



Subject: Public Works Roads Staff Complement Request

Report Number: OPD 24-036

Department: Operations and Development Department

Submitted by: Richard Sparham, Manager of Public Works

Meeting Type: Council Budget Meeting

Meeting Date: Monday, November 18, 2024

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT report OPD 24-036 titled *Public Works Roads Staff Complement Request* be received as information; and
- B. THAT Council approve the staff hiring of 3.7 permanent FTEs through restructuring; and
- C. THAT Council approve, through the 2025 Public Works budget, the amount of \$298,900 to accommodate the new staff as of Jan 1, 2025

OVERVIEW

The Public Works Road's staff/team, in the Public Works Division, of the Operations and Development Department, provides an essential service, in not only keeping public (local, county and MTO) roadways/thoroughfares and sidewalks safe for the local travelling residents and visitors, but they also play a critical role in managing life-cycle activities over the same right-of-way(s). Additionally, the Public Works Road's staff have also identified the maintenance needs of effective stormwater drainage, beautifying through grass cutting and tree trimming activities as well as staffing and serving the public at the Town-owned transfer station, etc. To this effect and historically, the Public Works Road's staff often exceed the requirements of the [Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways, O Reg. 239/02](#) and the Town's Levels of Service. Generally well-maintained roads and sidewalks are paramount towards the Town's due diligence and/or obligations in helping to protect the Municipality from exposure in consideration to the liability in managing these assets.

Furthermore providing these essential services in an efficient and timely manner for the entire community is imperative for the Town's residents as expectations either through legislations and/or levels of service changes have increased over time.

BACKGROUND

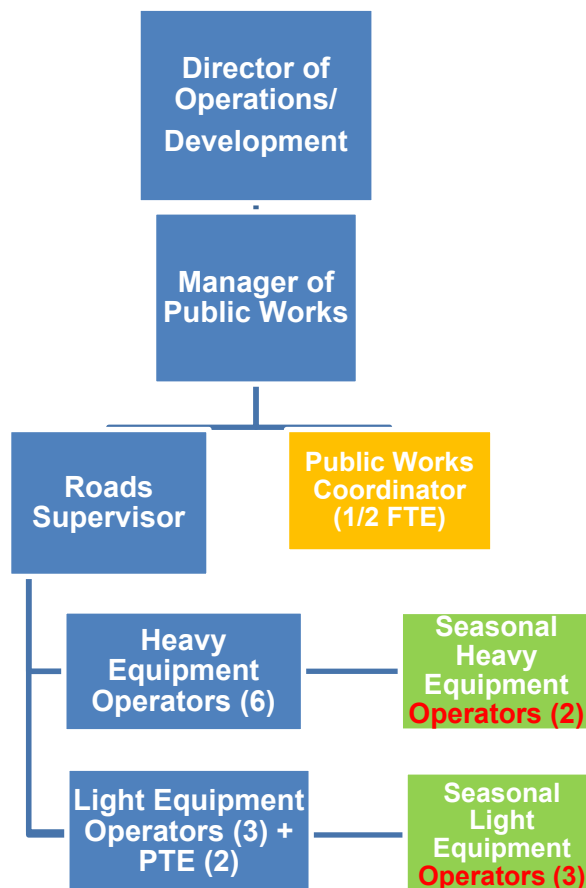
Please be advised that through this analysis, Town staff have consolidated relative comparisons in the attempts in demonstrating Public Work's departmental performance vs staff complement over a period of eighteen to twenty years. The rational to this timeframe is subject to the last known Public Works Road staff addition/complement of a full-time permanent position in 2001 with the understanding a minor staff reorganizing

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taking place in 2005 where a Fleet Services were added the overall Public Works staff/team complement. To date and since then Public Works Road staff has maintained a complement of eleven (11) FTEs with the addition of winter/seasonal staff that generally consists of the addition of five (5) staff members.

To this effect, and through this report, Town staff have also attempted to remove any natural known or unknown bias, insofar as deciphering “needs” vs “wants” by the use of an analytical approach in the review of relative Census Data and/or Town owned Asset/Counts. As such Council may consider the following background and discussions within this lens.

Under the leadership of the Manager of Public Works and the Roads Supervisor, the Public Works Road’s team is comprised of: six (6) Heavy Equipment Operators; three (3) Light Equipment Operators; two (2) staff split between Recreation, Culture and Parks and one staff with Water/Wastewater (winter only). During the winter operations season (November – March), five (5) seasonal contract winter operations staff are employed.



ANALYSIS

Per the most recent [2021 Canadian Census Data](#) (through *Statistics Canada*) and in comparison to the milestone of [2006 Archived Canadian Census Data](#), the population of the Town of Tillsonburg has increased by 25.6% from 14,822 to 18,615; where in the same period *Total Private Dwelling* rose from 6,519 to 8,494 or 30.1%.

In a “segmented” Public Works approach, specific to linear infrastructure i.e. roads and sidewalks, the Town of Tillsonburg has also increased its asset portfolio by the following:

Asset	2006 Financial Information Return	2023 Reported Asset Inventory	Percentage increase
<i>Kilometre of Maintained Road</i>	216	276	27.8%

Asset	2016 Reported Asset Inventory	2023 Reported Asset Inventory	Percentage increase
<i>Kilometre of Maintained Sidewalk</i>	94.2	138.5*	47.0%

***Note:** Subject to the efforts of the Town of Tillsonburg’s *Sidewalk Connectivity Plan*

In correlation to an increase in roads, similar increases in stormwater infrastructure, line painting, signs, maintenance activities (i.e. street sweeping, etc.) can also be realized through the increase of similar or connected assets and activities.

However, in this same eighteen to twenty year period, Public Works Roads staff has not added any full-time permanent positions to complement the maintenance activities; where asset maintenance whether they be official or unofficial (i.e. MESH tickets, etc.) have weighted or lagged. Such an example may be considered sidewalk repairs, grass cutting, signs, pavement markings, storm sewer (inspections, assessments and repairs), tree maintenance and replacement programs, guide rails and roadside protective features, ditch maintenance and asphalt repairs, etc. To this effect we can consider that the Town’s Public Work’s Road staff/team have slipped into a reactive state rather the proactive.

BUSINESS NEEDS

The Public Work’s Road staff workload is governed and managed by three (3) primary and mitigating regulations or internal policies; they are, the Ontario Minimum Maintenance Standards, Council adopted and accepted Levels of Service as well as the overall expectations of the Town’s Residents.

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As stated, since 2006, with the notable increases in Town's population, development and infrastructure, there is considerable increase associated with service demands and maintenance. These increasing demands on the current Public Work's Roads staff/team complement, which has not increased in this time, is becoming more and more difficult to not only keep up with existing demands, but, in today's climate of employee retention and attraction can have a significant impact on our ability to retain employees as they become increasingly overworked. Further increasing demands on staff can also have a detrimental effect of safe working environments relative to burnout and quality of tasks preformed.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

To assess regional competitor's, Town staff has contacted two (2) nearby local municipalities in assessing *Kilometre of Maintained Road per Operator(s)* as per the following:

Municipality	Roads (Lane-km)	Non-Seasonal	Non-Seasonal	Winter/ Seasonal	Winter/ Seasonal
		PW Staff	Km/ PW Staff	PW Staff	Km/ PW Staff
Tillsonburg	276	11	25.09	16	17.25
Woodstock	486	54	9.00	N/A	N/A
Ingersoll	151	13	11.62	N/A	N/A

TASK ANALYSIS

Over the better part of a year and to better understand the labour demands of the position, Town staff performed a detailed task analysis of each task and its relative frequency to determine the overall labour-hours. This was completed for both winter and non-winter seasons. These figures were then compared to the total productive time for staff overall.

The table below provides a detailed task analysis, as follows:

Non-Winter		
Task Description	Labour Hours	Staff Required
Retention/Storm Water Management Ponds	68.00	0.09
Tree Maintenance/Trimming	320.00	0.40
Transfer Station - staffing	700.00	0.88
Transfer Station - maintenance	672.00	0.84
Patrols (non-winter)	336.00	0.42
Surface Maintenance	1,280.00	1.61
Equipment Upkeep	420.00	0.53

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General Maintenance	272.00	0.34
Manholes / Catchbasins	512.00	0.64
Sidewalks - minor repairs	160.00	0.20
Sidewalks - concrete work	480.00	0.60
Sod repairs	480.00	0.60
Shoulders	160.00	0.20
Sweeping	656.00	0.82
Line Painting	630.00	0.92
Grass Cutting (Roadside)	2,688.00	3.38
Grass Cutting (Airport)	1,344.00	1.69
Special Events* (tracking required)	-	0.00
Reactive (Customer service/Council)	1,120.00	1.41
- Engineering requests	560.00	0.70
- Bylaw requests	560.00	0.70
Guiderails	160.00	0.20
Emergency Services	-	0.00
Baldwin Oil Clean-up	140.00	0.18
Sign locates, installs, repairs, inspections	560.00	0.70
Drainage problem areas	36.00	0.05

Total Staff Required **18.11**
Current Non-Winter Complement **9.00**
Staff Deficient **- 9.11**

Winter (assuming a trend of 17 winter events per season)		
Task Description	Labour Hours	Staff Required
Plowing/Material Application - Roads (Continuous)	1,360	2.75
Plowing/Material Application - Roads (Spot)	1,040	2.11
Plowing/Material Application - Sidewalks (Continuous)	680	1.38
Plowing/Material Application - Sidewalks (Spot)	2,080	4.21
Plowing/Material Application - Alleyways (Continuous)	136	0.28
Plowing/Material Application - Alleyways (Spot)	208	0.42
Plowing/Material Application - Cul-de-sac (Continuous)	408	0.83
Plowing/Material Application - Cul-de-sac (Spot)	-	-
Plowing/Material Application - Bus stops/pads (Continuous)	340	0.69
Plowing/Material Application - Bus stops/pads (Spot)	400	0.81
Inspections	200	0.40
Snow Removal - Parking Lots	480	0.97
Snow Removal - Streets/Downtown	720	1.46
Snow Removal - Other	320	0.65
Kinsmen Bridge	122	0.25
Patrolling (winter)	364	0.74
Equipment Upkeep	420	0.85

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Tree Maintenance/Trimming		-
Transfer Station - staffing	340	0.69
Transfer Station - maintenance	324	0.66
Surface Maintenance	480	0.97
Equipment Upkeep	202.50	0.41
General Maintenance	136	0.28
Special Events	80	0.16
Reactive (Customer service/Council)	560	1.13
- Engineering requests	272	0.55
- Bylaw requests	272	0.55
Emergency Services		-
Baldwin Oil Clean-up	68	0.14
Sign locates, installs, repairs, inspections	128	0.26
Drainage problem areas	36	0.07

Total Staff Required 24.65
Current Non-Winter Complement 15.00
Staff Deficient - 9.65

Overall and in review of both non-winter and winter activities, results indicate a relative/comparable shortfall of approximately nine (9) full-time permanent Public Works Road staff/team members.

DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

There are a number of drivers that have highlighted the need for additional staffing in the Public Works Road’s team, however, the key driver towards this significant increase relative to our added assets (roads, sidewalks, storm sewers, traffic controls, landscaping, etc.). As an overview we may consider the following:

- **Roads** – with a 27.8% increase since 2006 (totalling 276 lane-km) where with increased linear assets maintenance need included increased plowing operations in the winter; patrolling, safety, maintenance, etc.
- **Sidewalks** – with a 47.0% increase since 2016 (totalling 138.5 km): where with the increased linear assets and increased services levels operations generally include winter maintenance, inspection, grinding as well as panel replacement/lifting.
- **Stormwater Management Ponds** or the addition thereof (17-20 stormwater features i.e. ponds, etc.) – in the past number of years, stormwater ponds have been added to all developments. The Town’s Engineering Department has developed a maintenance document outlining the year-to-year maintenance required. These ponds are just now/will be become a significant part of the Public Works Roads staff portfolio.

- **Public Transit (T-Go)** – the accepted and implemented transit system will require specialized maintenance needs, especially in winter, which has also not been fully factored into the Public Works Roads staff portfolio.

Further activities which are a part of the Public Work's Road staffs general tasks, which are directly affected by the increased infrastructure include the following:

- **Sweeping** – this maintenance activity is affected in direct proportion to the increase in the roads infrastructure.
- **Storm Sewers** – this maintenance activity is affected in direct proportion to the increase in the roads infrastructure.
- **Signs** – this maintenance activity is affected in direct proportion to the increase in the roads infrastructure. Also, as new by-laws and regulations change/evolve, so does the Town's signing needs/demands. Further, and in meeting regulated minimum standards, annual sign retroreflectivity assessment are required to be performed, which requires additional works in the replacement of signs.
- **Street lighting** - this maintenance activity is affected in direct proportion to the increase in the roads infrastructure. Although the street lights are managed by a contracted serves; managing the overall contracting and the inspection/work processing is ongoing.
- **Surface Maintenance** – the patching and asphalt works in roads maintenance is a significant activity which also increases in direct proportion to the increase in the roads infrastructure; which is also directly related to the increasing traffic volumes as well as capital improvements budgeting.
- **Landscaping (Grass)** – as development progresses, so does grass cutting and maintenance activities in direct correlation to roads infrastructure and the inclusion of more pedestrian pathways. It should be noted, and stressed, this area receives a great deal of focus and attention from Council as well as the general public, which also takes a significant effort to on staff time when grass is neither deemed a task associated to the Minimum Maintenance Standards or Legislative Requirements nor is it identified in the Town's Asset portfolio.
- **Landscaping (Trees)** – over the past year or so, Public Works Road staff have increased their attention to the right-of-way landscaping in tree trimming, removal and replacement. This attention will steadily increase over time as tree inspections and maintenance are integral in maintaining safer right-of-way infrastructure especially in consideration newer Plans of Subdivision. Furthermore, the added beautification of increased tree planting throughout the Town helps to make the Town and the streetscape much more attractive to residents and visitors.
- **Drainage** – this maintenance activity is also affected in direct proportion to the increase in the roads infrastructure.
- **Line Painting** – this maintenance activity is also affected in direct proportion to the increase in the roads infrastructure.
- **Shouldering** – this maintenance activity is also affected in direct proportion to the increase in the roads infrastructure.

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- **Special Events** (parades, Turtle Fest, etc.) – with most special events organized by the Town, especially in the Town right-of-way, requires Public Works Road's staff to perform duties (i.e. road closure/detour, traffic management, sweeping, etc.)
- **Emergency Response** – Public Works Roads staff, when emergency incidents occur (i.e. motor vehicle collisions, etc.) are often called upon to perform road closures, roads clean-up, etc. to assist and support all emergency services.
- **Miscellaneous/Reactive** – in similarity to all operating departments, reactive tasks, whether internal or through businesses or residents requests through MESH, are unplanned and can take away from planned/scheduled day-to-day activities/tasks

Of further note, the ongoing developments (i.e. Rolling Meadows, Harvest Heights, Westwinds, etc.) have not been factored/forecasted in the infrastructure assets to date and their impacts on the Public Works Roads team staffing demands will further compound overall staffing complement when these assets become assumed.

DISCUSSION

In summarizing the overall detailed analysis components above, this report has demonstrated the significant needs through the following four subject areas:

MAINTAINING INFRASTRUCTURE

One of the primary focuses of Public Works Road's staff is to maintain the associated roads infrastructure. The maintenance of roads-related infrastructure increases the safety of the users of the roads, demonstrates a high level of maintenance and visible care and beautification of the Town overall, which is pivotal to residents and visitors and effective maintenance of infrastructure helps to lengthen its serviceable life, thereby positively impacting the Town's assets and betters asset life expectance(s).

MEETING REGULATORY/LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

As stated, the Town of Tillsonburg, through the [Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways, O Reg. 239/02](#), the Town's adopted Level of Service policies as well as the Hours of Service regulations where with the continuing increase in development and infrastructure, Public Work Road staff is finding it increasingly difficult to attain the mandated and regulatory standards and have often fallen behind in some areas. These areas included but are not limited to regular roads patrolling and street lighting assessments, sign retroreflectivity assessments, a guardrail program, complete sidewalk repairs/replacement etc.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Although working safely is the primary focus of all of Public Works Road staff/team, the ever-increasing demands on staff has a significant impact on the staff's mental acuity in

performing their tasks and, overtime, can have an impact on their personal health and well-being.

MANAGING STAFFING LEVELS (DEPARTMENTAL CULTURE)

Staff are generally dissuaded from any requests for vacations during winter months, due to the need for all staff to be available in case of winter snow events. This situation/culture essentially means Public Works Road staff usually take their available vacation time during the non-winter times (i.e. June to September); meaning summer operational tasks and assets betterment are very understaffed throughout the spring and summer to the extent which roads staff can be noted as operating with a shortfall of at least two personnel each day; this does not take into account personal/sick days or any unplanned leaves of absence.

CONCLUSION

Town staff recognizes, and has demonstrated, a significant shortfall of almost nine (9) full time staff members are required in both winter and non-winter periods. Furthermore and in analyzing staffing complements Town management staff are recommending the addition of 3.7 FTEs staff through altering a combination of contract/seasonal positions to full-time roads positions (one shared water/wastewater, two shared RCP positions and one winter contract position). Staff has determined the increase of the non-winter staffing complement of a more prioritized need which can be accomplished with less financial impact on current budgets (see below).

CONSULTATION

- Road Supervisor
- Director of Operations and Development
- Director of Finance/Treasurer
- Manager of Human Resources

FINANCIAL IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE

It is estimated the overall financial impact to wages and benefits for the 3.7 FTEs for 2025 is approximately \$398,900 as the intended start date of January 1, 2025, but there could be further discussion to start at March 31st, 2025.

CORPORATE GOALS

- Lifestyle and amenities
- Customer service, communication and engagement
- Business attraction, retention and expansion
- Community growth
- Connectivity and transportation

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Not Applicable

Does this report relate to a specific strategic direction or project identified in the Community Strategic Plan? Please indicate section number and/or any priority projects identified in the plan.

Goal – The Town of Tillsonburg will accommodate and support sustainable growth.

Strategic Direction – Plan and develop a long-term financing strategy for new services and infrastructure to support growth.

Priority Project – *Medium Term* - Resourcing review to service growth

ATTACHMENTS

NONE