

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Planning Committee
Comité de l'urbanisme
14 February 2019 / 14 février 2019**

and / et

**Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee
Comité de l'agriculture et des affaires rurales
22 February 2019 / 22 février 2019**

**and Council / et au Conseil
February 27, 2019 / 27 février 2019**

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Submitted by

Soumis par:

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Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2019-PIE-PS-0009

SUBJECT: Site Plan Control Process and Fees Review

OBJET: Révision du processus de réglementation du plan d'implantation et des droits afférents

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That Planning Committee and Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee recommend Council approve:

- 1. Amendments to the Site Plan Control By-law No. 2014-256, as detailed in Document 1 and Document 4;**
- 2. Amendments to the Fees for Planning Applications By-law No. 2017-18, as detailed in Document 2; and**
- 3. Updating the Council approved Public Notification and Consultation Policy for Development Applications, as included in Document 3; in support of the proposed changes to the Site Plan Control review process with modified application categories and fees.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité de l'urbanisme et le Comité de l'agriculture et des affaires rurales recommandent au Conseil d'approuver :

- 1. les modifications proposées pour le *Règlement régissant la réglementation du plan d'implantation* (n° 2014-256) décrites dans les documents 1 et 4;**
- 2. les modifications proposées pour le *Règlement relatif aux droits de demande d'aménagement* (n° 2017-18) décrites dans le document 2;**
- 3. les mises à jour proposées pour la Politique d'avis et de consultation publique concernant les demandes d'aménagement approuvée par le Conseil, décrites dans le document 3, qui viennent en appui aux modifications proposées pour le processus d'examen des demandes d'approbation du plan d'implantation, entre autres au sujet des catégories et des droits.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Assumption and Analysis

The Site Plan Control Process and Fees Review project was initiated to improve the review and approval process of Site Plan Control. Site Plan Control is an important

business component to Planning Services. Recent examinations show that neither the legislative timeline nor the internal target timelines are being achieved for site plan reviews. There are a number of factors that impact timelines: increased complexity and scale of developments, increased workload, poor quality submissions, extensive public consultation, time to obtain Councillor's concurrence, and internal factors leading to delays in approvals. In addition, current planning fees for Site Plan Control applications are not achieving cost recovery.

Staff are providing Council with recommendations that will achieve the following:

- Modified triggers for Site Plan Control, which are specified in the Site Plan Control By-law;
- A balanced approach for public consultation on site plans;
- Empowering staff with site plan approval authority;
- New site plan categories and re-structured fees;
- An aligned road modification review and approval process where it is associated with a site plan;
- Setting new and realistic approval timelines; and
- Other improvements to streamline internal business rules and workflows.

Financial Implications

The estimated 2019 incremental revenues resulting from the site-plan fee amendments are \$90,000. Planning Services' revenue budget will be adjusted through the 2020 budget process.

Public Consultation

A series of discussions were held with the development industry representatives including the Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association (GOHBA) comments from GOHBA are included as Document 8 and the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) Ottawa, as well as representatives from the community including the Federation of Citizens' Associations (FCA) of Ottawa and various local community associations, as well as a number of City Councillors. Feedback collected from communities are summarized in Document 7.

RÉSUMÉ

Hypothèses et analyse

Le projet de révision du processus de réglementation du plan d'implantation et des droits afférents vise à améliorer le processus d'examen et d'approbation du plan d'implantation. Ce processus tient une place importante dans les activités opérationnelles des Services de planification. D'après de récents examens, il s'avère que ni le calendrier législatif ni les échéanciers internes ne sont respectés quand il s'agit d'évaluer ce type de demandes. Plusieurs facteurs sont en cause : complexité et envergure des aménagements proposés, augmentation de la charge de travail, mauvaise qualité des soumissions, ampleur des consultations publiques, temps nécessaire pour obtenir l'accord du conseiller et facteurs internes. Qui plus est, les droits d'aménagement actuels pour les demandes d'approbation de plan d'implantation ne permettent pas le recouvrement des coûts.

Le personnel présente donc au Conseil les recommandations suivantes :

- Modifier les éléments déclencheurs liés au processus de réglementation du plan d'implantation qui figurent dans le *Règlement régissant la réglementation du plan d'implantation*;
- Adopter une démarche de consultation publique équilibrée concernant les plans d'implantation;
- Donner au personnel les pouvoirs d'approbation des plans d'implantation;
- Créer de nouvelles catégories de demandes d'approbation de plan d'implantation et restructurer les droits;
- Harmoniser le processus d'examen et d'approbation des modifications proposées pour le réseau routier lorsqu'il est associé à un plan d'implantation;
- Établir de nouveaux délais d'approbation réalistes;
- Améliorer d'autres éléments pour simplifier les règles et les processus opérationnels internes.

Répercussions financières

On estime à 90 000 \$ les recettes supplémentaires attribuables à la révision des droits afférents aux plans d'implantation. Les recettes prévues des Services de planification seront mises à jour dans le cadre du processus budgétaire de 2020.

Consultation publique

Une série d'échanges a eu lieu avec des représentants du secteur de l'aménagement, notamment de la Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association (GOHBA) les commentaires de la Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association (GOHBA) sont présentés dans le document 8 et de la Building Owners and Managers Association of Ottawa (BOMA Ottawa), ainsi qu'avec des représentants locaux, entre autres de la Fédération des associations civiques d'Ottawa (FAC) et de diverses associations communautaires, et plusieurs conseillers municipaux. Le document 7 résume les commentaires du public.

BACKGROUND

In order to advance the changes recommended in this report, a number of by-laws and one City policy are recommended to be updated. These are detailed below.

Site Plan Control By-law

Pursuant to Section 41 of the *Planning Act*, a municipality may pass a by-law and require Site Plan Control review and approval within a designated area. City of Ottawa Council enacted the current Site Plan Control By-law No. 2014-256 to define the Site Plan Control area and to specify types of developments that may or may not be exempted from Site Plan Control. The Site Plan Control By-law was subsequently amended.

Fees for Planning Applications By-law

Section 391 of the *Municipal Act* authorizes a municipality to impose fees for municipal services. Council enacted the Fees for Planning Applications By-law No. 2015-96 to establish a structure and fees according to planning applications types, which sets out the current planning fees being charged for Site Plan Control applications.

The Public Notification and Consultation Policy for Development Applications

The Public Notification and Consultation Policy for Development Applications was originally approved by City of Ottawa Council in 2001 and was amended most recently in 2014. The policy provides direction for notice and consultation on planning applications including site plans.

Delegation of Authority By-law

The authority for the delegation of approval comes from the *Planning Act*, 41(13) *t*. In 2016, following the City's re-organization, Council enacted the current Delegation of Authority By-law No. 2016-369. Sections 12 to 17 under Schedule "J" of the by-law to

authorize city staff and management to approve various types of site plans; Section 41 under the same schedule deals with authority to approve road modifications.

The recommended amendments to the Delegation of Authority By-law were already adopted by Council on December 5, 2018 as part of [2018-2022 COUNCIL GOVERNANCE REVIEW](#).

DISCUSSION

Site Plan Control Process and Fees Review Project Overview

The Site Plan Control Process and Fees Review project (the project) was initiated in the fall of 2016 by Planning Services within the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department. The purpose of the project was to improve the review and approval process of Site Plan Control, which is an important business component of Planning Services. The recommendations included in this report are intended for a more streamlined Site Plan review process so that it will become a more effective development control tool, and to re-structure planning fees to reflect the true effort of Site Plan review so that cost-recovery can be realized. They represent outcomes from extensive discussions, research, and consultation on issues related to Site Plan Control.

The key deliverables of the project have three components. The first part includes conclusions related to the new triggers, application categories, fees, target timelines, the aligned road modification process, and necessary amendments to various by-laws and a City policy to implement the recommended changes, which is the purpose of this report. The second part is the configuration of new process steps in the City's development application management system (MAP) that is supported by Information Technology Services. The third part is closely tied with improvements to other internal business rules, procedures, and tools.

What is Site Plan Control

Under the *Planning Act*, the City is authorized to establish a Site Plan Control Area and undertake a comprehensive review of all issues related to a site plan including but not limited to: building location, exterior design, parking, access, landscaping, traffic, grading, drainage, and servicing. The review enables the City to influence land development to ensure it is functional, safe and compatible, and to address city building goals contained within City policies and guidelines. The City can approve the site plan application with a set of conditions and may require an agreement to be registered on title and take securities to ensure requirements and conditions will be fulfilled by the owner. The Site Plan Control process does not deal with the issues pertaining to what

uses are permitted on a property, as such matters are typically addressed through the zoning process.

The Challenges

Under the *Planning Act*, if the municipality fails to approve a site plan application within 30 calendar days after it is submitted and deemed complete, the owner may appeal the failure of the municipality to approve the application to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT).

The current internal target approval timelines for site plans with and without public consultation are eleven and seven weeks, respectively. A recent review shows that the average approval timelines for those applications received between 2012 and 2017 are 32 and 17 weeks, respectively.

The delayed processing times are costly to the development industry and reflect poorly on the City especially when both the *Planning Act* and internal timelines are not met or if non-decisions are appealed to the LPAT. Further, delays can have a negative impact on Council priorities, as they constrain the ability to achieve the affordability of housing, frustrate growth in the local economy, and negatively affect the client experience when service expectations are not maintained.

The Factors

There are many factors that affect the ability of planning staff to review Site Plan Control applications efficiently.

Under the *Planning Act*, a municipality is not mandated to conduct public consultation for site plans. In fact, based on staff's research, the City of Ottawa is one of the few municipalities in Ontario that actively seeks public opinions on site plan applications. The current public consultation practices for site plans include:

- inviting community representatives to participate in the pre-application consultation meeting (for site plan applications in the Wards of the Central Area);
- sending out heads-up notification emails to community groups;
- mailing application information packages to local community associations;
- placing large development information signs on the frontages of the site;
- listing supporting documents and studies of the application on Ottawa.ca;

- organizing or supporting the Ward Councillor to organize community information sessions, if requested;
- collecting and responding to public comments on the application; and
- notifying the public of decisions.

The above are applicable if a site plan application meets the current threshold for “Manager approval, public consultation” category, which means a residential building containing five or more units, or a non-residential development with a gross floor area of 350 square metres or more. Further, the Ward Councillor is always provided with the opportunity to remove the delegated authority prior to site plan approval.

According to the 2016 data, over 86 per cent of new site plan applications went through the public consultation process as described above. The extensive process ensures all stakeholders will be well informed and will have an opportunity to provide inputs on developments that may affect them; this process also demands extra time and resources, contributing to a gap between *Planning Act* requirements, industry expectations, and the actual application approval timelines.

Another factor includes the increased complexity of proposals and issues. The City’s population is projected to reach one million in 2019. This population growth is the foundation for economic growth, making Ottawa more attractive for businesses, investments, and developments. The light rail also presents desirable development potential along the transit lines, embracing transit focused developments with mixed uses. Planning Services has observed more site plan applications of unprecedented complexity and scale.

The review undertaken by Planning Services has become more multifaceted as well. The Zoning By-law has evolved to become more detailed and complex. There are more planning documents to consider, for example, multiple technical and design guidelines, community design plans, and secondary plans. Further, being the capital city on a provincial boundary, staff need to interact with multifarious stakeholder groups at various government levels and of different jurisdictional boundaries. All these additional considerations combine to create a sophisticated planning regime, and ultimately contributes to the quality of the built environment of our city, but adds complexity to the review process. Site plan review must consider numerous economic, environmental, engineering, and built-form issues. As many complex and large-scale projects will have a greater impact on the public realm, they generate more attention from stakeholders, which demand additional time to resolve issues.

On the other hand, more small-scale developments and infill projects emerge given the well-established City policies related to intensification. These smaller developments are typically as-of-right, that the land use and density are within the zoning envelop, but currently are still required to go through a complex site plan control process. As part of this project, staff have examined our processes with a lens of wanting to make site plan control easier for the forms of development that are desirable, and more thorough for the type of development that may require more time and thoughtful consideration before approval.

It is further recognized that some of the inefficiencies of the site plan review are due to internal complexities. For example, unclear expectations of pre-application consultation outcomes, un-clarified workflows and procedures, or miscommunications among multiple stakeholders and internal groups.

In addition to these factors that impact the timelines, it should be noted that not all submissions that are received from the applicant for review have been completed fully and time is taken for several reviews to improve the quality of the submission before reaching site plan approval.

One last factor that can lead to increased timelines for approval is the process to obtain Ward Councillor's concurrence. Currently the Ward Councillor's concurrence on the site plan is required before approval. This concurrence is not required under the *Planning Act* and is an additional step in the process that can cause delays.

Site Plan Control Application Fees

Although Ottawa is the second largest city in Ontario, we charge one of the lowest fees on planning applications. Currently, a site plan application for a 40-unit apartment will be subject to a planning fee (in 2018) of \$18,478 and a total application fee of \$21,509. The same development would pay approximately \$27,000 in Hamilton, \$29,000 in Mississauga, and almost \$47,000 in Toronto. The fees charged in Ottawa do not truly reflect the level of effort that City staff will invest in the review of a site plan file.

With the support from Financial Services, Planning Services conducted a review of the cost for site plan review according to the latest organizational structure, various roles involved in the process, average hours spent, and hourly rates. It concludes that the estimated expenditure on site plan control for Planning Services is approximately \$3.3 million, which represents direct costs only. Currently, the revenue generated from Site Plan Control application fees is 38 per cent below the estimated expenditure.

Recommendations

The following principals were developed to support the proposed changes to the site plan review process and fees:

- Site plan control shall not be an onerous process for small-scale and as-of-right developments;
- Public engagement on site plans shall be meaningful and shall be used to address issues within its intended scope; and
- Site plan control application fees need to reflect true efforts and to achieve cost-recovery.

1. Modified rules for site plan control exemptions

The current Site Plan Control By-law exempts certain small-scale developments, for example, residential developments of up to three units. The City has experienced more infill developments of four to six units, which can fit into the community easily, provided parking is not constrained. However, in areas where parking is constrained, parking, access, garbage, and other site design issues are more likely to be of a concern.

The proposed Site Plan Control By-law amendment introduces a new Site Plan Control Inner Area (the Inner Area), shown as Schedule C within Document 4. This aligns with Areas X, Y and parts of Z (inside the Greenbelt area) under the Zoning By-law Schedule 1A (Document 5), and represents the area where reduced parking standards are required, as well as where new development tends to occur on smaller lots at higher densities.

Outside the Inner Area, it is recommended that residential developments of up to six units with a maximum total gross floor area of 600 square metres and a maximum total parking of seven spaces may be exempted from site plan control. Inside the Inner Area, a lower trigger for Site Plan Control is recommended. Only residential developments of up to three units with a maximum total gross floor area of 600 square metres and a maximum total parking of three spaces may be exempted. Boundaries of the Inner Area will be reviewed over time as the City matures.

For non-residential developments, staff also recommends an adjusted trigger for Site Plan Control from a minimum gross floor area of 300 square metres to a minimum of 600 square metres for urban developments. Non-residential developments on private services with a gross floor area of over 300 square metres will still be subject to Site Plan Control for hydrogeology review purposes.

Other proposed changes to the Site Plan Control By-law include: increasing the maximum amount of securities for site plans that may be provided with a letter of undertaking as an alternative to an agreement; revising the list of non-residential uses that are not exempted for new establishment; incorporating the updated policy for the Development Zone of Influence for light rail; clarifying exemptions rules for small scale mixed-use conversions; technical cleanup of clauses related to coach houses, and editorial updates. The section in the current by-law regarding Sandy Hill Special Site Plan Control Area is proposed to remain unchanged. The details of recommended amendments to the Site Plan Control By-law are included in Document 1, and an updated by-law is included as Document 4.

2. Balanced approach for public consultation on Site Plans

Public consultation is an important component in the Site Plan review process, particularly for large-scale projects. Rather than following the lead of many other Ontario municipalities and abandoning public consultation in Site Plan review, staff recommends a balanced approach to support public engagement.

Staff recommend two main types of new site plan applications – Complex and Standard. A “Complex” site plan application would be similar to the current category of “manager approval, public consultation”. Staff further recommends a generally increased threshold for Complex site plans. These would include: residential developments containing fourteen or more units, five or more floors and/or having a gross floor area of 1,200 square metres or more; all planned unit developments; mixed-use buildings containing fourteen or more units, five or more floors and/or with a gross floor area of 1,400 square metres or more; non-residential development of five or more floors and/or with a gross floor area of 1,860 square metres or more; and drive-through facilities in the Site Plan Control Inner Area or abutting residential zones.

Public notification and consultation activities as previously discussed in this report would still be applicable for “Complex” site plans, with the exception that staff would not proactively organize community information sessions. The Ward Councillors may choose to hold a community information session on their own behalf, however, this would need to be accomplished within the target timeline for Site Plan Control approval.

New developments that meet the threshold for Site Plan Control but are not meeting the threshold for “Complex” would fall under the “Standard” site plan category. For “Standard” site plans, public notification would include listing all applications and supporting documents online, with the opportunity to send comments to staff online. Furthermore, staff would not actively seek the Ward Councillor’s concurrence prior to

approval, unless it was clearly requested by the Councillor during the initial circulation period.

Where the Ward Councillor's concurrence is to be actively sought, the Councillor will have five business days to confirm concurrence. If the Councillor disagrees, he or she needs to advise the lifting of the delegated authority within the same time frame. If the Councillor's response is not received by five business days, staff will assume that concurrence has been provided and will proceed to approve the site plan. Planning Services will produce a set of communication packages to clarify this process.

For all site plans types, the Ward Councillor will continue to be circulated with the application information package. The differences of public engagement approaches for "Complex" and "Standard" site plans are as shown in Document 6. An updated Public Notification and Consultation Policy for Development Applications is included in Document 3.

3. Empowering staff with site plan approval authority

The authority for Site Plan Approval is specified under the Delegation of Authority By-law. Previously the By-law grants most of the Site Plan Approval authority to different levels of management within the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department. Staff are only authorized to approve minor developments and revisions. This lack of authority increases timelines for assigned staff when dealing with site plan issues and trying to move the review process forward.

It is recommended that the Delegation of Authority By-law be amended to provide more authority to the staff level, specifically, to delegate the approval authority of the "Standard" site plan applications to the assigned staff, as these applications are typically developments of small and moderate scale with manageable impacts. Internally, Planning Services worked on establishing business rules for an escalation process to management to deal with issues that may go beyond staff's level of control. The "Complex" site plans will remain under the delegated authority of the managers.

For all categories, Ward Councillors still reserve the ability to lift delegated authority, under which circumstances the site plan approval shall rest with Planning Committee or Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee.

Further, as a result of the process review for a road modification approval where it is associated with a site plan, it is recommended that the authority for such road modification approvals be in line with the associated site plan approvals.

The recommended amendments to the Delegation of Authority By-law were already adopted by Council on December 5, 2018 as part of [2018-2022 COUNCIL GOVERNANCE REVIEW](#).

4. New site plan categories and re-structured fees

Currently there are 19 different types of Site Plan Control applications. Seven of these fall under the Sandy Hill Special Site Plan Control Area, which will remain unchanged. The list of the current site plan types and planning fees (excluding Sandy Hill Special Site Plan Control Area) are included in Table 1.

Table 1 – Current site plan control application planning fees in 2018 dollar value

Type of Site Plan Application	Planning Fee
Two-Stage Site Plan, Manager's approval with public consultation	Draft Approval \$13,011.00, plus Final Approval \$5,467.00
New site plan application, Manager's approval with public consultation	\$18,478.00
Revision to a site plan approval, Manager's approval with public consultation	\$18,478.00
New site plan application, Manager's approval without public consultation	\$4,237.00
Revision to a site plan approval, Manager's approval without public consultation	\$2,975.00
Site Plan approval by staff, including new, revision or extension	\$3,250.00
Street Townhouse not previously approved through the subdivision process	\$3,250.00
New site plan application or revision to site plan approval that is rural based and does not require public consultation	\$706.00

As a result of the modified thresholds for Site Plan Control and Public Consultation, it is recommended that the current site plan types be consolidated and renamed. In addition

to the “Complex” and “Standard” categories as discussed earlier, the new types also include: the “Master” category, which is the same as the previous two-stage site plan; “Revision-Complex” for major site plan revisions that would require a full re-review; “Revision-Standard” for minor site plan revisions; “Extension” for extension of a previous approval; and “Rural Small” for small development in rural areas such as coach houses.

A financial analysis of site plan fees was conducted by a consultant retained by Planning Services. This analysis was further adjusted internally with assistance from Financial Services. The analysis reviewed each position in Planning Services and determined the percentage of time spent on each activity related to Site Plan Control. The study allocated the time currently spent on site plans to the new site plan types. The analysis then determined the total number of hours per year per position per new site plan type and calculated the budgeted total compensation cost of each new application type, and then summarized this by areas. The new fees were then calculated based on the total value of expenses to be recovered and the total number of expected applications using 2016 data. The cost recovery model was reviewed to ensure all direct expenses were captured. Further adjustments were applied for small-scale developments in rural areas. Table 2 summarizes the recommended site plan planning fees responding to the new categories. These fees are based on the 2019-dollar value.

It is recognized that planning fees for certain site plan applications will increase significantly. For example, for a 40-unit residential development, which would fall under the “Complex” category, the planning fee will rise from today’s \$18,478 to \$39,052, representing an increase of 111 per cent. In order to support a harmonized implementation of all the proposed changes, staff recommend a set of interim fees to be applied, which would represent an incremental increase by 50 per cent for major fee increases. These interim fees are recommended to be implemented in June 2019 and the ultimate fees to be implemented in January 2021. The recommended interim fees are also listed in Table 2.

Table 2 - New site plan categories and recommended planning fees in 2019 dollar value

New site plan categories	Ultimate site plan planning fees (for implementation in January 2021)	Interim site plan planning fees (for implementation in June 2019)
Master (manager's approval)	\$48,250.00	\$30,793.00
Complex (manager's approval)	\$39,052.00	\$28,996.00
Standard, non-rural area (staff approval)	\$13,947.00	\$9,145.00
Standard, rural area (staff approval)	\$11,647.00	\$7,995.00
Street townhouse, not previously approved through the subdivision process (staff approval)	\$5,938.00	\$5,938.00
Rural Small, rural area (staff approval)	\$723.00	\$723.00
Revision - Complex (manager's approval)	\$26,462.00	\$22,701.00
Revision – Standard, non-rural area (staff approval)	\$5,938.00	\$5,938.00
Revision – Standard, rural area (staff approval)	\$723.00	\$723.00
Extension – non-rural area (staff approval)	\$3,331.00	\$3,331.00
Extension – rural area (staff approval)	\$723.00	\$723.00

It should be noted that for a large portion of site plan applications, which would be changed from “manager approval” to “staff approval” under the new threshold, the planning fees for these applications would decrease. For example, for a 12-unit residential development, which would fall under the new “Standard” category, the planning fee will drop from \$18,478 to \$13,947, representing a decrease of 25 per cent.

The estimated revenue that will be generated by interim and ultimate fees is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 – Estimated expenditure and revenues

	Non-rural areas	Rural areas	Total
Estimated expenditure in 2019-dollar value based on the financial analysis	\$2,706,382	\$612,145	\$3,318,527
Revenue generated by planning fees for site plans in 2016	\$1,769,698	\$237,269	\$2,006,967
Estimated revenue in 2019-dollar value that will be generated by interim fees based on 2016 application counts	\$2,091,903	\$198,699	\$2,290,602
Estimated revenue in 2019-dollar value that will be generated by ultimate fees based on 2016 application counts	\$2,745,114	\$267,238	\$3,012,352

The estimated 2019 incremental revenues resulting from the site-plan fee changes are \$90,000. Planning Services' revenue budget will be adjusted through the 2020 budget process.

The details of amendments to the Fees for Planning Applications By-law to implement the interim fees is included in Document 2.

5. Process improvements

Finally, staff recommends modifications to the site plan review process and workflow. These improvements include aligning relevant processes, clarifying roles and responsibilities for all parties at all steps, setting more realistic timelines, and encouraging communications and collaborations among staff, applicants, and stakeholders, including utilizing necessary technologies and tools.

A number of process improvement actions have already been adopted by Planning Services to improve service efficiency. In May 2018, Planning Services adopted digital approval for all site plans. The paperless approval process offers significant time- and cost-savings for applicants and staff. It avoids waiting for the mylars to be printed and delivered prior to approval, saving approximately five to eight business days in the

process, as well as saving money on printing, delivery and modifying the mylars and paper copies. The digital process also reduces administrative tasks such as manual stamping for staff.

In December 2018 a consolidated pre-application consultation process tool kit was made available to staff and applicants. Pre-application consultation is an important stage for development application review. It provides the opportunity to engage the review team at an early stage to identify critical issues. A consolidated process tool kit helps ensure consistent practices and outcomes, so that requirements are properly communicated with the applicants to ensure the quality of application submission, and accordingly, for the review team to achieve the target timelines.

Another initiative for process improvement involves the aligned road modification approval process where it is associated with a site plan. Currently, the public notification, circulation, review and approval for all road modifications are managed by the Transportation Planning Branch under the Transportation Services Department. The road modification approval process often happens after site plan approval, causing inconsistencies between civil engineering design and road modification design, duplicated efforts, and consequently, the delay of the development project. Through the site plan review project, Transportation Planning and Planning Services agree that where a road modification is associated with a site plan, the notification, circulation, review and approval for road modifications shall be parallel and joint with the site plan approval. The two departments are currently working together to modify the workflow with clarified roles and responsibilities.

Through this project, staff also reconsidered the site plan approval target timelines. The current timelines were established in 2001. These timelines were based on the estimated “net time” that staff will be working on the applications. They do not recognize necessary time spent for issues resolution, which happens to all applications. This causes confusion to all parties in the process and inaccurate expectations. Through extensive discussions with the development industry, consultants, internal technical review teams and researching of best practices in other municipalities, it is recognized that an ideal submission and approval process would typically require two submissions prior to site plan approval. This report recommends a target approval timeline of 19 weeks for “Complex” site plans and 15 weeks for “Standard” site plans. Time required for staff to work with applicants to resolve issues and to prepare for resubmissions are considered in these targets.

There are a number of additional on-going process improvement action items. Most of the process improvements will be realized through creating and updating internal business rules, templates, procedure manuals, and tools. The target implementation

time of these new process and workflow items is the second quarter of 2019. Additionally, the online public engagement tool is also being modernized to meet accessibility requirements and to improve the usability of the webpage.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed amendments to the Site Plan Control By-law, Fees for Planning Applications By-law, and the Public Notification and Consultation Policy for Development Applications would be applicable to all rural areas.

CONSULTATION

A series of discussions were held with development industry representatives including the Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association (GOHBA) comments from GOHBA are included as Document 8 and the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) Ottawa, as well as representatives from a number of community associations, the Federation of Citizens' Associations of Ottawa (FCA), and several City Councillors. This report represents the key issues expressed by each of these stakeholders. The development industry is looking for efficiencies, time is money, therefore a full review of internal processes is taking place as part of this project. The community association representatives expressed the need for consultation and to be informed of what is taking place in their neighbourhoods, therefore extensive consultation will be maintained for the complex Site Plans, and the standard site plans will be posted to the City's website for online comment. Councillors wanted to ensure that they still maintain their ability to lift delegated authority, wanted to be informed of all standard and complex site plans, and wanted the option to offer consultation on either site plan type. Community information sessions on site plans can be triggered by the Councillor's office, however, if required, staff will only participate in the complex site plan community information sessions. Nevertheless, staff will still accept and consider any feedback received on standard site plans, as long as it is received within the timelines established. For further details on community feedback, please see Document 7.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLORS

This is a city-wide report – not applicable.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no legal impediments to adopting the recommendations in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications association with the recommendation in this report.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The estimated 2019 incremental revenues resulting from the site-plan fee amendments are \$90,000. Planning Services' revenue budget will be adjusted through the 2020 budget process.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

According to this report, the online public engagement tool for development applications (DevApps) is being modernized to meet accessibility requirements.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

This report addresses the following Term of Council Priorities:

Economic Prosperity: EP2 – Support growth of local economy.

Service Excellence: SE1 – Improve the client experience through established service expectations, and SE3 – Develop positive, effective and engaged employees committed to the service promise.

Governance, Planning and Decision-Making: GP1 – Strengthen public engagement, and GP2 – Advance management oversight through tools and processes that support accountability and transparency.

Financial Sustainability: FS1 - Demonstrate sound financial management.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 Amendments to the Site Plan Control By-law

Document 2 Amendments to the Fees for Planning Applications By-law

Document 3 Updated Public Notification and Consultation Policy for Development Applications

Document 4 Updated Site Plan Control By-law

Document 5 Zoning By-law Schedule 1A overlaying with Site Plan Control Inner Area

Document 6 Public Engagement by Site Plan Types

Document 7 Community Feedback

Document 8 GOHBA letter of February 1, 2019

DISPOSITION

Planning, Infrastructure, and Economic Development Department to forward the recommendations approved to Legal Services. Legal Services to prepare the implementing by-laws and forward to City Council.