

# TORONTO BUILDING SERVICE PLAN

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2017-2021





# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CHIEF BUILDING OFFICIAL



I am excited to share Toronto Building's 2017 to 2021 Service Plan which sets the direction of the division's work for the next five years. The plan refreshes our mission and vision, identifies four priorities and sets out an action plan to advance these priorities.

This is the right moment for Toronto Building to launch its first five-year plan. We have been through several consultations and reviews to help identify areas of improvement.

Toronto Building is also introducing significant changes to how we do business. In 2016 we began implementing a continuous quality improvement system, called Excellence Toronto. In 2017, we will be launching the first phase of a public web portal. Our employees are changing as well; over the next five years we will welcome and train a new generation of staff as many staff retire.

Toronto Building developed its first Service Plan to advance recommendations, support projects that transform how we do our business, and respond to the evolving needs of our workforce. The four priorities for 2017 to 2021 are:

- invest in a knowledgeable and engaged workforce,
- advance strategic initiatives and fiscal responsibility,
- drive service quality, efficiency and innovation, and
- pursue a seamless customer service experience.

These priorities were developed following consultation with Toronto Building clients, staff, and partners. We surveyed over 300 customers, interviewed 100 staff, and met with dozens of stakeholders.

Our Service Plan fits into the City of Toronto's integrated planning framework. Our work contributes to Council's vision of a caring and friendly city; a clean, green and sustainable city; a dynamic city; and a city that invests in quality of life.

The Service Plan provides a blueprint that helps clients, City Council, and the public understand our long-term vision and the key steps on the way to building a division that strives to continually improve.

I would like to thank the many people who contributed ideas that shaped this plan. I hope you see your ideas in this document and look forward to working with you to achieve our goals.

Ann Borooah  
Executive Director and Chief Building Official



# HOW OUR PLAN WAS DEVELOPED



This plan is the product of two years of extensive analysis, feedback, and consultation with Toronto Building's customers, employees and partners as well as other municipalities and City of Toronto divisions. The priorities, goals, and actions identified in the plan are the result of inputs from the following studies, consultations, reports, and stakeholders.

11

employee focus groups held with 79 participants total

135

participants in employee survey

32

recommendations from business process reviews

## Business Process Reviews and External Consultations (2014 & 2015)

Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) Renovators

Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) Developers

Professional Engineers of Ontario (PEO)

Ontario Association of Architects (OAA)

Association of Architectural Technologist of Ontario (AATO)

Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologist (OACETT)

Association of Registered Interior Designers of Ontario (ARIDO)

Building inspections officials from five Ontario Municipalities (Hamilton, London, Markham, Mississauga, and Ottawa)

## Surveys and Focus Groups (2015 and 2016)

Employee focus groups

Focus groups with divisional partners

2015 customer satisfaction survey

## Strategic Planning Sessions (2015 and 2016)

Managers meetings

Senior management strategy sessions

"[The focus group] allowed us to state our opinions and make a difference. It was very engaging; everyone had a chance to speak."

Toronto Building employee



# MISSION, VISION AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Toronto Building is the City of Toronto division's responsible for enforcing provincial and municipal building regulations and bylaws.

The Ontario Building Code Act establishes the divisions primary responsibilities, which are:

- reviewing and issuing building permits
- conducting inspections during construction to make sure work is in compliance with the Building Code and building permits
- setting fees for building permits
- enforcing compliance through inspections and if necessary, issuing orders.

In addition to the roles prescribed by the Ontario Building Code Act, Toronto Building administers and enforces the City of Toronto's Sign Bylaw.

**Mission**

To deliver the highest quality public service that secures compliance with building regulations and bylaws, while working cooperatively with the public, designers, and the building industry to create a safe, healthy, sustainable, and accessible built environment.

**Vision**

To be the municipal leader in the promotion and application of building regulations, innovators in service delivery, and partners in making our city's buildings safe, accessible and sustainable.

**City of Toronto Code of Conduct for Chief Building Official and Inspectors**

1. Promote the safety of buildings with reference to public health, fire protection, structural sufficiency, conservation and environmental integrity, and barrier-free accessibility;
2. Apply the Building Code Act and the Building Code impartially, without influence and in accordance with all applicable legislation;
3. Act within the area of qualification obtained under the Building Code Act;

**Excerpt from City's Vision Statement on Access, Equity and Diversity**

"The City recognizes the dignity and worth of all people by equitably treating communities and employees, fairly providing services, by consulting with communities and making sure everyone can participate in decision-making... The City will create an environment of equality in the government and in the community for all people regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, disability, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, same sex partnership, age, marital status, family status, immigrant status, receipt of public assistance, political affiliation, religious affiliation, level of literacy, language and/or socio-economic status."

4. Perform duties with due diligence, honesty and integrity;
5. Extend courtesy to everyone and adhere to the City's Vision Statement on Access, Equity and Diversity;
6. Keep abreast of current building practices through continuous education;
7. Comply with the City of Toronto Public Service By-law, and
8. Manage confidential and sensitive information according to the City's guidelines and relevant legislation.



# WHAT WE DO

To achieve our mission and vision, the services we provide are divided into two main groups:

## Building Permission and Information

### Building Permits

We accept and review permit applications and issue a permit when a project complies with the Ontario Building Code and other applicable laws.

Over 50,000 permits issued in 2016

### Preliminary Review

We offer a preliminary review of permit documents before clients submit a formal building permit application to confirm zoning compliance and identify other required approvals.

Over 7,600 preliminary reviews in 2016

### Building Information

We provide information to the public on permits and property records.

Over 10,800 requests in 2016

## Building Compliance

### Building Inspections

We conduct provincially-required inspections for building construction to confirm compliance with approved permits.

Over 170,000 inspections conducted in 2016

### Building Investigations

We investigate building-related complaints and take enforcement action under the Ontario Building Code Act when necessary.

Responded to over 5,000 requests to investigate illegal construction and safety issues at construction sites in 2016.

### Sign Tax Billing and Collection

We administer a City of Toronto tax on billboards.

Over 2,000 signs assessed in 2016



# WHO WE SERVE



Our applicants are anyone who applies for a building permit or preliminary review. This includes residents who are building or renovating their homes, contractors, renovators, and sign companies who apply for permits on behalf of their clients, architects and engineers who design homes and buildings, and developers who are building large, multiuse residences and facilities. Some applicants apply for one to three permits for their home, while others may submit over 100 in one year for multiple projects.

## 43%

of our applicants are homeowners, applying for one permit per year.

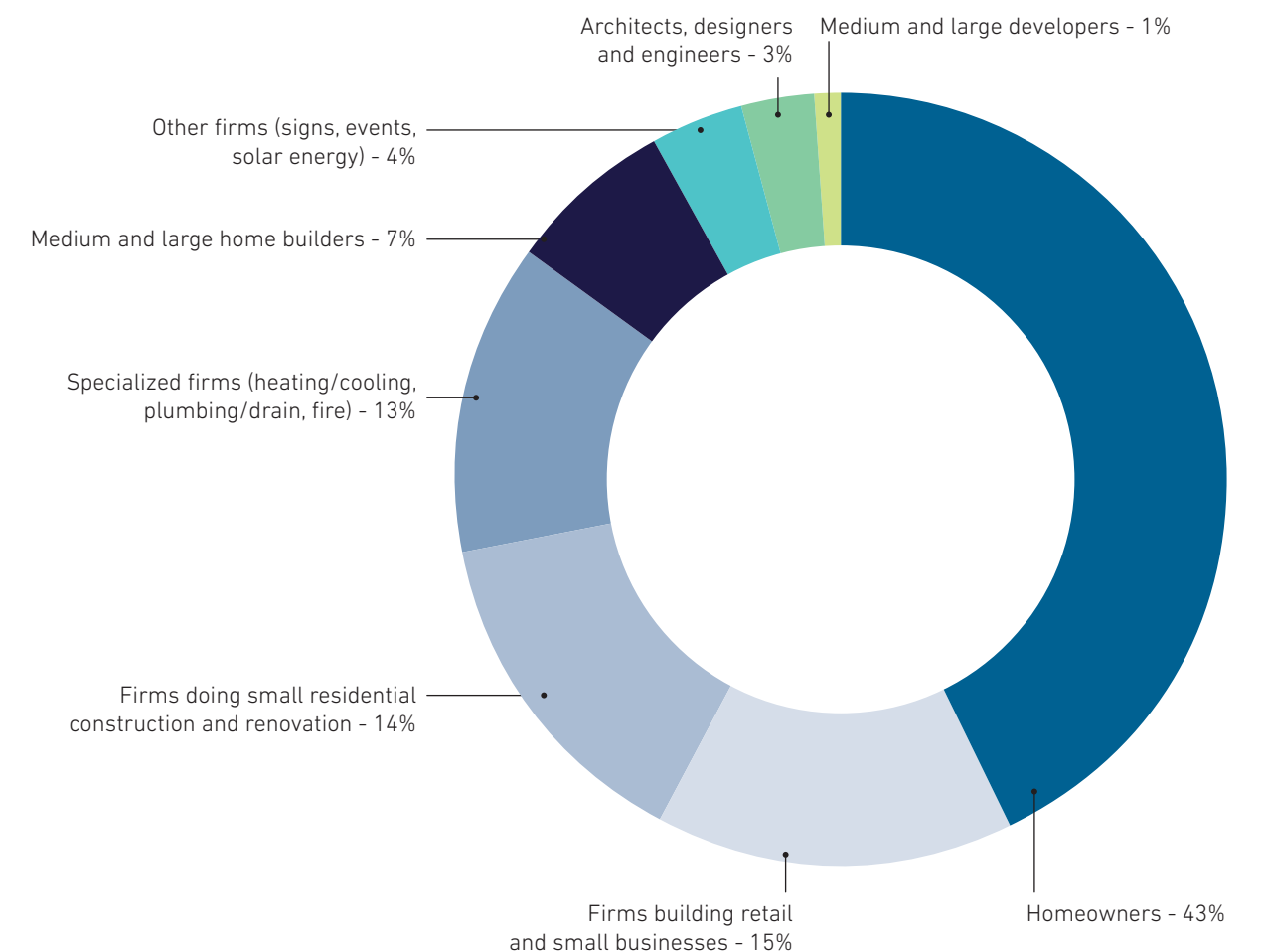
## 52%

of our applicants are construction, design and development firms, applying for up to 22 permits per year.

## 4%

of our applicants are firms dealing with signs, special events and solar panel installation.

**Toronto Building Permit Applicants**





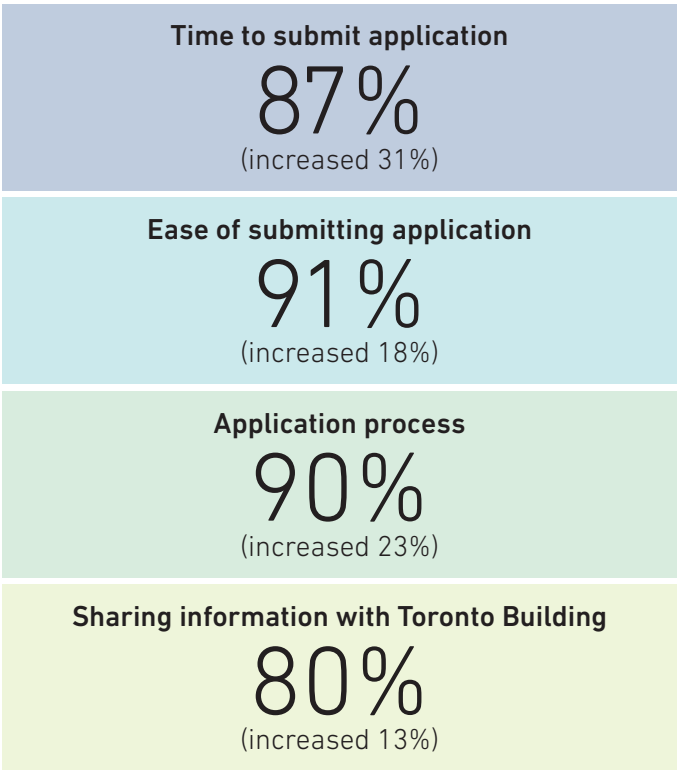
# WHAT APPLICANTS SAY ABOUT OUR SERVICE



In both 2013 and 2015, we conducted customer satisfaction surveys with commercial and homeowner permit applicants. Below are the results from these surveys.

### COMMERCIAL STAKEHOLDER satisfaction levels

Percentage of respondents who said they were satisfied or very satisfied:



### HOMEOWNER satisfaction levels

Percentage of respondents who said they were satisfied or very satisfied:



The surveys also identified areas for improvement. In 2015, 52% of commercial clients and 57% of homeowners were satisfied with the time to complete the entire permitting process. We expect this level of satisfaction to increase as we implement the improvements outlined in this Service Plan.



# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN



## Strengths

As part of service planning process Toronto Building undertook an environmental scan to assess strengths and weakness to help prioritize its actions over the next five years. Toronto Building's **strengths** included:

- The ability to meet most legislated time frames for responses to applications are above the Ontario average.
- The electronic service delivery program - a multi-year project that includes digitizing existing records, accepting permit applications electronically, and creating an online portal for clients.
- Service integration with other divisions (e.g. launched Toronto Building and City Planning shared counters).
- FASTRACK and Commercial Xpress. Two successful services tailored to meet the needs of specific clients.

## Challenges

Toronto Building faces the following **challenges** in the next five years:

- There will be high staff turnover due to retirements. Over 40% of the Toronto Building workforce will be eligible to retire between 2015 and 2019
- The system for management of applications and inspections will require a significant update in the next five to ten years.
- The division's revenue from permits and workload is subject to market volatility. The volume and mix of applications Toronto Building receives changes as the city grows and changes (see chart 1).
- The building industry and city are facing a number of challenges that may result in regulatory changes, including climate change, energy efficiency and structural maintenance standard for certain existing buildings.



# PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES



The Service Plan priorities and objectives form the backbone of the Service Plan. They describe what Toronto Building aims to achieve by 2021. Four priorities were identified by Toronto Building's vision. Each priority is supported by objectives and specific actions.

- 1

**Investing in a knowledgeable and engaged workforce**
  - 1.1. Engage our people
  - 1.2. Train and build capacity
  - 1.3. Promote diversity and wellness
- 2

**Advancing strategic initiatives and fiscal responsibility**
  - 2.1. Enable data-driven decisions
  - 2.2. Implement common management framework and strategic initiatives
  - 2.3. Promote fiscal sustainability
  - 2.4. Influence legislation to achieve our vision
- 3

**Driving service quality, efficiency and innovation**
  - 3.1. Improve efficiency of processes and policies
  - 3.2. Support innovation in service delivery
  - 3.3. Ensure business systems meet our needs
- 4

**Pursuing a seamless customer service experience**
  - 4.1. Champion client-centred services
  - 4.2. Improve transparency, accountability and consistency
  - 4.3. Communicate with and engage our customers and stakeholders



# CORPORATE STRATEGIC ACTIONS

When developing the Service Plan, Toronto Building considered the strategic actions identified in the Council's Strategic Plan. The 2013 – 2018 Corporate Strategic Actions were adopted by Toronto City Council in October 2013. The City of Toronto uses an integrated planning framework that links the Strategic Actions with a division's service plan and budget.

## 2013 -2018 Corporate Strategic Actions

<b>City Building</b>	<b>Economic Vitality</b>	<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>
1. Implement Smart Urban Growth Strategies	4. Increase Employment Opportunities	6. Support Environmental Sustainability
2. Invest in Culture	5. Accelerate Economic Growth	7. Develop a Long-term Solid Waste Management Strategy
3. Develop a Long-Term Transportation Plan and Policies		
<b>Social Development</b>	<b>Good Governance</b>	<b>Fiscal Sustainability</b>
8. Support Affordable Housing	13. Open Government by Design	23. Update the Long-term Fiscal Plan
9. Strengthen Neighbourhoods	14. Engage the Public	24. Improve Service and Financial Planning
10. Enhance the City's Quality of Life	15. Strengthen Public Service Governance	25. Ensure State of Good Repair for Infrastructure
11. Advance Toronto's Motto 'Diversity our Strength'	16. Strengthen Intergovernmental Relationships	26. Finance the City's Growth
12. Improve Emergency Response and Prevention	17. Enhance the City's Capacity to Service Toronto's Diversity	
	18. Develop and Implement a Workforce Plan	
	19. Improve Customer Service	
	20. Enhance Performance Measurement	
	21. Improve Organizational Excellence	
	22. Implement Shared Services	



# TORONTO BUILDING ACTIONS





“Have a training program to develop future managers.”

Toronto Building employee



# 1 Investing in a knowledgeable and engaged workforce

	Actions	Timing
1.1. Engage our people	1. Continue and enhance employee recognition program	2017-2021
	2. Implement a formal on-the-job training and mentoring program	2017-2018
	3. Implement exit interview process	2017
1.2. Train and build capacity	4. Implement Inspector Generalist on-site training and evaluation program	2017
	5. Develop Customer Service Training Manuals	2017
	6. Develop and implement employee leadership development program	2017-2018
	7. Implement competency-based training programs for all staff	2019-2020
1.3. Promote diversity and wellness	8. Invest in student and new professional's program	2017-2021
	9. Roll out education, training and programs related to wellness, responding to workplace violence, healthy workplace, and mental health.	2017-2018
	10. Undertake review of recruitment process and practices	2017-2018
	11. Pilot options for flexible work arrangements	2020-2021

## How We Link to Corporate Strategic Actions



- 11. Advance Toronto's Motto 'Diversity our Strength'
- 17. Enhance the City's Capacity to Serve Toronto's Diversity
- 18. Develop and Implement a Workforce Plan
- 19. Improve Customer Service



## 2 Advancing strategic initiatives and fiscal responsibility



“We have lots of data, the challenge is about how we use it.”

Toronto Building employee

	Actions	Timing
2.1. Enable data-driven decision making	12. Develop data and information management strategy	2017-2019
	13. Develop and implement an intelligent workload distribution solution	2019-2020
2.2. Implement common management framework and strategic initiatives	14. Implementation of Excellence Toronto Common Management Framework	2017-2021
	15. Undertake annual review of business continuity plans	2017-2021
	16. Prepare a divisional annual report	2018-2021
	17. Develop a formal risk management strategy	2018-2019
2.3. Promote fiscal responsibility and economic development	18. Establish annual budget that enables division to meet service targets and supports service plan implementation	2017-2021
	19. Undertake comprehensive fiscal review of full cost-recovery model	2017-2018
	20. Deliver expedited services to support economic development, affordable housing, and transit improvements	2017-2021
2.4. Influence legislation to achieve our vision	21. Anticipate, influence and respond to changes in building regulations	2017-2021
	22. Lead advocacy for new standards that will improve sustainability, energy efficiency, and resiliency	2017-2021

### How We Link to Corporate Strategic Actions



16. Strengthen Intergovernmental Relations  
 20. Enhance Performance Measures  
 21. Improve Organizational Excellence  
 22. Implement Shared Services  
 24. Improve Service and Financial Planning



# 3 Support service quality, efficiency and innovation



“Automation has been a major success. However, it has not yet relieved examiners of the burden of some routine information-related tasks.”

Business Process Review of the Building Permit Application Process

	Actions	Timing
3.1. Improve efficiency and quality of processes and policies	23. Develop, review, and improve service level agreements with key partners	2017-2019
	24. Develop a policy and procedure management process	2017-2018
	25. Review and update service quality assurance programs	2017-2018
3.2. Support innovation in service delivery	26. Create a Toronto Building Innovation Team	2017
	27. Implement a process for employees to submit their ideas	2017
	28. Implement new collaboration platforms and tools for staff	2019-2021
3.3. Ensure business systems meet our needs	29. Create IT Roadmap to align and support divisional and City investments in technology	2017-2021

## How We Link to Corporate Strategic Actions



13. Open Government by Design  
15. Strengthen Public Service Governance  
21. Improve Organization Excellence



# 4 Pursuing a seamless customer service experience



	Actions	Timing
4.1. Champion client-centred services	30. Implement a customer web portal and drive digital first service delivery	2017-2019
	31. Make all open permit files available digitally	2018
	32. Review and improve phone service channel	2018
4.2. Improve transparency, accountability and consistency	33. Enhance complaint monitoring and management system	2017
	34. Refresh Code of Conduct for Building Officials	2018
	35. Deliver training on Code of Conduct and conflict of interest protocol to every new employee	2017-2021
4.3. Communicate with and engage our customers and stakeholders	36. Formalize stakeholder consultation plan	2017
	37. Undertake comprehensive review and revision of web content	2017 -2018
	38. Develop communication strategy to improve client awareness of building regulations and approvals process	2017-2018
	39. Develop new online tools to request services	2019-2021

How We Link to Corporate Strategic Actions

13. Open Government by Design  
14. Engage the Public  
17. Enhance the City's Capacity to Serve Toronto's Diversity  
19. Improve Customer Service  
22. Implement Shared Services

"We're excited about the future. When we can provide all of our services online to our clients - that will be the next step"

Toronto Building Chief Building Official



