



2024 Budget Request

Request: Additional Staff Requests

Department: Office of the CAO

Request ID: CAO2024BUDGET-O-02

Financial Ask: \$378,000

Funding Source: Operating

This document and its attachments are public and available in an accessible format upon request.

Background and Strategic Priority

During a review of organizational alignment undertaken in summer 2023, it was highlighted that the Township of Georgian Bluffs has an extremely lean staff resource for a municipality of its size. Indeed, the Township has the lowest staff to resident ratio than any municipality in Grey County, and significantly lower than some Grey County municipalities with similar population numbers.

While a comparison of raw staff numbers is useful, it should be noted that the services offered by other municipalities differ, and so there is more than a simple comparison of staff to resident ratios, however, this is a useful point of comparison.

While staffing resources have grown at the Township, the staffing model remains very lean, with several areas of pressure, particularly in responding to new strategic priorities and new legislative requirements.

Through the budget discussions for 2024, Council and staff will be seeking to review a significant number of projects, prioritizing these, and seeking to balance the need for projects and fiscal accountability. Even if finances were not a constraint on projects in 2024, there is more work that needs to be completed than staff resource available to complete it. Indeed, several projects that Council will be considering in 2024 are linked to the need for staff resources to support this work.



Rather than identifying staff needs across several Budget Requests, staff are consolidating these into one single staffing request.

Analysis

Asset Management Coordinator – workload and legislative

Est. Budget Impact: \$104,000

This role was previously identified as a pressure in late summer 2023 as part of the organisational realignment.

In summer 2023, staff initiated a body of work to update and redevelop an Asset Management Plan. The Township is currently not in compliance with Providing Regulations on the development of Asset Management Plans and is working to quickly become compliant once more.

Staff are working to ensure that the Asset Management Plan does not become a stagnant reflection of a moment in time to rapidly become outdated, but that the Asset Management Plan is operationalized so that it becomes a living tool for the municipality moving forward, provides data to make informed decisions, particularly in respect to work priority and budget. While the Township is working with a consultant to lead much of this work, staff have identified that in order to support the plan, through its development and more importantly, its onwards implementation, dedicated resourcing will be required to help manage data, and inform data-based decisions.

The work being completed by the external consultants for the updated Asset Management Plan is heavily supported by the current Operations and Treasury staff. In addition, the Operations department is experiencing growing pressure from a number of areas such as supporting rights of way work, entry permits, and managing locate requests as well as working on water meters and responding to resident enquiries.

Provincial legislation for completing and implementing an asset management plan has a number of compliance deadlines approaching in 2024, 2025 and beyond; having a dedicated staff resource in place to support this work will ensure continued compliance with emerging asset management priorities; compliance with which is already a pre-requisite for several funding programs.

Staff are seeking a new, full-time position to lead the ongoing management of assets at the Township.

Project Coordinator: Engineering and Infrastructure Projects - workload

Est. Budget Impact: \$104,000



The Engineering and Infrastructure Department is responsible for the delivery of growth-related trunk and plant infrastructure, plus the refurbishment, rehabilitation, and ultimate replacement of the same related to water, roads, and structures, including bridges and culverts. The capital needs are identified within various studies and Environmental Assessments (EAs) the Township has undertaken, and good practices related to asset management.

Budget 2024 has a number of significant high priority capital projects proposed. These include major road works, servicing upgrades and enhancements and bridge replacements. In addition, work related to building condition assessments and infrastructure projects associated with Township facilities are identified within the budget. To help deliver the capital projects and programs identified in Budget 2024 and future 5 and 10 Year Capital Program (to be finalized) as having high priority and for likely sometime thereafter, one (1) Project Coordinator position is necessary.

Critical to the effective and efficient delivery of the capital program is human resources to scope projects, facilitate procurement, and manage consulting and construction contracts. Over the past few years, it has been evident that the increase in the number of growth-related projects and maintaining existing infrastructure at the quality expected by the community warrant additional project coordination and management resources. Delivering on a capital program of works is undertaken alongside the routine planning and engineering work of the team such as involved in service master planning, capital planning and service level development.

Without the position or equivalent in place, the capital projects identified in Budget 2024 and 5 and 10-Year Capital Program may not be able to be delivered. The program would be revised to defer projects. There is a risk that trunk infrastructure will not be in place for development, the current level of service expected by the community will not be achieved and infrastructure will degrade to where unexpected failure becomes more likely.

Options or Solutions Analysis

1. Internal Contract Staff – Instead of full-time staff, the Township could hire contract positions. Since the work needs are at least now and 10 years and likely longer, the contract positions become full-time for all intents and purposes. As a general rule, full-time positions draw better candidates than contract positions.
2. External Contract Staff – The Town could hire external consultants to work as the Township's project coordinator and administrator. Although this approach offers most flexibility the Town also loses some control and intrinsic vested interest. In addition, the cost of external project management is 1.5 to 2 times internal.



3. Reduce Capital Program – Without the position, the 2024 Budget and 5 to 10-year capital program will need to be re-worked to re-prioritize project assignments. This will reduce the number of projects delivered in the next year and beyond. Staff currently believe that with a significant backlog of deferred infrastructure projects, this will result in further declines to infrastructure condition.

Environmental Initiatives Officer – *strategic delivery*

Est. Budget Impact: \$90,000

This position is recommended for a 3-year contract basis for the initial roll out of the Corporate Climate Action Plan and for support community driven climate action locally.

In November, Council endorsed a Corporate Climate Action Plan that seeks to achieve ambitious reductions in the environmental and greenhouse gas emission footprint of the Townships operations. Success of the plan will be in its adoption at an operational level in all decisions of Council, and to help ensure this over the early years of the plan, a dedicated presence to implement key projects and drive the plans operational adoption across the organisation is key.

In budget 2024, Council will review and prioritise a number of actions over the next three years which implement recommendations of the strategy. While some of these can be achieved with existing staff resources, several of these actions will require additional resources that the Township does not currently have. These will support enhanced community outreach and engagement, seeking of funding and partnerships to deliver projects as well as the running of several larger initiatives that will require a dedicated staff focus.

Staff are seeking a full-time position to support this work on an initial contract for 3 years, which will be reviewed at that time.

Students: Operations (x2), GIS, and Records Management – *workload & efficiency*

Est. Budget Impact: \$80,000 (\$20,000 each)

Staff are seeking student support in three areas in 2024:

- Operations: Two students will be assigned to operations and will provide support to the operations team during the summer season. Students will be engaged on routine tasks such as inspections of signs and tasks such as flagging, providing capacity for operations staff to use skills and experience efficiently and effectively on job sites.
- GIS: The Township relies on its GIS systems on a daily basis, for asset management and work planning. Several layers of the corporate GIS system are



out of date and/or inaccurate and many layers which would be useful on a daily basis are not present due to a lack of data. The GIS student will work with the Operations and Engineering and Infrastructure teams to collect field-based information in GIS format and to ensure that this information is readily available through the Townships GIS systems.

- **Records Management:** The Township has engaged a student over the past few summers to support Record Management. This position has been instrumental in reviewing corporate records, sorting these and digitizing data. In 2023, this role provided invaluable support to the Legislative Services team in analyzing and sorting Cemetery records.

Each student position has a budget impact of \$20,000 although it is anticipated that if approved, grant support will be sought for these roles in early 2024 which will offset these costs, potentially by as much as half.

Financial Impact

The total budget impact of all roles, if supported, would be \$378,000 to the operating budget.

The positions of Asset Management Coordinator and Project Coordinator would have future budget implications as they are permanent full-time positions. The Environmental Initiatives Coordinator would have a budget impact for the next three (3) years and the summer students would only have a budget impact for the 2024 year, any request for students in future years would be presented as an ask for that year's budget.



Report Approval Details

Document Title:	2024 Budget Request Additional Staffing Requests.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Nov 14, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Samantha Buchanan, Treasurer

Niall Loble, Director of Community Services