

Development Review Timeline Metrics - Q1 2024

Date: January 4, 2024

To: Planning and Housing Committee

From: Deputy City Manager, Development and Growth Services

Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report responds to Planning and Housing Committee's direction requesting staff report development review timeline metrics to Planning and Housing Committee on a quarterly basis ([2023.PH6.2](#)). Quarterly reports will include the following:

- a. Average timeline to complete the Pre-Application Consultation Process;
- b. Average timeline to reach a decision on a Zoning By-law Application;
- c. Average timeline to reach a decision on a combined Official Plan Amendment/Zoning By-law Application; and
- d. Average timeline to approve a Site Plan Application.

In addition to a description of the metrics listed above, the report provides context on how ongoing improvements to the development review process impact application review timelines in the medium to long term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Deputy City Manager, Development and Growth Services recommends that:

1. Planning and Housing Committee request the Deputy City Manager, Development and Growth Services, incorporate all future development review timeline metrics reporting into a consolidated development and housing dashboard.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report; however, as addressed in a previous related report, ([2022.EX1.4](#)), Bill 109 presents significant risk to the City's cost recovery model of development review services. This includes the City's ability to retain revenue generated through the processing of development applications.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact section.

DECISION HISTORY

On December 13, 2023, City Council adopted the report "Implementing Bill 109 - 2023 Annual Update" outlining the implementation efforts of staff in responding to Bill 109 and plans for further policy and program updates in 2024.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.PH8.7>

On October 11, 2023, City Council directed the Deputy City Manager, Development and Growth Services, to report to the Planning and Housing Committee on a quarterly basis beginning in the first quarter of 2024 with available metrics related to changes in development application review timelines as a result of continuous improvements to city processes, including:

- a. average timeline to complete the Pre-Application Consultation Process;
- b. average timeline to reach a decision on a Zoning By-law Application;
- c. average timeline to reach a decision on an Official Plan Amendment/Zoning By-law Application; and
- d. average timeline to achieve an approved Site Plan Application.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.PH6.2>

On July 19, 2023, City Council adopted the report "Bill 109 Implementation, Phase 2 - Recommended Official Plan and Municipal Code Amendments respecting Delegated Authority for Minor Zoning By-laws," to establish new policy tools that enable the City to better address recent changes to Zoning By-law Amendment decision-making timelines in the Planning Act under Bill 109.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.PH5.1>

On March 29, 2023, City Council adopted the report "Bill 109 Implementation, Phase 1 - Recommended Official Plan and Municipal Code Amendments," to implement complete application provisions for Site Plan Control applications.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.PH2.1>

On December 15, 2022, City Council adopted, as amended, the report "Implementing Bill 109 - The More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022," from the Interim Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure and Development Services regarding the City's approach to addressing the impacts of the legislation. City Council directed the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to report back to Planning and Housing Committee with recommended Official Plan and Municipal Code amendments.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EX1.4>

On December 14, 2021, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 550 and related Municipal Code amendments to require a pre-application consultation (PAC) meeting between City staff and applicants as a prerequisite to the submission of a development application. The requirement applies to Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, Plan of Subdivision and/or Site Plan Control.

COMMENTS

Background

Continuous efforts to improve development review timelines are ongoing. The recommendation to transition to a new operating model was approved by Council in September 2019 through the End-to-End Review of the Development Review Process Report ([2019.PH8.7](#)). Implementation of the new operating model has been ongoing since March 2020 through the Concept 2 Keys (C2K) program. The new operating model includes organizational structure changes, process improvements and technology upgrades required to ensure optimal functioning of the model as the City responds to existing and evolving legislative changes.

To continue to advance these operating model improvements, in June 2023 the City established Development and Growth Services (DGS), and a new Deputy City Manager ([2023.CC7.2](#)) to lead these changes. The establishment of DGS will accelerate the implementation of the new operating model. Over time, ongoing organizational, policy, process and technology improvements will support improved performance.

Implementing Process Improvements

The City has taken a phased approach to implement process improvements that respond to Bill 109. Several policy improvements have been implemented to date:

Mandatory Pre-Application Consultation: City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 550 and related Municipal Code amendments to require a pre-application consultation (PAC) meeting between City staff and applicants as a prerequisite to the submission of a development application. The requirement applies to Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, Plan of Subdivision and/or Site Plan Control applications ([2022.PH30.1](#)). The mandatory pre-application consultation by-law came into effect on April 3, 2023.

Delegated Authority for Minor Zoning By-Laws: Official Plan Amendment 660 identified three types of minor zoning by-laws, including removal of a Holding ("H") Symbol, that may be delegated to the Chief Planner to reduce review and decision-making timelines ([2023.PH5.1](#)).

Site Plan Approvals: Legislative conformity updates to Municipal Code Chapter 415 clarify delegated authority for Site Plan Control approval to the Chief Planner or their designate and broaden the list of development types that are exempt from Site Plan Control ([2023.PH2.1](#)).

Additional information regarding development review process and policy improvements can be found in the Bill 109 Implementation - 2023 Annual Update ([2023.PH8.7](#)).

Metrics Overview

Attachment 1 to this report includes four development review timeline metrics:

- Average timeline to complete the Pre-Application Consultation Process: This metric measures the average number of business days, from the time an applicant requests a PAC meeting to the time the City issues a Planning Application Checklist Package. Average timelines are presented on a monthly basis. The City's PAC process service standard is 40 business days. Longer than typical timelines in October and November 2023 reflect delayed scheduling of PAC meeting requests received over the summer months.
- Average timeline to reach a decision on a Zoning By-law Application and average timeline to reach a decision on a combined Official Plan Amendment/Zoning By-law Application: These metrics measure the average number of calendar days it takes for a complete application to reach a decision of Council. Average timelines are presented for both one-year (2023) and five-year (2019-2023) periods. In both cases, the one-year average timeline shows improvement over the five-year average, potentially reflecting operating model improvements.
- Average timeline to issue Notice of Approval Conditions (NOAC) for a Site Plan Control Application: This metric measures the average number of calendar days it takes to issue NOAC for a complete application. Average timelines are presented for both one-year (2023) and five-year (2019-2023) periods. In 2023, the one-year average timeline was slightly increased, potentially due to practice changes related to concurrent Site Plan applications.

The metrics presented in Attachment 1 will serve as a baseline for future reporting.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Development Review Timeline Metrics - Q1 2024