



STAFF REPORT TO COMMITTEE

DATE OF REPORT March 27, 2024
MEETING TYPE & DATE Electoral Area Services Committee of April 17, 2024
FROM: Inspections & Enforcement Division
Land Use Services Department
SUBJECT: Building Inspection 2024 First Quarter Report
FILE: 4560-20

PURPOSE/INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to inform the Electoral Area Services Committee of Building Inspection activity for the first quarter of 2024.

RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION

For information.

BACKGROUND

At the end of each quarter, the Electoral Area Services Committee is provided with an update on the Building Inspection activities and undertakings.

ANALYSIS

Building Permits

The primary function and responsibility of Building Inspection is to administer and enforce the *BC Building Code* and the newly adopted CVRD Building Bylaw No. 4433. Building Inspection is also responsible for issuing all building permits and conducting all required building inspections. In the first quarter of 2024, Building Inspection issued 84 building permits, including 19 permits for new dwellings units which includes attached or detached suites. Total value for all permits issued amounted to \$23,139,561. The most valuable permit issued in the first quarter was issued to Unsworth Vineyards in Area A for a winery expansion valued at 11 million dollars. Staff are also prepared to issue a permit valued at just under 2 million dollars for a new residency at "The Cedars" in Cobble Hill.

Applications

For the first quarter of 2024, Building Inspection received 77 building permit applications. Electoral Area A – Mill Bay/Malahat led the way with 17 applications followed by Area B – Shawnigan Lake with 14 applications. Less activity was seen in Area I – Youbou/Meade Creek with 3 applications and Area G - Saltair/Gulf Islands with 4 applications. The remainder of the Electoral Areas averaged between 10 and 6 applications.

Inspections

All building permit applications are followed up by a site inspection prior to the issuance of the permit. Once approved, additional inspections are then required with the actual number of inspections varying depending on the type of the project. A new single-family dwelling may require as many as 10 inspections or more. As of the end of March, Building Inspection has conducted 413 site inspections and has travelled 12,695 km plus an additional 5 round trips to Thetis Island. This distance is the equivalent to driving from Dallas Road in Victoria to Port Hardy 25 times.

Customer Service

Aside from processing permits and performing inspections, Building Inspection is also committed to maintaining a high level of customer service. This includes assisting realtors, contractors and home owners seeking both permit and non-permit related information. In the first quarter staff assisted with 98 realtor related property inquiries.

Additional Comments and Observations

As interest rates appear to be stabilizing, inquiries regarding development have picked up. An identified trend in the comments coming from the development community relates to the unavailability of industrial or commercial space in Langford and the Greater Victoria area, and the hopefulness of space zoned for these uses coming available in the southern region of Electoral Areas A & B.

Inspections staff have participated in recent affordable and workforce housing workshops. From the perspective of meeting life safety objectives, and related enforcement experiences, Building Inspection has concluded that Mobile Home Parks that are stocked with CSA-Z240-MH units could be a pragmatic part of the overall housing solution in the setting of a rural and regional landscape.

The *2024 BC Building Code* took effect on March 8, 2024. Any building permit application received beyond this date will be reviewed under the new *Code*. Protection from Radon and Overheating are two new primary objectives, with new seismic changes being delayed until 2025 due to costs and engineering associated with the new requirements.

The Building Officials have completed *Code* update training modules with regard to Energy, Carbon and Plumbing, with the final Building module being anticipated for mid April. The Building Officials have also successfully completed additional training respecting “soft skills” and effective report writing.

Local builders have acknowledged *Zero Carbon Step Code EL-4* coming into effect on July 1, 2024. Staff have already received a number of applications where applicants have voluntarily demonstrated compliance with EL-3 and EL-4. Staff have also observed Builders achieving Step 4 of the *Energy Code* on a voluntary basis as well.

Lastly, Building Inspection would like to notify the Committee to expect reports with regard to placing notices on land titles for building contraventions. Staff continue to attempt to resolve long outstanding violations and have found that a notice on title is an effective tool. Section 57 of the *Community Charter* dictates that the Building Official must seek a resolution from the Regional Board prior to a notice being filed.

Attachment A contains the Building Report for the month of March that also includes statistics from the previous 5 years.

Attachment B contains progress photos of major projects in the region.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

COMMUNICATION CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

STRATEGIC/BUSINESS PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

Not Applicable

Referred to (upon completion):

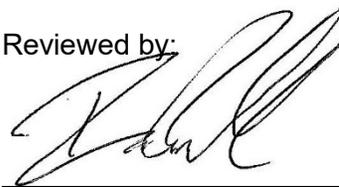
- Community Services (*Cowichan Community Centre, Cowichan Lake Recreation, South Cowichan Recreation, Arts & Culture, Facilities & Transit*)
- Corporate Services (*Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Legislative Services*)
- Operations (*Utilities, Parks & Trails, Recycling & Waste Management*)
- Land Use Services (*Community Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Development Services, Building Inspection & Bylaw Enforcement*)
- Strategic Services (*Communications & Engagement, Economic Development, Emergency Management, Environmental Services*)

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Reviewed for form and content and approved for submission to the Committee:

Resolution:

Corporate Officer

Financial Considerations:

Chief Financial Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – March 2024 Building Stats

Attachment B – Site Photos