

Supervisor of Traffic Safety and Operations – New Staff Request

Overview

As Richmond Hill continues to grow and intensify, issues and concerns related to traffic operations, traffic congestion, pedestrian safety and parking have become more prevalent in Town. This heightened sensitivity to traffic issues appears to have become a “top of mind” issue for Town residents as reflected by the results of the Richmond Hill Citizen’s Survey since 2000, including the latest 2016 Survey which identified “traffic” as the most important issue the Town will have to deal with in the next 5-10 years.

As a result, Staff are experiencing an increase in inquiries and complaints from residents with respect to these issues. These traffic and parking complaints are received by Transportation staff through emails, phone calls, social media, and letters. These complaints cover a wide variety of issues including speeding, pedestrian safety, intersection controls, neighbourhood traffic infiltration, traffic congestion, on-street parking, sight lines, school traffic activity, etc. In addition to the increase in volume, these inquiries appear to be increasing in complexity in terms of solutions.

The following table summarizes the annual number of new traffic complaints received by Transportation staff over the last five years.

Year	Complaints received
Up to September 2018	112 (150*) *projected to the end of 2018
2017	136
2016	127
2015	170
2014	130
2013	76

The Transportation section currently has two key staff members that are primarily responsible for investigating and responding to traffic complaints: a Senior Traffic Analyst and a Traffic Analyst. These staff are currently responsible for tracking, analysing, developing recommendations, coordinating the implementation of solutions, and responding to the public on routine traffic and parking investigations. More complex and contentious traffic and parking inquiries typically require involvement and communication from the Manager of Transportation. Over the past few years, the number of more complicated and contentious traffic complaint cases have increased requiring significantly more involvement from the Manager of Transportation on a day-to-day basis, to give staff guidance and direction, review recommendations from staff, and engage in meetings, discussions, and correspondence with the Councillors and the public. This has started to impact the ability of the section Manager to be able to focus his attention on other more strategic initiatives and projects within the business unit as well as the overall management of the section. Transportation staff have been challenged to keep up with the backlog of complaints and the ability to close cases has fallen behind in the last 2-3 years.

The Manager of Transportation currently has six staff reporting directly to him, serving a number of roles for the organization, including long term transportation planning (Transportation Master Plans, EA’s. etc), reviewing transportation issues on development applications, dealing with large scale traffic operation, traffic safety, and parking projects for the Town (Residential Permit Parking Study, Red Maple Traffic Study, Lake Wilcox Parking

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Study, Town's Parking Strategy, etc.), as well as day-to-day residential parking and traffic issues. The Development Engineering and Transportation Division has identified the need for a Supervisor, Traffic Safety and Operations in 2019, which was part the staffing outlook approved in the 2018 Development Engineering Budget.

This position is requested in order to provide managerial level capacity to address the demands of an increasing number of complex and contentious traffic and parking complaints received by the Town. This position will report directly to the Manager of Transportation, and will supervise and coordinate the day-to-day workload and activities of the Traffic Analysts with respect to these complaints and bring a high level of technical knowledge and public acumen in order to be able to make good technical recommendations and decisions and be the key point of contact for the Division with respect to these issues. This position will also seek continuous improvement and efficiencies of the policies and processes that govern this functional area.

This will allow the Manager of Transportation to focus more on the strategic needs of the overall business unit as a whole.

Program Description

As the green field areas within the Town build out, traffic issues will be more focused on intensification corridors and Key Development Areas. To respond to these pressures in a timely and efficient manner, the Town needs to have experienced and senior staff in traffic safety and operations that can help find creative and unconventional solutions with respect to traffic safety, traffic calming, parking, traffic operations, and design of transportation facilities that meet the needs of the municipality.

To keep up with the increasing complexity of the complaints, a well qualified Supervisor of Traffic Safety and Operations position is required. The individual must meet the educational, skill, and experience requirements of a Certified Engineering Technologist or Traffic Engineer in order to manage and supervise the Traffic Analysts. The Supervisor is also required to assist with some key tasks including: giving traffic safety and operations related evidence as an expert witness in OMB/LPAT hearings; reviewing transportation, lighting, and parking matters related to development applications; evaluating and providing quality control of traffic data programs; and providing traffic and parking advice and guidance to the Town's planning studies and related Zoning By-Laws.

Strategic Alignment

Providing this Supervisor – Traffic Safety and Operations position aligns with Goal One of the Town's Strategic Plan: Stronger Connections in Richmond Hill, where the new staff member will respond to the changing needs of the community with improved customer service. It will also improve the function of the streets and neighbourhoods by responding to residents needs and addressing the safety concerns. This position also aligns with Goal Four of the Town's Strategic Plan: Wise Management of Resources in Richmond Hill, where the human resources of the Town are better utilized to address the growing needs of the community and providing timely responses to traffic issues. It provides better alignment and management of Transportation staff functions and improves the efficiency of the overall business unit.

Comparative Analysis

As a comparison, the Cities of Markham and Vaughan's Transportation sections were reviewed. The following table summarizes the comparative analysis between the three municipalities with respect to the permanent full time staff responsible for handling day-to-day traffic complaints.

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Municipality	Population in 2016 Census	Staff Handling Day-to-Day Traffic Complaints Under the Director Level
Town of Richmond Hill	195,000	Manager, Transportation (1) Senior Traffic Analyst (1) Traffic Analyst (1)
City of Markham	329,000	Senior Manager, Transportation (1) Supervisor, Traffic Operations (1) Engineering Technologists (3)
City of Vaughan	306,000	Manager, Traffic Engineering Services (1) Senior Traffic Technologists (2) Traffic Analysts (2) Transportation Technician (1)

The City of Markham's Transportation section is organized into two groups: Transportation and Traffic Operations. Traffic complaints fall under the responsibility of Traffic Operations staff with three Engineering Technologists reporting to a Supervisor of Traffic Operations who reports to a Senior Manager of Transportation. There is a total of five staff members in Markham under the Director level that can potentially address day-to-day traffic complaints.

In the City of Vaughan, the organizational structure is somewhat different than Richmond Hill's and Markham's but the traffic complaints are handled by the Traffic Engineering Services Division in the Public Works Department. Reporting to the Manager, Traffic Engineering Services, there are two Senior Traffic Technologists, two Traffic Analysts, and a Transportation Technician who handle the day-to-day traffic complaints and carry out the data collection. In addition, there are five other engineering assistants and traffic specialists in the Traffic Engineering Services Division reporting to the Manager. There is another Manager of Transportation Planning in the Planning and Growth Division of the Development Engineering Department for transportation planning and development related studies.

The Town of Richmond Hill has all six (6) transportation and traffic-related staff reporting directly to the Manager of Transportation including the two Analysts. Having a Supervisor would align the traffic safety and operations expertise more with staffing levels and responsibilities in the other municipalities. With the hiring of the Supervisor of Traffic Safety and Operations, the Manager of Transportation would have 5 direct reports, including this new position.

Analysis of Alternative Approaches

One alternative is to not hire the Supervisor. This was not considered a desirable option as the Traffic Analysts require guidance and supervision to undertake the current workload associated with more complex day-to-day traffic issues and addressing the backlog of complaints. The Manager of Transportation is spending a significant amount of time on a daily basis guiding and providing quality control of the responses to traffic complaints.

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The Supervisor will be responsible for conducting traffic operational and safety reviews and defending the Town's position on traffic requests. Without this position, there is potential for significant delays and reduction of level of service to investigating, responding, and taking appropriate action. Also, this position would help provide timely comments on development applications and minimizing impacts on approval schedules.

Cost and Benefit Analysis

The Supervisor position is proposed to be classified as Admin Grade 6 – Level 1. The following table is a summary of the 2019 Operating Budget requirements to support this new position.

	Current Year (2019) Impact	Full Year (2020) Impact
Start Date	01-Jul-18	
End Date or Contract Terms	31-Dec-18	
Full Time or Contract	Full Time	Full Time
CUPE/Admin/SEA/FIRE	Admin	Admin
Grade	6	6
Step	1	3
Annual Salary	\$91,800	\$98,900
Annual Benefit	24,200	26,100
Operating Costs		
Salaries (Prorated Salary Based on Start Month)	45,900	98,900
Benefits	12,100	26,100
Corporate allocation for training	300	300
Corporate allocation for conference	900	900
Equipment & Vehicle Rental		
Specialized or mandatory training		
Membership	1,000	1,000
Uniforms		
Minor Capital (cell phone and smart phone charges)	200	200
Total Operating Costs	\$60,400	\$127,400
Funding Source		
Reduction in casual wages & benefits		
Program efficiencies (contracts, consulting, etc)		
Reserve Fund - Specify		
Grants		
Tax Rate	60,400	127,400
Total Funding Sources	\$60,400	\$127,400
Difference	0	0
Capital Costs		
Furniture (\$5K) & desktop with standard software (\$4K) (Desktop or Laptop Computer, Standard Corporate Software, Land Line Telephone and Associated Service costs, Data/Telco cable runs (If Required) etc). Rugged Toughbook (\$6,900) with vehicle mount and other accessories (\$1,600).	\$9,000	
Office built for Managers and above (\$25K)		
Computer hardware/software beyond standard issue		
Vehicle		
Total Capital Costs	\$9,000	\$0
Funding Source		
Reserve Fund - Specify		
Grants		
Cash to Capital Reserve	9,000	0
Total Funding Sources	\$9,000	\$0
Difference	0	0
Total Operating and Capital Costs	\$69,400	\$127,400

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Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the above, the Development Engineering and Transportation Division recommends that a new Supervisor – Traffic Safety and Operations position be approved for 2019.