

TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Development Services Level of Service

October 20, 2025

Respond to Council's
Requests

Respond to Public Inquires
Plan Checking for Zoning and
Parking Compliance

Planning for
Health Needs



Zoning Administration

Geographic Information
Systems

Process FOI Requests for Building
Plans

Building Code
Administration

LGCAP Reporting

Maintain the On-line Development
Tracker and Dashboard

Incorporate Amendments and Produce
Consolidated Versions of all Planning Related
Bylaws.

Administration of the
Pesticide Use Reduction
Bylaw

Heritage
Planning

Subdivision
Approval

Liquor Licence
Application
Processing

What Do We Do?

Business Licence
Application Review

Agricultural Land
Commission

Planning Studies

Staff
Development

Long Range Planning

Housing Targets
Reporting

Design Review
Committee

Housing

Climate Action Plan

Administer Development
Agreements and Covenants

Advisory Planning
Commission

Board of
Variance

Emergency
Operations Centre

Current
Planning

Planning Technician

Senior Building and
Plumbing Official

Planner 2 - Policy

Office
Administrator

Who Does It ?

Manager of Planning

Planner 2 - Development

Acting Planner 3 -
Development

Director of Development
Services



Staff referrals

Various legal processes

Meetings with applicants

Advisory Planning
Commission

How is it Done?

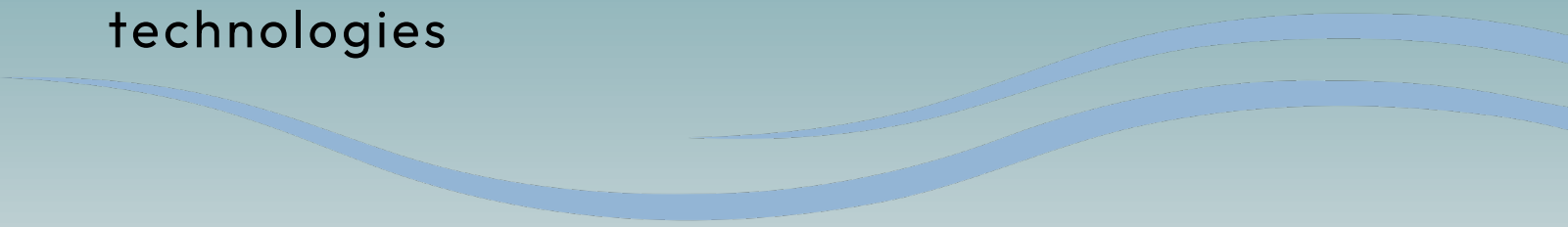
Data analysis

Design Review Committee

Continuous improvement

External referrals

Adoption of new
technologies



Planning is a Team Sport

Civil Engineering
and Public Works

Finance

Transportation Engineering

Geotechnical
Engineering

Health Professionals

Architecture

Public Administration

Arborist

Fire

Law

Communications

Psychology

Crime Prevention
Through
Environmental Design

Urban Design

Economics

Landscape Architecture



What impacts our work?

- Economic Trends/Cycles (expansion vs contraction)
- Financial impacts (e.g. interest rates)
- Demographic Trends
 - Aging population
 - Immigration
 - Young families
- Federal and Provincial Government Directives (fast and frequent statute amendments and policy directions)
- Building Code amendments (e.g. seismic upgrades)
- Government programs (e.g. favorable loan programs)
- Housing Affordability
- Climate Change
- Workload
- Available Resources (money, staff, time)
- Increasing complexity and uncertainty (e.g. August 7, 2025, British Columbia Supreme Court decision *Cowichan Tribes v Canada (Attorney General)*)

Trends

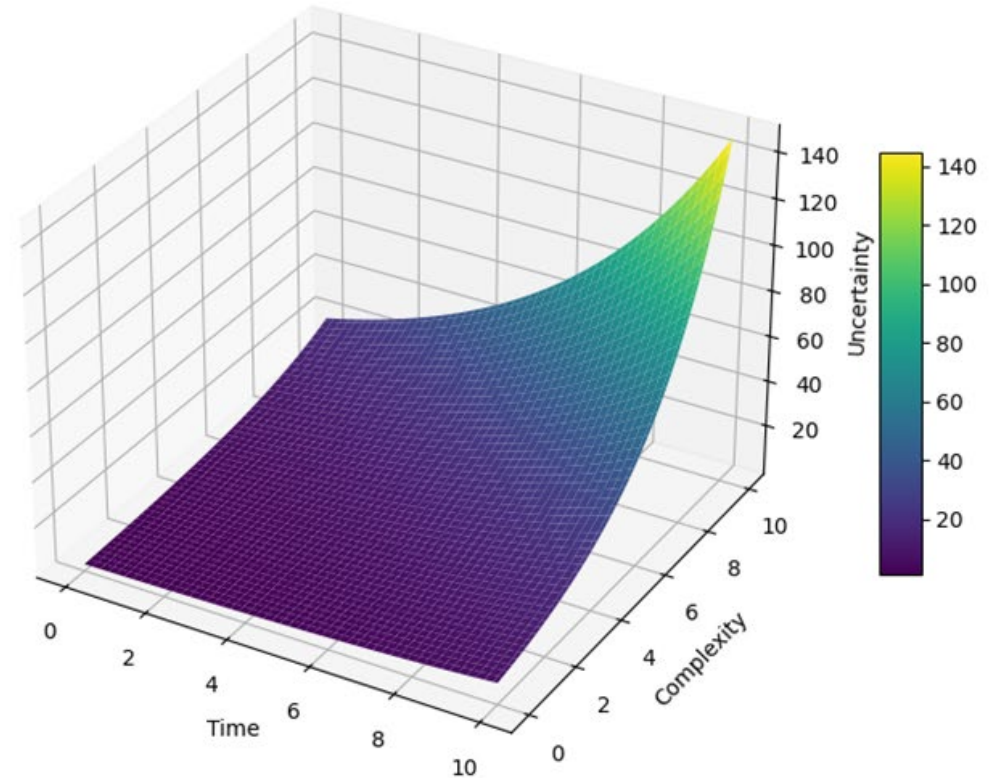
Complexity is increasing

- Tall buildings
- Seismic requirements

Uncertainty is increasing

- Economic uncertainty
- Geo-political uncertainty

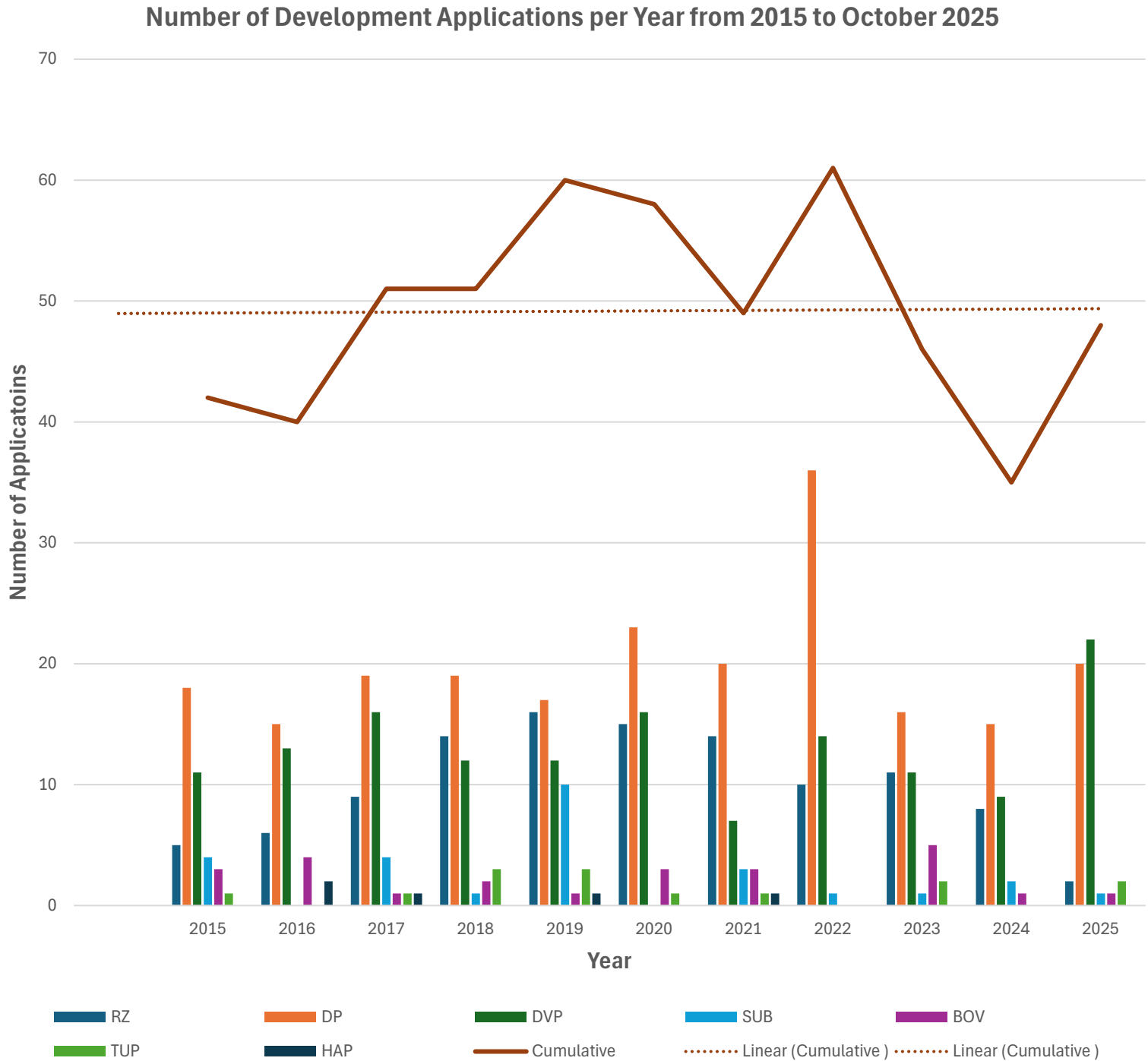
3D Relationship between Time, Complexity, and Uncertainty



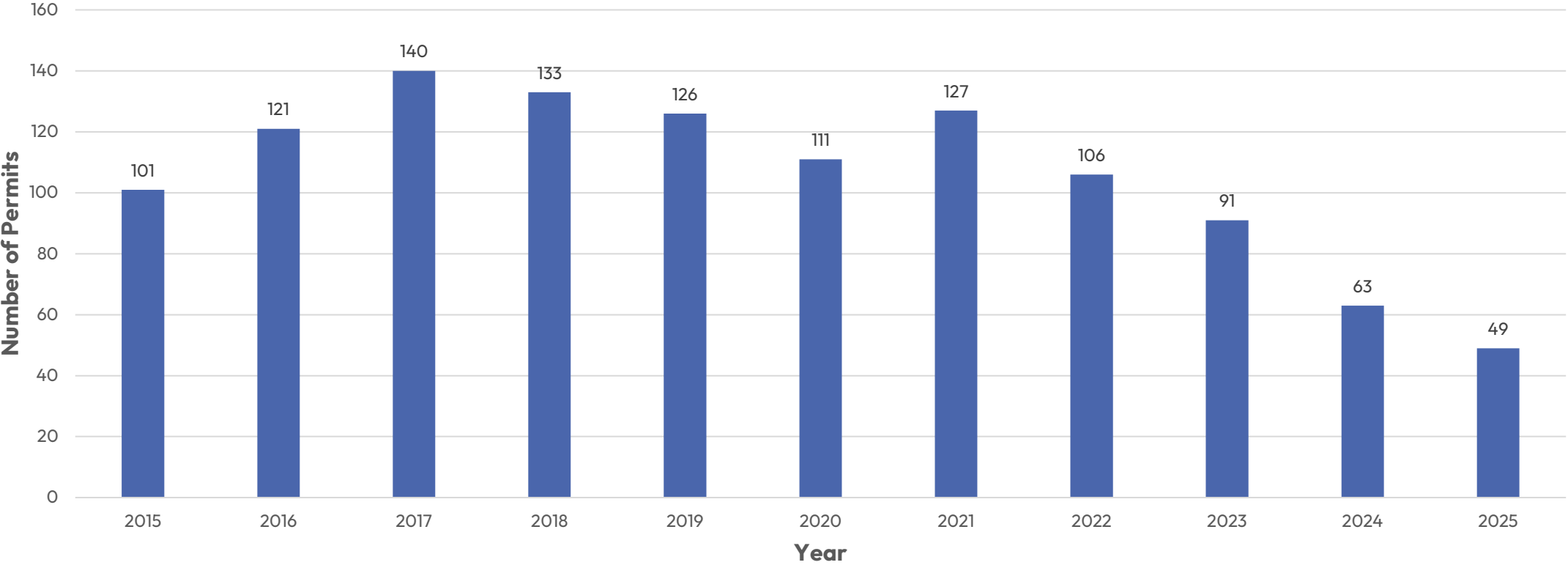
Trends

Tend is Holding Steady

- After a dip in 2024, the number of applications is trending towards the linear trend line (Note 2025 data is for January to October).



Number of Building Permit Applications Per Year 2015 to October 2025



Comparison with Peers

Position		Esquimalt	Oak Bay	View Royal
Director of Development Services	1		1 (includes Bylaw Services)	1
Manager of Planning	1		1	
Senior Planner	1		3	2
Building Inspector	1		2	1
Plan Checker			1	
Planner	2		1	1
Planning Technician	1		1	
Administrative Support	1		≈2	0.5 (shared with licencing)
Total	8		12	5.5

Current Projects

- OCP Recalibration
- Health Needs Assessment
- Development Capacity Study
- Short Term Rentals Policy and Analysis
- Zoning Bylaw Omnibus Amendments
- Doctor Density Bonusing (based in part on the finding of the Health Needs Assessment)
- Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Road Map
- Front Yard Deer Fencing Policy
- Climate Action Plan Annual Report
- Report on DCC's and ACC's
- Review of SSMUH Zone
- Single Stair Egress Policy

Future Projects

- Sign Bylaw Modernization
- Affordable Housing Study
- Esquimalt Road Urban Design Guidelines
- Development Fiscal Impact Assessment (review of height and density)
- Official Community Plan Major Review
- Ground-Oriented Small Developments
- Implementation of on-line application submission.
- Zoning Bylaw Rewrite

Recent Initiatives

- Delegation of more types of development permits including small scale multi family applications.
- Delegation of minor variances.
- The delegation has increased levels of service.
- Adoption of new Parking Bylaw (reduces the need for parking studies to justify lower parking ratios).

Future Initiatives

- On-line applications for building permits
- On-line applications for all other land use permits (development permits, development variance permits, heritage alteration permits).
- On-line applications for rezonings and amendments to the Official Community Plan.
- Moving to an on-line portal will increase levels of service by eliminating incomplete applications and eliminating the need to drop of large rolls of plans at the counter.

Future Initiatives

- Use of AI in application review (e.g. automatically review building plans against the BC Building Code and the Zoning Bylaw).
- AI powered zoning analysis (e.g. use available data related to traffic volumes, water and sewer capacity, tree canopy, proximity to services and amenities, etc. to determine various land use scenarios)

Levels of Service – How to Measure?

- Processing Time – Incomplete Measure
 - Processing Time is often beyond the control of staff:
 - Parking Bylaw was delayed due to too many conflicting priorities.
 - Staff turnover means project delays due to lack of staff resources and loss of corporate memory.
 - It is not always possible to get a quorum at the APC or DRC.
 - The delay is sometimes due to the applicant.
- Customer Service Inquiries or Complaints – Incomplete Measure
 - Are often related to delays in processing applications or getting projects finished.
 - Staff do their best to avoid complaints.
- Revenues – Not a Good Measure
 - Application fees are the departments only source of non-tax revenue.
- Number of applications processed – Incomplete Measure
 - Beyond the control of staff.

Levels of Service

Limited to Urgent – Important Tasks

- Most of the staff time is spent on urgent/important tasks.
- There is very little time left for important/not urgent tasks.

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	▪ Staff health and wellness ▪ Processing applications ○ Building ○ Sign ○ Rezoning ○ Development ○ Development Variance ○ Board of Variance ○ Subdivision ▪ OCP Recalibration ▪ Meeting statutory timelines ▪ Responding to e-mails from council, residents,	▪ Parking Bylaw ▪ Development Capacity Study ▪ Short Term Rental Report ▪ Deer Fencing ▪ Modernization of permit processing ▪ Etc.
Not Important		Responding to unsolicited e-mails.

Levels of Service - Impacts of Limited Resources

- Working on holidays.
- Working on weekends and evenings.
- Working when sick.
- Application processing is slowed down.
- Projects are delayed – Deadlines are Exceeded.
- Lack of staff resources in the past have put a number of projects behind schedule (development permit application processing is moving smoother now that there is a full complement of staff except for an unfunded Senior Planner position which results in bogged down projects).
- No buffer when staff leave or are off for long periods.

Levels of Service - Impacts of Limited Resources Con't

- Increased staff stress and illness resulting in lower productivity.
- Family suffers.
- Mistakes are more common.
- Some things are left undone (e.g. the last Zoning Bylaw consolidation was June 24, 2024).
- Records management delayed.
- Files are not closed.
- No time for deep thinking.

Response to Constraints

- Training staff to be able to do more tasks (e.g. issue plumbing permits, take payments for applications, do landscape inspections).
- Use more consultants.
- Extend timelines.

Impact of a Senior Planner on Levels of Service

- The Senior Planner position exists but is unfunded.
- If funded the Senior Planner could contribute to increase levels of service by:
 - Working on projects that are behind such as:
 - Affordable Housing Study
 - DCC's and ACC's
 - Esquimalt Road Urban Design Guidelines
 - Development Fiscal Impact Assessment (review of height and density)
 - Official Community Plan Major Review
 - Ground-Oriented Small Developments
 - Sign Bylaw Modernization
 - Review of SSMUH Zone
 - Doctor Density Bonusing (based in part on the finding of the Health Needs Assessment)
 - Implementation of on-line application submission.
- Reducing the workload of the Planning Manager allowing the Manager to focus on staff development and improving departmental efficiency.

