

Draft – City of Toronto Committee of Adjustment Purpose Statement and Service Charter

Purpose Statement

The Committee of Adjustment is granted authority under the *Planning Act* and by the delegation of authority by City Council to consider applications to permit adjustments to buildings, structures, and land. The Committee promotes thoughtful neighbourhood changes through a fair, transparent, and evidence based decision-making process.

The Committee of Adjustment considers and makes decisions on applications to permit adjustments to buildings, structures and land. The Committee promotes thoughtful neighbourhood changes through a fair, transparent, and evidence-based decision-making process.

The Committee is delegated authority by City Council under the *Planning Act* to make decisions on applications for minor variances to the zoning by-law and consent to divide property or change property lines. The Committee does not make new planning policies or zoning rules, but rather makes decisions within the intent of the existing policies and rules adopted by City Council.

Service Charter

Who We Are

The Committee of Adjustment (CoA) is an independent, quasi-judicial, administrative tribunal that makes decisions under the *Planning Act* on applications for minor variance, consent, and permissions to extend or enlarge legal non-conforming uses.

The City of Toronto's Committee of Adjustment is committed to providing accessible, fair, and transparent services for all interested parties. We aim to foster a hearing environment that encourages collaboration between all parties where the needs and concerns of applicants, the public, and the City are all carefully considered and communicated in our decision-making process.

The Committee of Adjustment at the City of Toronto is organized into two sections:

1. **Administration:** City staff who administer the application process from start to finish.
2. **Committee Members:** Council-appointed Members who evaluate and make decisions on each application.

What We Do

The Committee of Adjustment's role is to consider and weigh information and evidence that is presented by the parties involved with a specific application. The Committee holds public hearings and makes legally binding decisions based on criteria set out in the *Planning Act*.

Who We Serve

The Committee of Adjustment at the City of Toronto serves:

1. **Applicants:** Individuals, developers and property owners seeking minor variances from the zoning bylaw, changes to legal non-conforming uses of land, buildings, or structures, and consents to sever land related to property development.
2. **The Public:** Residents, community members, and property owners who are interested in the development of properties in their neighbourhood and would like to provide input regarding proposed developments.
3. **Public Bodies and Organizations:** The City, its divisions, agencies, boards and commissions, Councillors and other public bodies and organizations that have responsibilities and interests that could be impacted by proposed development.

What Applicants and the Public Can Expect From Us

1. **Transparency in Decision-Making:** We hold public meetings where applicants present their application, and the public can provide input. These meetings will be accessible in-person and virtually, with public notices distributed in a timely manner to inform interested parties. We post online on the City of Toronto's Application Information Centre the application, staff reports, comments from the public, virtual hearing recordings, decision minutes and other information.
2. **Timely Decisions:** We strive to provide an immediate decision once an application is heard by the Committee or in alignment with any applicable service standard.
3. **Accessibility:** We will ensure that public meetings and hearings are accessible in-person and virtually, including offering accommodation or assistive services where possible with sufficient advanced notice.
4. **Fairness:** We will assess every application fairly based on relevant materials and legislative requirements, including application materials, public input, policies, the City's Official Plan and zoning by-law.
5. **Professional Guidance:** We will provide information and guidance on the submission process, required documents, timelines, and ensure all applications are complete prior to being scheduled for a hearing date.

6. **Opportunities for Public Input:** We provide interested parties options to engage through written comments or speaking in person or virtually at a public hearing. All comments and concerns will be considered by us when making decisions, considering relevance to the application and the four tests, as well as alignment with the City's planning priorities.
7. **Clear Communication:** We will provide clear, accurate, and up-to-date information regarding the status of applications and decisions, making it easy for the public to obtain information and express their views.
8. **Timely Notification:** We will provide timely notice of hearings and decisions in accordance with regulations under the *Planning Act*. Notices will be made available through appropriate channels, including direct notifications, on the Committee of Adjustment website and City of Toronto Application Information Centre.

Our Expectations

1. Of Applicants and the Public:

- **Complete and Accurate Information:** Applicants and the Public are expected to provide complete, accurate, and timely documentation to facilitate the decision-making process.
- **Respect for the Process:** Applicants are expected to adhere to timelines, pay applicable fees, and participate fully in the public hearing process where required. Applicants and the general public are expected to remain courteous and professional during public meetings.
- **Constructive and Respectful Feedback:** The Committee values feedback from applicants and the public that is constructive, respectful, and relevant to the matters under consideration.
- **Timely Participation:** Applicants and the public are encouraged to attend the hearing and when required submit written comments, or otherwise express their opinions within the designated timeframes to ensure their concerns are considered in the decision-making process.
- **Community Engagement:** Applicants and the Public are encouraged to engage early in the process to understand concerns and ensure transparent communication between interested parties.
- **Understanding of the Zoning and Planning Context:** Applicants and the public should consider the applicable test under the *Planning Act* for Minor Variance and Consent applications when providing information to the Committee in consultation with Committee of Adjustment Public Handbook.

2. Of the Committee of Adjustment:

- **Professionalism and Accountability:** Committee Members and staff like all parties involved, are expected to maintain a high standard of professionalism, ethical conduct, integrity, and transparency throughout the review process. Committee members are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct for members of Administrative Tribunals.
- **Timely Decision Making that Respects the Four Tests:** Committee Members will consider evidence that is relevant under the applicable test under the

Planning Act for each application, not whether the proposal is a good idea in general. We provide decisions on an application in accordance with the Planning Act requirements. A “Notice of Decision” is sent to the applicant and upon request.

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