

NOTICE OF MOTION

Improving the Development Review Process for Faster Housing Delivery

Moved by: **Councillor Matlow**

Seconded by: **Councillor**

SUMMARY:

Toronto is in a housing crisis. The City has committed to a target of 285,000 new homes by 2031 and must deliver the municipal services that support housing approvals in a timely, predictable and accountable manner. This is especially true for affordable housing, where delays add costs that non-profit builders cannot absorb, and for the parks, community facilities and other public benefits that developments deliver alongside new homes.

Significant progress has been made speeding up approvals in recent years. In April 2024, the City launched the Development Review Division, consolidating approximately 400 staff from across the organization into a single division with a clear mandate. As reported in [EX25.2](#), statutory review timelines for complex applications improved by over 80 percent compared to the previous five-year average. The Division has adopted published Customer Service Standards with target timelines for each application type, launched the File Circulation Tool in March 2025 to modernize how staff conduct reviews, and reports quarterly to the Planning and Housing Committee on development review timelines. The changes that were made clearly delivered improved accountability structures and streamlined processes.

However, fundamental challenges remain in parts of the development process that fall outside the Development Review Division but play a critical role in housing delivery. Staff in Corporate Real Estate Management, Legal Services, Transportation Services, Toronto Water, Parks and Recreation, City Planning, and other divisions can significantly impact timelines. These divisions sit across multiple service areas and their development-related functions are often not covered by service standards or fully defined inter-departmental processes.

There are many examples. The acquisition or conveyance of public laneways (see [MM40.42](#)), the negotiation and execution of tieback and crane swing agreements, road occupancy approvals, servicing reviews, and construction staging on lands designated for future parks all require coordination across divisions. Too often, applicants are often left without answers from City staff, facing carrying costs and financing uncertainty that delay or jeopardize the delivery of housing.

The Development Review Division's own Customer Service Standards acknowledge this gap by committing the Division to work with its divisional partners across the City administration to strengthen internal alignment with its service commitments. Critically,

these divisions sit outside the control of Development Review and solving these challenges requires a corporate-wide focus.

Timelines can also be highly dependent on applicant-side factors, specifically the quality and timing of submitted materials, compliance with applicable policies and legislation, and clear communication.

This motion does not prescribe organizational restructuring, nor does it suggest that further restructuring is necessarily appropriate. Rather, it requests that the City Manager consult with industry partners to identify ways to improve coordination across the range of service areas involved in the development process, and to offer standardized solutions to issues concerning the acquisition or conveyance of public laneways, the negotiation and execution of tieback and crane swing agreements, road occupancy approvals, servicing reviews, and construction staging on lands designated for future parks, which are aligned with the Development Review Division's mandate.

RECCOMENDATIONS

1. City Council Direct the Deputy City Manager, Development and Growth Services and the Deputy City Managers responsible for relevant service areas to engage and meet with relevant internal and external stakeholders to identify current processes and practices which impact the timely delivery and cost of housing, and develop standardized solutions to the identified issues, including proposed processes and service standards to address acquisition or conveyance of public laneways, the negotiation and execution of tieback and crane swing agreements, road occupancy approvals, servicing reviews, and construction staging on lands designated for future parks, among others.
2. City Council the Deputy City Manager, Development and Growth Services, and the Deputy City Managers responsible for relevant service areas, to report through Planning and Housing Committee in the second quarter of 2027 on the work completed further to Recommendation 1.