

Development Review Timeline Metrics - Q3 2024

Date: June 20, 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 [that](#) staff report development review timeline metrics to Planning and Housing Committee on a quarterly basis ([2023.PH6.2](#)). Quarterly reports 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.

In Q1 2024, the report ([2024.PH9.2](#)) included aggregate metrics for items b. through d., above. The Q2 2024 report ([2024.PH11.5](#)) broke these metrics out into two categories (non-Bill 109 and Bill 109 files) to highlight timeline management improvements for Bill 109 files.

On June 6, 2024, Bill 185: the *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act* received Royal Assent. Bill 185 removes application fee refund provisions introduced under Bill 109. However, legislated timelines for review of combined Official Plan Amendment/Zoning By-law Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control applications remain unchanged. The Q3 2024 report includes application timeline metrics up to June 3, 2024 and continues to distinguish between non-Bill 109 and Bill 109 files.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Planning and Housing Committee receive this report for information.

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 continues to present risk to the City's cost recovery model of development review services. Until recently, this included the City's ability to retain revenue generated through the processing of development applications.

On June 6, 2024, Bill 185, the *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act* received Royal Assent. Bill 185 removes application fee refund provisions introduced under Bill 109. Transition provisions included in Bill 185 continue to extend application fee refund eligibility for any applications deemed complete up to and including June 6, 2024. Bill 185 does not waive any application fee refund eligibility accrued under Bill 109, potentially resulting in ongoing financial impact to municipalities.

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 May 22, 2024, City Council adopted the report "City Comments on Proposed Bill 185 - *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024*, Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, and New Minister Zoning Order framework." Bill 185 removes application fee refunds and mandatory pre-application consultation from the *City of Toronto Act* and the *Planning Act*.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.PH12.7>

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>

COMMENTS

Background

Continuous improvement of the City's development review process is ongoing through Development & Growth Services (DGS) and recent establishment of the Development Review Division. Organizational structure change, process improvements and technology upgrades continue to roll out to ensure optimal functioning of the development review process as the City responds to existing and evolving legislative changes.

Metrics Overview

Attachment 1 to this report includes four development review timeline metrics, described below.

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 in two ways: One-year average and six-month average. The City's mandatory PAC process service standard is 40 business days. Of note:

- Q3 2024 metrics reflect reduced average timelines to complete the PAC process (both one-year and six-month) over Q2 2024. The six-month average timeline was 44 days.
- Bill 185 removes the ability for municipalities to require pre-application consultation. The City will continue to offer its structured PAC process on a voluntary basis. Staff anticipate the volume of meeting requests to remain steady, based on historical volumes prior to April 3, 2023 (when the City's mandatory PAC process came into effect).

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. They illustrate average timelines for applications that are subject to Bill 109 (i.e., applications with a submission date between July 1, 2023 and June 3, 2024). They also present one-year (2023-2024) and

five-year (2019-2024) average timelines for non-Bill 109 applications. These metrics show:

- Continued improvement in average timelines for Bill 109 applications over those reported in Q2 2024 and an average timeline for combined OPA/ZBA Bill 109 applications (115 days) that is less than the legislated timeline (120 days). In many cases, the legislated timeline has been achieved by applying a Holding Symbol ("H") to the zoning by-law. In a few cases, staff have recommended refusal of an application.
- Timeline fluctuations in the one-year and five-year average timelines potentially reflect "legacy" applications advancing to Council for decision. Closing even a small number of legacy applications in a given quarter can skew average timelines, particularly if those applications have been under review for multiple years.

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. It illustrates average timelines for applications that are subject to Bill 109 (i.e., applications with a submission date between July 1, 2023 and June 3, 2024). It also presents one-year (2023-2024) and five-year (2019-2024) average timelines for non-Bill 109 applications. This metric shows:

- Continued improvement in average timelines for Bill 109 applications over those reported in Q2 2024. However, under Bill 109, the City has generally refused Site Plan applications that cannot be approved within the 60-day legislated timeline where in-force zoning does not permit the development proposed in the Site Plan application. Approximately 63% of Site Plan applications that were deemed complete between July 1, 2023 and June 3, 2024 were refused.
- Timeline fluctuations in the one-year and five-year average timelines potentially reflect NOAC being issued for "legacy" applications, similar to combined OPA/ZBA and ZBA application types. Legacy Site Plan applications, particularly those that were processed concurrently with an OPA and/or ZBA application, have the longest average timelines of all non-Bill 109 application types. When NOAC is issued for even a small number of these applications in a given quarter, it can skew average timelines.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Development Review Timeline Metrics - Q3 2024