

General Service Overview

Department Name: Planning Services

General Overview

The planning department is committed to delivering timely and effective service that respects the character and values of the community, while helping advance strategic development goals and priorities of the Town. The department seeks to ensure staff recommendations and development outcomes align with planning policy direction, while maintaining a reasonable approach to the planning process. The planning department manages land use and development inquiries from public and private stakeholders, as well as *Planning Act* applications from pre-consultation and application intake through to a decision for an application. Planning applications must be processed in accordance with statutory timelines outlined through the *Planning Act*, and the department consistently must balance competing priorities within tight timeframes.

In addition, the department supports the building department through completing zoning compliance reviews for permit applications received, and economic development efforts of the Town to help attract and retain new businesses and development. The planning department also liaises with local agencies and conservation authorities, to coordinate and achieve broader development and planning outcomes. The planning department is also tasked with managing and coordinating mandatory updates to planning policy documents, such as the Official Plan, as well as managing and enforcing the Town's Zoning By-Law.

Overview Service Type

The department provides a range of essential municipal services that are largely mandated by provincial and federal legislation, ensuring compliance with strict standards for public health and environmental protection. While these services are legislatively required, they are also carefully designed to meet the evolving needs of our residents. A primary function of the department is to ensure land-use compatibility concerns are mitigated while supporting development in the municipality that respects the community character and sense of place. Some service level adjustments may be considered, provided they continue to respect all applicable legislative requirements.

Funding Sources

- General tax levy
- Application fees

Total Resource Levels

Employee Type	Job Title	Notes
(2.125) FTE Administration	- Director of Development Services (1) - Planning Coordinator (1) - Administrative Assistant (0.125)	Management & non-union positions

Authorities

- Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
- Environment Canada
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Ministry of Transportation
- Conservation Ontario

Main Legislation, Bylaws and Policies

- Planning Act
- Ontario Heritage Act
- Environmental Protection Act
- Ontario Water Resources Act
- Nutrient Management Act
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Municipal By-laws: Zoning By-law 02-22, Fees & Charges

Service Descriptions

Planning Act Application Facilitation:

The department is responsible for managing as aspects of *Planning Act* applications, which can be broken into the following steps.

Pre-consultation

While no longer a mandatory requirement, staff encourage and facilitate pre-consultation meetings, both in-person and virtually, with proponents upon request. Meetings are requested to be supported by a conceptual plan, as well as a description of the proposal. The meetings may be held solely with planning staff and the proponent but may also include coordination with other Town departments and external agencies, which is undertaken by staff at no cost to the proponent. The value-add intended for this service provision is to provide proponents with the list of materials required to deem an application complete, and direction for a proposal to help encourage good development outcomes are achieved.

Staff aim to facilitate a pre-consultation meeting within 5-7 business days of receiving a request and supporting materials, though timing may be subject to availability of external agencies.

Application intake

Staff are tasked with receiving and processing application submissions, both in digital and hard copy format, depending on proponent preference. Staff must ensure appropriate payment is received, check that all required supporting materials have been provided, and create and populate a digital file. Staff also commission applications upon request at no additional cost to the applicant.

Deeming Application Complete and Agency Circulation

Once an application submission is received and fees provided, staff have 30-days to review and deem an application complete. Applicants are to be notified within 30-days if the application is deemed complete, or if additional information and materials are required. Provided an application is deemed complete, staff must circulate the application and materials to internal departments and external agencies for technical review.

Technical Circulation

Staff must coordinate all comments provided from internal departments and external agencies back to applicants for response in an organized and timely manner. The level of effort required for technical circulation varies from application to application depending on the complexity and scale of the proposal. Most site plan control and plan of subdivision applications result in three rounds of technical circulation, while more minor applications typically take 1-2 rounds of technical circulation.

Staff work with internal departments, various agencies, and applicants to have technical comments appropriately addressed prior to scheduling a public meeting or executing a site plan agreement.

Public Notice

Staff prepare notices of public meeting which are mailed to residents within 60 or 120 metres of the subject lands of an application, depending on application type, in accordance with the *Planning Act*. Public notices are also posted on the subject property in addition to the mail-out notices, which is facilitated by staff and requires creating the sign, traveling to the site, and fixing into the ground on a post in a location visible to the road right-of-way. While not a requirement, staff also prepare meeting agendas for posting on the website.

Public notice must be made in accordance with the statutory requirements outlined in the *Planning Act* as follows:

- Minor Variance: 10 days prior to a decision being made for an application
- Severance: 14-days prior to a decision being made for an application
- Zoning By-law Amendment: 20 days prior to a decision being made for an application
- Official Plan Amendment: 20 days prior to a decision being made for an application

Public Meeting

Staff prepare and provide presentations at statutory public meetings. As part of the public meeting process, staff must respond to questions and comments received from residents which require formal responses, and all communications received must be formally filed as part of the public record for an application. Staff work to circulate comments and responses to Council for all applications, and provide presentation materials in advance of public meetings to support the decision-making process.

Depending on the level of interest for a given application, staff may require a public open house in advance of a statutory public meeting. This requires additional coordination efforts by staff, as well as attendance at an additional meeting.

Staff Report

Staff prepare a report which reviews the applicable policy and regulatory framework, site context, and the merits of the application. Reports vary in scope depending on the complexity and scale of the development proposal. Larger applications were historically supported by planning consultants working on the Town's behalf but are now transitioning to be managed in house, where possible based on staffing resources and workloads. Staff reports serve to provide a recommendation to Council for consideration.

Notice of Decision

Staff prepare notices of decision for applications once a decision is made by the Committee of Adjustment or Council. Staff circulate the notice to the applicant or agent, and any interested party that request a copy. Staff seek to provide notices of decision within 2-business days from the date a decision is made for an application and continue to monitor decisions over the statutory 20-day appeal period.

Notice of No Appeals/Appeal

Provided no appeals are received, Staff prepare a notice of no appeals and issue to the applicant, which serves to confirm that the decision made is in force and effect. The notice is prepared and issued within 1-business day of the appeal period ending.

Appeals

In the event an appeal is received for an application, staff must prepare a formal appeal package to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) in accordance with their requirements and those outlined through the *Planning Act*. Preparing an appeal package typically requires a staff member to dedicate 5-7 business days, exclusive of all other duties, to prepare the record and complete the filing with the OLT within the mandatory timeline.

Facilitating an appeal requires preparation and attendance for a series of formal meetings and can include attendance at a hearing which can be multi-day proceedings.

Hearings require significant preparation, and they typically require a minimum of 10-15 business days, exclusive of all other duties, and are required should mediation between the Town and appellant not result in a settlement.

Special Projects and Assignments:

Staff may be requested to prepare reports to Council to address matters of interest as brought to the attention of the Town by residents or agencies, or as observed by Council. Staff reports can involve varying levels of effort and research depending on the subject matter but typically require 10-20 business days to prepare. Research efforts often require inter-departmental coordination, as well as investigation on specific topics and available qualitative and quantitative data sets.

Facilitating Technical Studies and Policy Document Updates:

Staff may be tasked with facilitating the completion of technical studies, such as an updated Official Plan or Zoning By-law, which includes completing the following:

- Reviewing requirements of a study or plan
- Supporting the Town RFP process, as required
- Engaging with approved consultants retained by the Town
- Reviewing draft materials and providing updates to their reporting manager, Senior Leadership Team and / or Council
- Attending public information sessions or meetings, as required
- Addressing public and agency comments

Depending on the nature of the technical study or policy document to be prepared, staff may be required to dedicate a minimum of 10-15 business days to support a project. For more intensive projects, such as an Official Plan update, staff may be required to dedicated more than 20-business days over the course of the project.

Zoning Information Request:

Staff receive requests for zoning information through the website and informally through a call, email, or front counter inquiry. Once a request is received, staff complete the following steps:

- Reviewing legal description
- Undertaking a site analysis
- Reviewing the in-effect zoning and related provisions against the request for information
- Preparing a written response to the inquiry
- Providing follow up via phone or email for additional questions, comments, or requests for clarification received

Zoning information requests often involving supporting new or expanding business inquiries and providing non-planning specific support to encourage economic development in the community. Staff work to respond to inquiries within 5-business days.

Zoning Compliance Letter:

Staff receive requests for a zoning compliance letter through the website with a payment for the service, and addresses these requests includes completing the following:

- Reviewing legal description
- Undertaking a site analysis
- Review property records and historical development information
- Reviewing the in-effect zoning and related provisions

- Preparing a formal written letter to respond to the request

Staff work to prepare and issue letters within 5-10 business days and remain available for follow up via phone or email for additional questions, comments, or requests for clarification received.

Planning Department Service Level Listing

Service Provided	Service Level	Service Description	Service Standard	Resources Allocated
Planning Act Application Facilitation				
Pre-Consultation	Discretionary	Meet in-person or virtually at the request of a resident or agent to review a development proposal and provide direction for the requirements of a complete application.	Within 10 days of request	2 FTE, Technical Consultants (where required depending on complexity)
Application Intake	Legislated O. Reg 197/96 O. Reg 200/96 O. Reg 545/06 O. Reg 543/06 Section 41 of the <i>Planning Act</i>	Receive application submissions, digitally and hard copy depending on proponent preference, process payment, create digital file, populate digital file folder, circulate to appropriate staff member for formal review. Staff also commission applications at no additional cost to the applicant.	Within 10 business days	2 FTE
Deeming Application Complete and Agency Circulation	Legislated O. Reg 197/96 O. Reg 200/96	Following review to confirm all information and required supporting materials have been received, staff deem an application complete and	Within 15 business days	2 FTE

	<p>O. Reg 545/06</p> <p>O. Reg 543/06</p> <p>Section 41 of the <i>Planning Act</i></p>	<p>circulate materials to internal departments and external commenting agencies.</p> <p>Once applications and payment are received, applications must be deemed complete or incomplete within 30-days.</p>		
Technical Circulation	<p>Legislated</p> <p>O. Reg 197/96</p> <p>O. Reg 200/96</p> <p>O. Reg 545/06</p> <p>O. Reg 543/06</p> <p>Section 41 of the <i>Planning Act</i></p>	<p>Coordinate comments provided from internal departments and external agencies to applicants for response in an organized and timely manner.</p> <p>Once an application is deemed complete, there are statutory timelines to have a decision made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land Severance: 90 Days - Zoning By-law Amendment: 90 days - Official Plan Amendment: 120 days - Site Plan Control: 60 days <p>Staff work with departments, agencies, and applicants to have technical comments</p>	<p>Within 21-days of application being deemed complete to receive technical comments for departments and agencies</p> <p>(Files typically have two to three rounds of technical circulation)</p>	<p>1 FTE (planning-specific), Various additional technical Town Staff, Technical Consultants</p>

		appropriately addressed prior to scheduling a public meeting or executing a site plan agreement.		
Public Notice	<p>Legislated</p> <p>O. Reg 197/96</p> <p>O. Reg 200/96</p> <p>O. Reg 545/06</p> <p>O. Reg 543/06</p>	<p>Staff prepare notices of public meeting which are mailed to residents within 60 or 120 metres of the subject lands of an application.</p> <p>Notices are posted on the subject property in addition to the mail-out notices.</p> <p>Consolidated meeting agendas are prepared and posted on the website.</p> <p>Statutory notice periods vary between application type as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minor Variance: 10 days - Severance: 14-days - Zoning By-law Amendment: 20 days - Official Plan Amendment: 20 days 	<p>Minor Variance and Severance Applications – 14 days of notice to the Public</p> <p>Zoning By-law and Official Plan Amendment– 20 days of notice to the Public</p>	<p>2 FTE, 1 Light Fleet, Equipment and Supplies</p>

Public Meeting	<p>Legislated</p> <p>O. Reg 197/96</p> <p>O. Reg 200/96</p> <p>O. Reg 545/06</p> <p>O. Reg 543/06</p>	<p>Staff prepare and provide presentations at statutory public meetings.</p> <p>Public notices can result in questions and comments received from residents which require formal responses, and communications are filed as part of the public record for an application.</p> <p>Depending on the level of interest for a given application, staff may require a public open house in advance of a statutory public meeting. This requires additional coordination efforts by staff, as well as attendance at an additional meeting.</p>	Maintain legislative compliance to ensure the public is informed of application intent through appropriate public meeting proceedings	1 FTE (planning-specific), Council Chambers
Staff Report	Discretionary	Staff prepare a report which reviews the applicable policy and regulatory framework, site context, and the merits of the application.	7-days prior to a public meeting	2 FTE Technical Consultants (where required depending on complexity), software and supplies
Notice of Decision	Legislated	Staff prepare notices of decision for applications once	Maintain legislative compliance	1 FTE

	<p>O. Reg 197/96</p> <p>O. Reg 200/96</p> <p>O. Reg 545/06</p> <p>O. Reg 543/06</p>	<p>a decision is made by the Committee of Adjustment or Council.</p> <p>Staff circulate the notice to the applicant or agent, and any interested party that request a copy.</p> <p>Staff monitor the decision over the statutory 20-day appeal period.</p>		
Notice of No Appeals/Appeal	<p>Legislated</p> <p>O. Reg 197/96</p> <p>O. Reg 200/96</p> <p>O. Reg 545/06</p> <p>O. Reg 543/06</p>	<p>Provided no appeals are received, Staff prepare a notice of no appeals and issue to the applicant, which serves to confirm that the decision made is in force and effect.</p>	Maintain legislative compliance	1 FTE
Appeals	<p>Legislated</p> <p>O. Reg 197/96</p> <p>O. Reg 200/96</p> <p>O. Reg 545/06</p> <p>O. Reg 543/06</p>	<p>In the event an appeal is received for an application, staff must prepare a formal appeal package to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) in accordance with their requirements and those outlined through the Planning Act.</p>	Maintain legislative compliance	2-3 FTE, Municipal Legal Support

		<p>Preparing an appeal package typically requires a staff member to dedicate 5-7 business days, exclusive, to prepare the record and complete the filing with OLT within the mandatory timeline. Facilitating an appeal requires preparation and attendance for a series of formal meetings and can include attendance at a hearing which can be multi-day proceedings.</p> <p>Hearings require significant preparation, and they typically require 10-15 business days, exclusive, and are required should mediation between the Town and appellant not result in a settlement.</p>		
Special Projects and Assignments				

<p>Various Special Assignments</p>	<p>Essential</p> <p>Response to Council requests</p> <p>Discretionary</p> <p>Assignment of work and response time</p>	<p>Staff prepare reports to Council to address matters of interest as brought to the attention of the Town by residents or agencies, or as observed by Council.</p> <p>Staff reports can involve varying levels of effort and research depending on the subject matter. Research efforts often require inter-departmental coordination, as well as investigation on specific topics and available qualitative and quantitative data sets.</p>	<p>Within 10-20 business days (min.)</p>	<p>1-2 FTE</p>
<p>Facilitate Technical Studies</p>	<p>Essential</p> <p>Completion of Council-directed work</p> <p>Discretionary</p> <p>Assignment of work and response timing</p>	<p>Staff may be tasked with facilitating the completion of technical studies, such as a Parking Study or Zoning By-law update, which includes completing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewing requirements of a study or plan - Supporting the Town RFP process, as required 	<p>Within 10-15 business days (min.)</p>	<p>1-2 FTE, Technical Consultants</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging with approved consultants retained by the Town - Reviewing draft materials and providing updates to their reporting manager, Senior Leadership Team and / or Council - Attending public information sessions or meetings, as required - Addressing public and agency comments 		
Zoning Information Request and Zoning Compliance Letter				
Prepare response to zoning information request	Essential Fee Set through Fees & Charges By-Law for providing the service	Staff will review a request for information received, either through the website or informally through a call, email, or front counter inquiry, which includes completing the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewing legal description - Undertaking a site analysis - Reviewing the in-effect zoning and related provisions against the request for information 	Within 5-business days of receipt of request	1-2 FTE

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparing a written response to the inquiry - Providing follow up via phone or email for additional questions, comments, or requests for clarification received <p>Zoning information requests often involving supporting new or expanding business inquiries and providing non-planning specific support to encourage economic development in the community.</p>		
Prepare a zoning compliance letter	<p>Essential</p> <p>Fee Set through Fees & Charges By-Law for providing the service</p>	<p>Staff will review a request for a zoning compliance letter received through the website with a payment for the service, which includes completing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewing legal description - Undertaking a site analysis - Reviewing the in-effect zoning and related provisions 	Within 5-10 business days	1-2 FTE

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparing a formal written letter to respond to the request <p>Staff remain available for follow up via phone or email for additional questions, comments, or requests for clarification received.</p>		
Front Counter and General Inquiries				
Property and Development Inquiries	Discretionary	Staff assist residents and agents with inquiries about active developments, application details, and other zoning and planning related matters for properties in the Town.	As required (phone, e-mail, counter). Response times within 2-5 business days depending on complexity	1-2 FTE
Record Retrieval	Discretionary	Staff respond to requests for records for select properties, including obtaining copies of site plans, and available plans.	Within 5-7 business days	1 FTE
Access E11 Case Management				
Process Complaint	Essential	Staff create a digital file to help tracking across applications and formally open a case.	Within 2-business days of receipt	1 FTE (admin)
Assign Staff to Case	Essential	Staff are assigned to cases by the Director of Development Services, or General Manager of Growth and Infrastructure.	Within 2-business days of receipt	1 FTE (manager)
Resident Engagement	Essential	Assigned staff reach out to resident to confirm receipt of	Within 2-3 business days of receipt	1 FTE (inspector)

		compliant, and of next steps for the file.		
Investigate Complaint	Essential	<p>Staff will complete a site visit and undertake investigation of the compliant received.</p> <p>This may lead to requests to a property owner to amend a situation within a set timeline to be compliant with property standards and zoning provisions.</p>	Within 3-5 business days of receipt	1 FTE (inspector)
Resolve and Close Case	Essential	<p>Staff will complete an assessment of the situation after the deadline date provided to a property owner, or once advised that the matter has been addressed. If the matter has been appropriately addressed, the resident that issued the compliant will be notified and the case will be closed.</p> <p>Should the matter not be resolved to Town standards, a violation may be issued.</p>	Within 4 weeks of receipt	1-2 FTE (inspector and manager)
Resolve Violations and Challenging Cases	Essential	Select cases can present unique conditions which require additional staff effort and support, and which make	Within 12-52 weeks of receipt	2-5 FTE (depending on level of complexity)

		<p>resolving cases in a timely manner challenging.</p> <p>Items that can create extended timelines to resolve cases include absentee owners, matters involving several owners or properties, and matters which fringe upon civil disputes between property owners and residents.</p> <p>Cases involving broader community matters, such as traffic in a given area, or a type of land use or development in the community, also create extended timelines and often result in staff receiving several related case assignments.</p>		
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