

## **LGLA Scenario**

### **CAO (Chris) Challenging Communicator**

Rick Brown, who has done three different developments in the District, applies to rezone one large single-family lot into two smaller lots in a well-established neighbourhood. This request is consistent with the District's Official Community Plan. Council has also directed staff to improve processing time on simple applications.

With this in mind, Amanda, a young and new area planner, quickly processes the application so that she can get the rezoning report on the next Council agenda. As part of the off-site services, she negotiates with Mr. Brown, the developer, that the District will build new sidewalks along the property's frontage which is consistent with Council's Healthy Build Community and pedestrian safety policies in the OCP.

Mr. Brown's site plans did not show that there are several large mature trees where the sidewalk is planned. Right after the Rezoning Bylaw receives three readings of Council, the neighbours call Amanda and advise her that they do not want the trees removed and that they will stand in the way of any bulldozer. Amanda is in a difficult situation because, although the OCP policies support the rezoning and the construction of sidewalks, she also recognizes that this would lead to the removal of mature trees. Further, the application is well along in the process and the retention of the trees was not negotiated in the off-site services.

Rick Brown does not want to meander the sidewalk around the trees because it will cause time delays and cost more because underground services will need to be relocated. He is a seasoned developer and knows that the District is between a rock and a hard place on this one. One of his staff already got in a shouting match with a neighbour over the trees. The neighbour is getting ready to go to the media over the mismanagement of the development application.

#### **Challenging Communicator's preparation (CAO Chris):**

As CAO, you'd just like to manage the Planning staff without the Mayor's influence. Of course, Rick Brown has profile in the community and is good at getting the ear of the Mayor and members of Council. The Mayor has asked to meet with you. You are anticipating he will come through your office door angry. This is going to be a difficult conversation and you are not the best at finding common ground. In fact, you can be defensive which is what these "confrontations" below demonstrate.

#### **Confrontation #1:**

"The developer, Rick Brown, knew how short staffed we were in the Planning Department and that the planner, Amanda, was new. He always takes advantage whenever he can."

#### **Confrontation #2:**

"Even with the shortage of staff in the Planning Department, you of all people should know we have worked hard to improve the processing time on simple applications. At first glance, it looked like a simple application. Amanda made a professional judgment to support the OCP policies and was unaware of the trees. Rick is holding our feet to the fire because he can!"

#### **Confrontation #3:**

"Just so you know, I won't be throwing Amanda or anyone in the Planning Department under the bus for this situation. That's not going to happen. In a perfect world, maybe she should have walked the site but we are past that now."

#### **Confrontation #4:**

"This will be the fourth development that Rick Brown has done in our municipality and he always seems to find a way to call us out on something and nickel and dime his way through the process. I'm fed up with it."

#### **Confrontation #5:**

"I'm surprised you are not more concerned about how upset the neighbours are. This is an election year!"

#### **Confrontation #6:**

"All municipalities have an emotional attachment to mature trees. We don't take cutting them down lightly."