public. Resolved issues as a result of the Program include: unsightly premises, garbage issues, zoning infractions and general upkeep of properties.

<b>2017, 2018 and 2019 Community Standards Program Results</b>			
	2017	2018	2019 (YTD)
Notices to Comply Issued	20	9	14
Property Cleanups Undertaken By Staff	2	6	1
Total Resolved Unsightly Premises Cases	82	75	95

Prior to the establishment of the Program, gaining compliance on non-life safety cases such as the clean-up of unsightly properties was a significant challenge. In 2017, a total of 82 unsightly premises cases were resolved with 20 Notices to Comply issued. In 2018, a total of 75 unsightly premises cases were resolved with 9 Notices to Comply issued. To date in 2019, the Community Standards Program has been able to resolve a record number of 95 unsightly premises

cases and 16 Zoning By-law enforcement cases with 14 Notices to Comply issued. While the Program has already supported impressive compliance and resolution, staff observes that there remains continued demand within the community.

It is anticipated that an extension funded by the Growth Reserve for the remainder of 2019 will allow an additional 40 properties to be cleaned, with approximately 6 unsightly property clean-ups being undertaken through a staff initiated clean-up. In other words, additional funding would support a total of 135 resolved unsightly premises cases in 2019.

The Community Standards Officer Position has been funded for the first 6 months of this year through the general operating budget, but the ability to offer enhanced support for the remainder of the year is being requested through Council's allocation of Growth Reserve funding towards the Program. The Growth Committee is recommending that \$30,000 be allocated from the Growth Reserve fund to extend funding for the Community Standards Program to deliver the enhanced service for the remainder of 2019.

***SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES***

N/A

***INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS***

N/A

***ATTACHMENTS***

N/A