

The Planning Act requires the City to hold Public Meetings when considering applications for amendments to the Official Plan or Zoning Bylaws and Plans of Subdivision, as well as for City-initiated Official Plan or Zoning Bylaw amendments. The responsibility for Public Meetings has been assigned to the City's four Community Councils and, where there is city-wide significance, to the Planning and Growth Management Committee. The purpose of the Public Meeting is to consider the staff report and provide a public forum for debate on the merits of the application. Applicants have the opportunity to present their proposal, the public can write in or attend to make their views known and Community Council has the ability to evaluate the application.

Staff and the local Councillor may also decide to host a community consultation meeting, which is not required under the Planning Act. This gives the City Planning staff, the Councillor and the local community an opportunity to go over a planning proposal with the applicant and ask questions in a less formal setting.

City Council has also appointed a Committee of Adjustment consisting of citizen member panels who regularly hold public hearings in each of the Community Council areas. These panels consider applications for minor variances and consents.

## For more information

You are encouraged to find out about planning applications, proposals, and policies by:

- participating in meetings, public forums and consultations
- making deputations at City committee meetings
- talking to your neighbours
- contacting your City Councillor
- contacting City planners with your questions, concerns, and ideas
- visiting the City Planning website – [toronto.ca/planning](http://toronto.ca/planning) – to learn more about active projects, read reports and policies, and learn more about the role of the Planner.

## 311 Toronto

311 is the public information and referral service for the City of Toronto, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Staff will help you with information about services and programs and how to contact your City Councillor. Service is available on line at [toronto.ca/311](http://toronto.ca/311).

- Phone within Toronto city limits: 311
- Phone outside city limits: 416-392-CITY (2489)
- TTY customers: 416-338-0TTY (0889)
- Email: [311@toronto.ca](mailto:311@toronto.ca)
- Fax: 416-338-0685

This brochure is just one in a series on the City of Toronto. You can find the rest of the series online and downloadable on the City's website at [toronto.ca/civic-engagement/learning-material](http://toronto.ca/civic-engagement/learning-material)

**toronto.ca**

# PLANNING

Your guide to...



**Toronto's City Planning Division manages growth and guides the evolving physical form of the city.**



City Planning works with the community and other City divisions to set goals and policies for responsible development. Planning staff gather public input, work with local organisations and groups, study issues, process development applications, and create plans and policies that protect and improve our urban environment. They provide support and advice to City Council to help ensure orderly growth and the kind of communities, neighbourhoods and city we want.



## The Planning Process

Depending on the type of application there are different approval processes. For Official Plan and/or Zoning Bylaw amendment applications the City follows the process below.



Planning in Ontario is governed by the Planning Act and the City of Toronto Act, 2006. The Planning Act requires each municipality to have an Official Plan, outlines the approval processes for land development and the minimum requirements for public consultation, and sets out appeal rights to the Ontario Municipal Board. The Province also issues Policy Statements which provide planning direction on issues such as the environment, the economy and housing. All of the City’s planning decisions must be “consistent with” the Provincial Policy Statements and must also “conform” to the Province’s *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*.

The City Planning Division is organized into four districts – Etobicoke York, North York, Toronto & East York, and Scarborough. Work is done by staff with a focus in Community Planning; Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis; Urban Design; Transportation Planning; and Zoning Bylaw & Environmental Planning

## Community Planning

- Offers advice to Council on development applications after consulting with members of the public and City divisions, and after reviewing and analyzing all parts of a development project

## Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis

- Develops planning policy based on extensive research in land use, housing, employment, community services and the environment

## Urban Design

- Promotes quality design for our streets, parks and open spaces
- Guides how buildings are located, organized and shaped
- Administers and promotes heritage preservation

## Transportation Planning

- Responsible for transportation planning initiatives, travel demand forecasting, and leading district transportation studies, including Environmental Assessment work and developing implementation strategies

## Zoning Bylaw & Environmental Planning

- Responsible for developing and maintaining a comprehensive Zoning Bylaw for the City and reporting on city-wide zoning issues. This section also formulates and implements environmental policy from the perspective of the City Planning Division mandate

The City’s Official Plan, a legal document approved by City Council and prepared in consultation with City residents, is a blueprint for how the City will grow over the coming decades. It describes the location for new housing, industry, parks, office and retail areas, community services and other land uses. The Official Plan also establishes policies for the built environment, for improvements to the City’s hard services (such as transit, roads, and sewers) and for the protection of the City’s natural environment. All development applications are evaluated against the Official Plan and the City’s zoning bylaws must reflect the intent of the Plan.

## The Planning Process and the Role of the Public

With public participation, City Council is able to make better decisions about the future of Toronto’s neighbourhoods. Community involvement in the decision-making process varies depending on the type or complexity of the application, any directions from City Council and the number of revisions, public meetings and submissions that are required.