

# DEPARTMENT FACT SHEET


## Planning

The following services are provided by the Planning Department:

- Land use information is provided to the general public and development industry.
- Administer Development applications for amendments to land use bylaws including, Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaws, Development Variance Permits, Development Permits and Subdivisions.
- Maintenance of the City Geographic Information System and Mapping.
- Advisory Planning Commission coordination.
- Building and Plumbing Inspection.
- Bylaw Enforcement and Business Licensing.



### SERVICE STATS



**83**


= The average number of days to administer land use applications to the stage where further progress is dependent on action by the client

"beep beep" that's fast!




**4**

The Planning Department is staffed by one Professional Planner assisted by one Planning Technician, one Building Inspector and one Bylaw Enforcement Officer. All work together to provide Development, Business Licensing, Bylaw Enforcement and Building Inspection



**Q.** Why is it a complex process to amend a land use bylaw such as the Official Community Plan or Zoning Bylaw?

**A.** A legislated, public, process must be followed when an application is received to amend a land use bylaw. The process ensures that the community has an opportunity to provide input to City Council.



**644**

Business Licenses issued/renewed in 2013

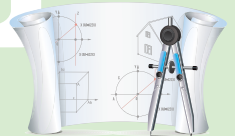


**25**

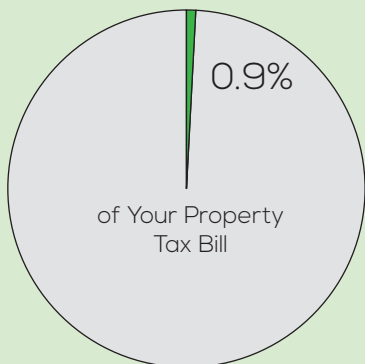
Average land use applications per year

**80**

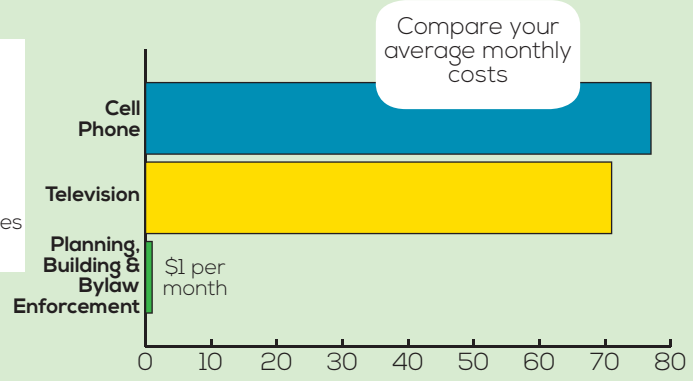
Building Permits issued in 2013



### BY THE NUMBERS



Budget Expenditure	<b>\$430,000</b>
-	
Service Fee & Other Revenue	<b>\$230,000</b>
=	
Net Operating Requirement from Property Taxes	<b>\$200,000</b>



## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Planning and Development - What do I need to do to subdivide my property?

- Step 1 Meet.** Discuss project with the City Subdivision Approving Officer (SAO).
- Step 2 The Application.** The SAO will determine whether or not a subdivision is possible. If it is possible you will be advised to prepare and submit a formal Subdivision Application. A Preliminary Layout Approval (PLA) will be prepared by the SAO detailing all fees and conditions that will be applied to your subdivision
- Step 3 The homework.** Once you have received a PLA you have one year, before it expires, to complete the conditions specified.

### 2. Business Licensing - Can I run a business out of my home?

Yes; under the conditions outlined in the Zoning Bylaw for Home Occupations.

### 3. Building - Can an exception to the building code be made for my project ?

No. The Province regulates standards for health, safety, accessibility, and energy and water efficiency in buildings through the BC Building Code. Equivalencies to code standards may be accepted from Registered Professionals under some circumstances.

### 4. Bylaw Enforcement - Others doing the same as I am have not been asked to make changes. Why are you giving me a hard time?

Bylaw infractions are handled by a single bylaw enforcement officer in Port Alberni. Enforcement action must be taken when the City receives a complaint about an infraction.

## Key Issue

Mapping software and methods evolve and improve at a rapid pace. The City's level of investment in its geographic information system, and in the ongoing training of technical staff, has not kept pace with advancements.

Methodologies and software require upgrading to realize efficiencies that will reduce the time and cost of managing our data resources. A plan is being developed to move the City's Geographic Information System forward.



## Trending Community Engagement

Both the Zoning Bylaw Review Project and the Waterfront North Study in 2013 presented opportunity for the City to engage with residents, property owners and business owners using social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter and Survey Monkey. Several public surveys generated higher than expected response rates when social media was used to engage the public.



## FOCUS

### CITY OF PORT ALBERNI STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2013 the City Zoning Bylaw was reviewed and overhauled. Enhanced provisions for Affordable and Supportive Housing in the form of Secondary and In-Law Suites were incorporated in the new Zoning Bylaw to provide more options for affordable housing in the community. The Commercial zoning structure was simplified and revised to encourage pedestrian friendly revitalization in the core commercial areas.

A project to develop a City of Port Alberni Building Standards Bylaw reflects the community's desire to improve its self-image. Property and buildings are required to be safeguarded, secured and maintained.



## MORE INFO

If you have questions about Planning or would like more information please contact Scott Smith, City Planner, 250-720-2808 or email at [scott\\_smith@portalberni.bc](mailto:scott_smith@portalberni.bc)

You can also connect via:

**City Hall: Phone: 250-723-2146**

**Website: [www.portalberni.ca](http://www.portalberni.ca)**

**Facebook: City of Port Alberni Local Government**

**Twitter: @cityportalberni**