

**TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT**  
**2025 Operating Request Form # 2025-01**

---

---

**Department:**

**Request Name:** Senior Urban Forester

---

**Description**

The collective responsibility for protecting and enhancing trees spans across various land uses, including privately owned lands, public agencies, and various departments within the Township. A sustainable, long-term management of the tree canopy necessitates the expertise of a certified and experienced Senior Urban Forester, possessing ISA (International Society for Arboriculture) and TRAQ (Tree Risk Assessment Qualification) in order to conduct and manage the Township's tree canopy through its urban, rural, parkland and trail assets. The long-term success of a healthy tree canopy hinges on the presence of an established professional who can serve as a unifying voice across all Township departments. This individual will play a pivotal role in coordinating efforts and developing a Township-wide cohesive approach towards tree management, conservation, and risk management.

**Justification**

Current management of the tree canopy utilizes limited resources amongst Parks and Facilities and Public Works to conduct tree management, which includes planting, watering, pruning, felling, planning and risk assessment/management. Current practice is largely reactive; requests or complaints are received from the public, and the work is fit in amongst other competing priorities. No staff amongst Parks and Facilities and Public Works are ISA or TRAQ certified, highlighting the inability to legally and competently assess or report on tree health. Furthermore, without proper tree management policies in place, the tree canopy will continue to be less of a priority amongst the departments.

The Senior Urban Forester would effectively alleviate the current challenges the departments are facing. By transition from reactive to proactive tree canopy management and centralizing expertise, better strategic planning would be possible, with implementation of maintenance protocols and identification of potential issues, improved preservation practices, and the integration of optimal tree care measures. Through focused oversight, efficient planning, and informed decision making, this position will be able to allocate proper resourcing to areas most in need, and provide a more central liaison with the community, organizational, and government stakeholders. The proper qualified candidate will be able to bring the expertise needed to the Township to guide proper tree selection, placement, and care for long-term community benefit, including reviewing tree protection and enhancement in capital projects and private development applications, assuring adherence to best management practices and overseeing day-to-day tree planting and maintenance activities.

**Risk of not proceeding**

Continuance of current practices will result in the Township continuing to carry immense liability, inability to properly and professionally assess the risk and/or health of the Township's tree inventory, continued reliance on third-party contractors, and a non-cohesive approach to policy, planning and management practices amongst the departments. With continued lack of professional ISA and TRAQ qualification oversight, proper assessment of the Township's tree inventory will not be possible without third-party contractors, and priorities will be incessantly placed on other Township priorities.

**Options Considered**

The seasonal Junior Arborist position was implemented in the Parks and Facilities department in 2022. Instated to allocate a resource specifically to tree inventory, this position was responsible for minor maintenance work on trees, risk and health assessment of inventory, and aiding in planting initiatives with Let's Tree Wilmot. This position is designed as an entry-level position, attracting students within the arboriculture field working towards their diplomas/certification. This position was filled in 2022 and 2023 but was cut in 2024 due to budgetary pressures. The position was a great asset, however, the short falls of resourcing pressures, as well as the lack of strong tree canopy and care policies, did not allow for full implementation of the position as intended.

Other options for consideration would be continued and increased third-party contracted services taking on more to alleviate resource pressures currently faced across the departments.

---

**Financial Considerations:****Operating Investment**

	<b>2025</b>
Compensation	134,800
Annual Operating Expense	1,450
One-time Expenses	65,450
One-time funding	(65,450)
Total	136,250

One-time expenses include vehicle and office equipment, funded from capital reserve funds.

**TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT**  
**2025 Operating Request Form # 2025-02**

---

---

**Department:**

**Request Name:** Stormwater Management System Maintenance

---

**Description**

This request comes from the Roads Need Study presented to Council in September 2024. This study outlined scenarios to address a backlog of work, as well as the expansion of operating programs needed, to improve road conditions in the Township. In large part, drainage related programs are needed to limit the impact of wet weather on getting into the road structure. This request is for \$35,000 to complete 15 catch basin lid repairs and adjustments (urban) annually, and \$25,000 for 500m of ditch maintenance programs (rural).

**Justification**

The scenarios outlined to address deteriorating road conditions included increased annual investment in operating budget to complete routine and preventative maintenance activities on the road network. These works are primarily focused on addressing drainage infrastructure issues in the right-of-way for hard surfaced roads. Drainage is a primary driver of road surface condition deterioration. Preventing drainage from entering the road base will preserve the assets condition and slow deterioration. Both items will keep water out of the road base and convey it away from the base. These are proposed in Stormwater Management budget because they deal with items related to Stormwater management directly.

**Risk of not proceeding**

Not proceeding would result in continued and increased asset deterioration. That would include increased maintenance activities to address potholing issues, and eventually increased capital load to address road conditions into failure mode. In addition, when roads are in a deteriorated state, the best timing window to address keeping the asset in good condition and minimizing costs has been missed. As such, it takes more capital and operating dollars to bring the condition to an acceptable level of service.

**Options Considered**

---

**Financial Considerations:**

**Operating Investment**

	<b>2025</b>
Catch Basin Lid Repairs (15 annually)	35,000
Ditch Maintenance (500m annually)	25,000
Total	60,000

**TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT**  
**2025 Operating Request Form # 2025-03**

---

---

**Department:**

**Request Name:** Hardtop Maintenance

---

**Description**

This request comes from the Roads Need Study presented to Council in September 2024. This study outlined scenarios to address a backlog of work, as well as the expansion of operating programs needed, to improve road conditions in the Township. In large part, drainage related programs are needed to limit the impact of wet weather on getting into the road structure. This request is for \$45,000 for 750m of shoulder repairs (rural) .

**Justification**

The scenarios outlined to address deteriorating road conditions included increased annual investment in operating budget to complete routine and preventative maintenance activities on the road network. These works are primarily focused on addressing drainage infrastructure issues in the right-of-way for hard surfaced roads. Drainage is a primary driver of road surface condition deterioration. Preventing drainage from entering the road base will preserve the assets condition and slow deterioration. This item will keep water from the road base and convey it away from the base. It is proposed in the hardtop budget because it deals primarily with hard top asset maintenance.

**Risk of not proceeding**

Not proceeding would result in continued and increased asset deterioration. That would include increased maintenance activities to address potholing issues, and eventually increased capital load to address road conditions into failure mode. In addition, when roads are in a deteriorated state, the best timing window to address keeping the asset in good condition and minimizing costs has been missed. As such, it takes more capital and operating dollars to bring the condition to an acceptable level of service.

**Options Considered**

---

**Financial Considerations:**

**Operating Investment**

	<b>2025</b>
Rural Road Shoulder Repair (750m annually)	45,000
Total	45,000

**TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT**  
**2025 Operating Request Form # 2025-04**

---

---

**Department:** Development Services  
**Request Name:** Economic Development & Tourism Officer

---

**Description**

To hire a full-time Economic Development & Tourism Officer.

**Justification**

As the Township grows the expectations for a greater level of dedicated customer service to support the local business community and to participate in Provincial, Regional and local initiatives warrants a dedicated position and not a 'corner of the desk' effort. In particular working with local business groups and other groups to not only support activities but also to grow and promote the community is imperative. Special Events co-ordination is one particular area where enhanced service would pay dividends for all involved.

**Risk of not proceeding**

The risk of not proceeding is the inability to proactively plan for and support or growing economy, to inadequately respond to requests and opportunities to support local events and activities, the loss of opportunity to 'tell the positive story' of Wilmot to the broader community and the ultimate loss of opportunity to attract and retain desirable businesses and activities to maintain our high quality of life. Increasingly we risk losing valuable financial grant opportunities through programs such as RED.

**Options Considered**

Options considered include continuing the piecemeal reactive approach spread across multiple corners of multiple desks which has worked but increasingly has been unproductive. With upper tier and collaborative lower tier efforts ongoing to develop larger scale economic development strategies it is important to embrace the implementation of same at the local level with a dedicated resource.

---

**Financial Considerations:**

**Operating Investment**

	<b>2025</b>
Compensation	146,400
Annual operating expenses	4,000
One-time expenses	5,500
One-time funding	(5,500)
Total	150,400

**TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT**  
**2025 Operating Request Form # 2025-05**

---

---

**Department:** Development Services  
**Request Name:** Senior Policy Planner

---

**Description**

Hire a full time Sr. Policy Planner - per the People Plan and per previous discussions on the implications of implementing Bill 23 (downloading of Planning Authority) and the new PPS

**Justification**

The Province of Ontario, through the proclamation of aspects of Bill 23, will be downloading Planning Authority from the Region of Waterloo to Area Municipalities including Wilmot Township. The impacts of downloading Planning Authority are significant across both spectrums of significant planning activity being Policy Planning and Development Approvals. Historically Planning Division staff have been able to balance the workloads of Policy and Development through a blended approach which will not be successful moving forward. The Development Approvals processes as Planning Authority and in an environment of increased activity required dedicated attention to ensure the duties and responsibilities are effectively completed. Further, the delegation of Planning Authority places a heightened importance on Planning Policy documents and decisions to ensure that the Township Official Plan remains current, in conformity with the new Provincial Planning Statement and that the significant, seemingly never ending, policy changes being implemented by the Province are reviewed, reported on, responded to and implemented in a timely fashion.

**Risk of not proceeding**

The risk of not hiring a dedicated Sr Policy Planner will be a heightened risk of error in both Development Planning and Policy Planning, a lack of sufficient staff time to participate in intermunicipal committees as we navigate the implementation of Bill 23 with our peers and the inability or difficulty in responding to Council requests for policy related matters in a timely fashion and in a level of depth necessary to ensure well informed decision making.

**Options Considered**

As Council is aware staff have considered the ability to continue with the current staff complement and considered how best to minimize the staffing complement required to effectively carry out the Township's duties that will accompany delegation of Planning Authority in a cost-effective manner.

---

**Financial Considerations:**

**Operating Investment**

	<b>2025</b>
Compensation	146,400
Annual operating expenses	4,000
One-time expenses	5,500
One-time funding	(5,500)
Total	150,400

**TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT**  
**2025 Operating Request Form # 2025-06**

---

---

**Department:** Corporate Services

**Request Name:** Revenue & Taxation Supervisor

---

**Description**

This position would be responsible for proactively managing the Townships tax roll and utility billing. They would oversee the Account Receivable Financial Analyst within Finance who currently deals with the collection of all tax and utilities revenues.

**Justification**

The management of the tax roll and the utility billing requires a proactive approach to the numerous requests and changes that are initiated by the public. Currently one staff member is responsible for ensuring all billing is issued on time (8,000 households), changes in assessment for all properties is verified and applied in a timely manner, review of utility billing to identify potential high usage issues. In addition, they are responsible for processing all change of ownership and billing request. Currently the Townships bills are primarily mailed to residents (>80%), a shift to electronic billing would create efficiencies in the process, however, it requires proactive efforts to encourage residents to make the change.

The Township is also at the beginning stage of identifying the financial system that will replace our current legacy system, one key feature that residents are looking for is access to online billing. This allows them to review past copies of bills, receive notification of upcoming changes and monitor their utility usage in near real time. The implementation of this type of system will require significant support from staff to ensure it is rolled out correctly and residents receive the full benefits.

**Risk of not proceeding**

Without this additional resource there is risk that the Township will not achieve the service levels expected by tax and utility customers. Response times will be delayed, and customers will be frustrated by the lack of timely response. There is also risk to the Townships revenues as collection of delinquent payments is prioritized after residents who are proactively contacting the Township, staff do not have time to follow up with late payments and encourage customers to pay off outstanding balances.

The new system that will be implemented may not provide the benefits expected due to lack of staff capacity to develop and implement new processes. This leaves value from the investment unrecognized.

**Options Considered**

Internal resources are the only option for this need as they are required day to day and must be familiar with systems and processes in order to provide benefit.

---

## Financial Considerations:

### Operating Investment

	<b>2025</b>
Compensation	146,400
Annual Operating Expenses	4,000
One-time expenses	5,500
One time funding	(5,500)
Total	150,400



**TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT**  
**2025 Operating Request Form # 2025-06**

---

---

**Department:** Corporate Services  
**Request Name:** Grant Coordinator

---

**Description**

This position would be responsible for supporting and coordinating all grant applications and reporting across the Township. This would include both allocation based grants such as Canada Community Benefit Fund and application programs such as Housing Enabling Water Infrastructure Funding.

**Justification**

The Township relies on grants to support both operating and capital budgets, annually over \$2.5 million in grant funding is received by the Township through allocation based grant programs. Additionally numerous applications are made for funding ranging from a few thousand to several million dollars, through a number of provincial, federal and non-government entities. Each of these grants requires support in completing applications to ensure required information is correct,

**Risk of not proceeding**

Without sufficient resources within Corporate Services there is potential to miss out on grant opportunities that could provide hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue that would offset the need for additional tax or rate funding.

**Options Considered**

The option of engaging a consultant on an as needed basis was considered, however, due to the large cost as a percentage of the grant received (typically 10-30%) and the fact that these services would not be eligible expenses under any current grant programs, this is not a viable option.

---

**Financial Considerations:**

**Operating Investment**

	<b>2025</b>
Compensation	112,300
Operating Expenses	1,500
One time expenses	5,500
One time funding	(5,500)
Total	113,800

**TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT**  
**2025 Operating Request Form # 2025-08**

---

---

**Department:** Corporate Accounts  
**Request Name:** Growth Capital Funding

---

**Description**

The cost of funding capital projects to support growth is not entirely covered by Development Charges, either through legislated exemptions or Council approved exemptions. This is the first year or a planned five-year phase-in of funding to support these exemptions.

**Justification**

These exempted costs must be covered by a funding source other than development charges. This leaves the costs to tax and rate funding sources. The Development Charges Act includes a number of legislated exemptions; additional residential units, affordable housing and industrial exemptions for example. Council has also approved an exemption for the Nithview Long-term Care facility.

**Risk of not proceeding**

If the funds are not put aside, annual impacts from exemptions will be drawn from capital reserve funds, which will limit the amount of funds available to fund infrastructure renewal projects.

**Options Considered**

The other options would be to fund from current capital reserve fund balances, which are near zero or from operating budgets during the year, which would result in a deficit within the operating budget.

---

**Financial Considerations:**

**Operating Investment**

	<b>2025</b>
Tax Growth Capital Funding	100,000
Sanitary Growth Capital Funding	40,000
Water Growth Capital Funding	10,000
Total	150,000

**TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT**  
**2025 Operating Request Form # 2025-09**

---

---

**Department:** Corporate Accounts

**Request Name:** Repayment of Ontario Building Code Reserve Fund

---

**Description**

The Townships reserve fund for Building (OBC # 6800) was in a deficit of \$2,012,628 at the end of 2023. This reserve fund should have a positive balance, which is used to support building services during periods of slow building activity.

**Justification**

As per the Building Code Act, municipalities are allowed to maintain a reserve fund that provides funding during periods where Building permit revenue is not sufficient to fund the operating expenses related to building inspection services. This reserve fund is built up over time from the fees collected, as per the Building Code Act.

The deficit in this reserve fund is due to excessive internal charges over the past 15 years, which have led to a transfer of these funds from the Building department to the tax funded operating budget. This has had the effect of reducing the taxes collected to fund operating expenses.

In order to rectify this situation the internal charge process has been reviewed and reduced to reflect more accurate cost allocations. This will ensure that the Building services area is able to end most years in a surplus, however, it will not reverse what has accumulated over the past 15 years.

The target balance for this reserve should be approximately one years operating expenses, which is approximately \$650,000.

**Risk of not proceeding**

Without this approach the risk is that the OBC reserve fund will never return to a positive position and therefore will not be able to function as intended.

**Options Considered**

Another option would be to transfer funds from current tax funded reserve balances, given the near zero balances in all the Townships tax funded reserves this is not possible.

---

**Financial Considerations:**

**Operating Investment**

	<b>2025</b>
Annual funding to OBC Reserve Fund (#6800)	100,000
Total	100,000