

## Development Review Timeline Metrics - Q1 2025

**Date:** March 27, 2025

**To:** Planning and Housing Committee

**From:** Deputy City Manager, Development and Growth Services

**Wards:** All

### SUMMARY

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This report responds to Planning and Housing Committee's direction for staff to report on development review timeline metrics to the 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.

Quarterly reports are also available for 2024: Q1 2024 ([2024.PH9.2](#)), Q2 2024 ([2024.PH11.5](#)), Q3 2024 ([2024.PH14.4](#)), and Q4 2024 ([2024.PH16.5](#)). Reporting has evolved to reflect ongoing legislative change and to improve data accuracy and interpretation, as detailed in the 'Comments' section of this report.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report. As addressed in a previous related report, ([2022.EX1.4](#)), Bill 109 previously presented significant risk to the City's cost recovery model of development review services.

On June 6, 2024, Bill 185, the *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act* received Royal Assent. Bill 185 removed application fee refund provisions introduced under Bill 109. 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

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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

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### Background

The City's development review service continues to navigate once-in-a-generation legislative change and transformation of its organizational structure. The Development Review Division was established with a mandate of expediting the review of all development applications to advance good city-building outcomes that help fulfil the City's commitment of getting more homes, notably affordable homes, built faster within complete communities.

The Development Review Division comprises a multi-disciplinary team of Community Planning, Engineering Review (Development Engineering and Transportation Review), the former C2K Program, and other business support staff. Ongoing process and technology improvements in 2025 will support the Division and its partners in providing an effective and timely review service.

### Metrics Overview

Attachment 1 to this report includes four development review timeline metrics, described below. Attachment 2 provides additional information about decision-making trends.

### Pre-Application Consultation

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:

- Bill 185 removed the ability for municipalities to require pre-application consultation by by-law. Despite legislative change, in 2024 the City continued to receive a high volume of PAC meeting requests (**467 requests**).
- Q1 2025 metrics reflect reduced average timelines to complete the PAC process (both one-year and six-month) over Q4 2024. The six-month average timeline is **41 days, compared to the one-year average of 43 days.**

### Standalone Zoning By-law Applications and Combined Official Plan Amendment/Zoning By-law Applications

In Q4 2024, the Development Review Division updated its approach to metrics reporting to provide a more accurate picture of the time to decision for files that were actively under review during two defined time periods:

- Applications submitted during the five-year period between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2023, and
- Applications submitted on or after July 1, 2023.

These metrics measure the average number of calendar days it takes for a complete application to reach a decision of Council. Highlights include:

- In 2024 and into Q1 2025, the average time to decision for combined OPA/ZBA applications (**127 days**) and standalone ZBA applications (**122 days**) submitted on or after July 1, 2023 are generally comparable, reflecting a similar level of effort for both application types.
- Attachment 2 shows the prevalence of Zoning By-law Amendment approvals with holding provisions applied in 2024. Holding provisions enable more timely approval of the Zoning By-law Amendment; however, a subsequent application process is required to remove holding provisions once conditions have been met. In collaboration with applicants, staff are currently assessing future process improvements to reduce the use of holding provisions and ultimately, get more shovels in the ground quicker.
- Time to decision for applications received prior to Bill 109 (i.e., prior to July 1, 2023) remains just under two years on average. Backlog management will be a focus in 2025 to ensure these applications receive a decision in a timely manner.

## Site Plan Applications

As noted above, this metric has been updated to report on two simplified categories of applications:

- Applications submitted during the five-year period between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2023, and
- Applications submitted on or after July 1, 2023.

This metric measures the average number of calendar days it takes to issue the first decision (e.g., Notice of Approval Conditions (NOAC), refusal) for a complete Site Plan application. In Q1 2025, this metric shows:

- Average time to decision for Site Plan applications has increased since Q4 2024 to **120 days**. At the same time, as illustrated in Attachment 2, the rate of refusal for Site Plan applications has decreased to **55%**. Since 2023, the City has generally refused Site Plan applications that cannot be approved within 60 days where in-force zoning does not permit the development proposed in the Site Plan application. However, in Q1 2025, this metric indicates that some flexibility on the timeline supports an approval instead of a refusal, which helps projects advance quicker to the building permit stage and ultimately, start construction sooner.

## CONTACT

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## SIGNATURE

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## ATTACHMENTS

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**Attachment 1:** Development Review Timeline Metrics - Q1 2025

**Attachment 2:** Decision Trends - Site Plan & Zoning By-law