



## Red tape holding back building boom

By Tim Miller, The Intelligencer

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Tim Miller/The Intelligencer Quinte West Mayor Jim Harrison speaks to reporters following a council meeting Monday in Quinte West.

QUINTE WEST - Council has agreed to support the Ontario Good Roads Association in its efforts to speed up environmental assessments.

“What we’re asking is, the quicker that we can get it done, the quicker we can get on with the development or the build, whatever it is,” said Mayor Jim Harrison at Monday night’s council meeting. Harrison said environmental assessments can go from simple to very involved and, even once the assessment is complete, there are still decisions on how to handle anything the assessment might have revealed.

“Anything we can reduce it by will be a plus,” he said. “Red tape is a big issue, still is.”

Harrison said the issue is especially important now as building is in a boom phase and anything that allows them to speed the process up is important.

A report provided to council shows that impact studies and public meetings required by the current process often take two years or more to complete before construction can commence.

It also showed analysis by the **Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO)** has demonstrated that the time to complete an assessment rose from 19 months to 26.7 months and costs went from an average of \$113,300 to \$386,500.

The purchase of some new equipment for the Quinte West Fire Department was also a topic of discussion at Monday's meeting. The equipment included a new side-by-side All Terrain Vehicle for Station 3 in Bayside, extrication equipment and a new Pierce Pumper truck for Station 1.

The new truck is priced at approximately \$456,000 plus HST — which is under the budgeted amount of \$500,000.

Deputy Fire Chief Dan Smith said the dollar value on the proposed pumper is a little higher than previous purchases due to its cab-over design.

Smith said that type of design is critical to responding to calls in Trenton.

"It allows us to manoeuvre around the tighter streets," he explained. "As more and more subdivisions are built, as cul-de-sacs are designed, it is very difficult for our apparatus to make the turns."

Smith said in many areas they currently have to make three, four or five-point turns just to navigate some corners.

"This design allows for a much greater turn radius."

The extrication equipment, more commonly known as 'the jaws of life', would be at a cost of \$29,485 plus HST.

The battery-operated portable cutter and spreader is used to open up a vehicle to rescue people who are trapped.

Smith said they have been working on purchasing a new set each year until all seven Quinte West fire stations are equipped with one. This purchase would bring the total owned to six.

The ATV — a Can-Am Defender — has a price tag of \$15,900.

"With the side-by-side unit it allows us to go off road in the Bayside area," said Smith, adding it will allow them to reach and remove individuals out of the woods and quarry areas where trucks are unable to get to.