



## **COUNTY OF PERTH**

Planning and Development Department

### **2021-2023 Business Plan**

December, 2020

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# Business Plan 2021-2023

## Planning and Development Department

December 2020

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### Preamble

Over the past year and a half the Planning and Development Department has been in the process of rebuilding – bringing together people, strategies and ideas to provide an efficient planning service with a solutions based approach and continuous improvement efforts toward consistency, best practices and communication. A new service model is proposed that is fully aligned with the Corporate Values in the Perth County Strategic Plan (section 3.3). Combining local and regional land use planning into a single tier that is accountable to all our municipal partners will leverage efficiencies and collaboration to achieve preparedness for growth and excellent service.

### Mission Statement

To plan with the County of Perth, its member municipalities, and the community for a healthy, viable, and sustainable living and working environment for present and future generations of Perth County residents.

### Service Strategy

The core business of the Planning and Development Department is to facilitate the planning application process, provide professional recommendations on proposed development and to produce and maintain a planning framework that reflects provincial direction for the public good as well as the values and needs of the community.

In the past three years (2018-2020) the department has provided day to day planning services both for the County and each of the member municipalities on matters of:

- consent,
- subdivision,
- condominium,
- amendments to the County of Perth Official Plan,
- Local Official Plan approvals; and

- Part Lot Control approvals.

### Proposed New Service Model

Throughout 2020 a new planning service model has been developed that offers planning to upper and lower tiers of Perth County through one department and a team of planners that will also conduct the day to day planning services for applications that the Lower Tier Councils are the approval authority for including zoning, minor variance and site plan control. This single tier planning service model also focuses on the update and maintenance of policy documents. More specifically to complete a new Official Plan in 2021 and complete an update of all the implementing zoning bylaws in 2022. The proposed service model is based on principles identified through a collaborative effort of representatives from each member municipality and the County.

The principles outline a culture, dedication and accountability to land use planning, and to each other. The ultimate goal of a renewed and vigorous planning service is to help the community prepare for and manage growth in all areas of land use as projected through the Comprehensive Review completed in 2020, and clearly evident in the settlement areas over the past few years.

The new service model proposes a department that provides day to day planning in all land use application types, has a heightened local engagement and works hard to maintain a progressive policy framework to manage growth while respecting existing resources and the community spirit that residents value. The program document outlining service improvements, key support systems and performance accountability has been provided to Council and is entitled “Single Tier Service Model for Perth County: Program Document 2020”.

### New Official Plan

The New Official Plan is also taking shape and will be completed in 2021. It is a critical tool for the delivery of a complete service and a key foundation piece for application review and growth management. The New Official Plan builds on work in 2019 to establish the public’s needs and vision and the projected growth plan through the undertaking of a Comprehensive Review. A review of provincial policy was largely completed in 2019 to guide the development of the Official Plan and ensure all new provincial policy will be reflected in the Official Plan document.

During 2020 the base mapping was completely rebuilt and all special or site-specific policies were evaluated. A draft of the text document has been done and will be received from WSP, the planning consultant firm, after significant edit through consultation during the summer and fall of 2020 with the Planning and Development Department.

As we enter 2021 the completely rebuilt text document and base mapping provide the background for the final pieces of planning for growth prior to releasing the completed draft to the Steering Committee, Technical Committee, Stakeholder Committee and

finally the public for consultation. It is the intention of the Planning and Development Department to conduct growth planning exercises with local Council and Staff in each of the four Lower Tiers prior to presenting a whole New Draft Official Plan for review and consultation.

### Public Engagement

Public engagement in a new environment, due to the COVID Pandemic, will require significant attention of planning authorities and planning staff to navigate new opportunities to share information, discuss and explore land use planning in our community. Over the past several months we have offered a resolution to public consultation during a pandemic to maintain operations in land use planning and development. In the coming year we will need to dig deeper into methods of public engagement that provide more interaction, greater innovation and wider reach while maintaining the public health and safety measures provided by our health authorities.

## **Key Customers**

- County Council;
- Councils and staff of member municipalities;
- Residents and property owners within Perth County;
- Economic Development Staff
- Prospective residents and businesses looking to locate in Perth County
- Provincial Ministries; and
- various agencies, boards and commissions;

## **Core Businesses/Services**

- Facilitate the land use planning process throughout the County;
- Assist the public with inquiries about property, land use and planning policy and the application process;
- Provide professional recommendations and advice on planning and development proposals or planning and development matters;
- Administration of the County Official Plan;
- Administration of the County's Land Division Committee;
- Long range policy development and maintenance;
- Assist and collaborate with GIS to ensure the maintenance and stewardship of land use data;
- Public Consultation and Engagement; and
- Lead, partner and/or participate in community programs and projects related to

land use matters.

## Legislated Standards

Land Use Planning in Ontario is subject to a variety of legislation, including:

- Provincial Policy Statement, 2020
- Planning Act RSO 1990
- County of Perth Official Plan, By-laws & Policies
- Member Municipality’s Official Plans, By-laws & Policies
- Aggregate Resources Act;
- Clean Water Act;
- Source Water Protection Plans;
- Condominium Act;
- Development Charges Act;
- Environmental Assessment Act;
- Municipal Act;
- Heritage Act;
- Nutrient Management Act; and
- Various Ontario Regulations

In addition, the Planners of the Department are guided by the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) Professional Code of Practice and Standards of Practice. Please see the attached links for further information:

OPPI Professional Code of Practice

<http://ontarioplanners.ca/Knowledge-Centre/Professional-Code-of-Practice>

OPPI Standards of Practice

<http://ontarioplanners.ca/PDF/Standards-of-Practice.aspx>

## Program Map

Planning and Development
County Official Plan, Zoning Bylaws, other related bylaws.
Planning Act Applications (facilitate, administer, track)

Professional Advice and Recommendations on Planning Matters
Delegated Approvals (Part Lot Control, Final Consent Approval, Final Subdivision Approval, Undisputed Conditional Consent Approval)
Expert witness at LPAT on behalf of County
Land Division Committee Administration
Public Consultation.
Planning related community programs, projects and outreach.

## Key Linkages with Strategic Plan

### Goal 1: Growth and Economic Development

- The New Official Plan and expanded boundaries of serviced settlement areas to provide a 25-year land supply for both neighbourhood and employment uses.
- Maintenance of policy to protect prime agricultural land and other natural and cultural resources.
- Policy for the development of On Farm Diversified Uses as per the provincial guideline including agri-tourism opportunities.
- Intensity and redevelopment targets and policy included in the New Official Plan.
- Support and policy for the development of a Community Improvement Plan in partnership with Economic Development Staff.
- Density and variety targets for housing and neighbourhood development.
- Official Plan and Zoning provisions for additional dwelling units with outreach for the development community.
- Coordination with Lower Tiers to support and facilitate planning for water, sanitary and storm water services. This is a critical growth management task.

### Goal 2: Regionalization and Service Effectiveness

- Single tier service delivery with Planners in the local offices while being part of and supported by a centralized team.
- Shared subject matter and local expertise through team coordination and communication.
- Facilitated workload sharing to back up heavy intake periods for planning

applications.

- Coordinated notice preparations and public meeting scheduling between Planning Technician and local staff.
- Increased collaboration with local staff by being stationed in local offices and through regular performance consultation with local staff and Councils.
- Coordinated pre-consultation with static schedule and regular local input.
- File tracking mechanism with automatic or log in access for local staff.
- Increased web-based communication, application capabilities and planning resources.
- Cost recovery implementation, monitoring and adjustment on an annual basis for all planning applications.

### Goal 3: Customer Service Excellence

- Reduce duplicated service and two Planners learning one property by one Planner handling county and local applications.
- Eliminate two Planners (county and local) at pre-consultation.
- Planner available in local office for all planning applications.
- Planning Technician to track all files and coordinate all notices.
- Web presence enhancements to provide comprehensive access to planning application and public engagement resources.
- Written procedures to foster consistency and facilitate evaluation.
- Solutions based culture and progressive staff mentorship.
- Quarterly communication re: workflow, application stats, process amendment.
- Semi-Annual evaluation and reporting of performance metrics (stats) and indicators (satisfaction).
- Coordination with GIS to ensure stewardship of land use planning data.

### Goal 4: Community Development and Planning

- New Official Plan with updated and progressive policies.
- Updated Zoning bylaws.
- Community Improvement Plan.
- Semi-Annual evaluation of community- based projects or policy needs with priority setting and planning for workload and resource allocation to selected

projects.

- See Goal 1 for policy to protect agriculture and provide for diversity in housing options. Policy framework and encouragement for multi-unit dwellings, rental stock and mix use developments. Enhanced policy for intensification, redevelopment and density targets.
- Collaboration with community partners to ensure policy framework is relevant to community housing needs and participation in outreach opportunities.
- Land base availability for neighbourhood and employment uses.
- Promote walkability and ‘complete’ neighbourhoods through Official Plan policy.

#### Goal 5: Corporate Sustainability

- Department culture of support, kindness, solutions and transparency.
- New hires are Registered Professional Planners with professional obligations, code of conduct and accountability for continued learning and professional development.
- Desire to collaborate with Economic Development Staff, Local Staff and community partners on all Planning and land use related topics for either research efforts, policy development or projects while maintaining that the core business of planning application review and long-range policy maintenance is critical and takes priority.

## Major Initiatives

Some of the practices proposed during the development of a new service model were implemented over the past year in an effort to enhance current service and increase efficiency. A new website was launched in September and approval authority for ‘undisputed’ consents was implemented in July, both initiatives providing simplified access to planning information and development opportunities.

2021 Goals / Objectives		Comments
Implement Single Tier Service Model and assign Planners to Local Municipality.		Ensure each Planner is set up for success in local offices and attending weekly team communications.

Complete the New Official Plan.		Finish mapping. Conduct growth management planning/boundary adjustment with Local staff and Council, re-engage committees, public engagement, Council Adoption, Provincial review.
Written Procedure Manual		Capture each task and resource required in written procedures for all planning application-based work.
Research and propose file tracking mechanism/software.		Coordinate with IT to develop cost efficient and effective file management process.
Conduct inaugural performance management evaluation and reporting.		Conduct Stats review, survey and key informant interviews in Local Municipalities and present analysis to Management Committee.
Review delegated authority processes.		Evaluate and report recommendations for any amendments to delegated authority processes.
Hire and train Planning Technician		Transfer Land Division Secretary duties, set up notice procedures, train in GIS for circulation materials.
Initiate reporting on land availability and lot supply for each Lower Tier.		Develop standardized analysis and reporting.
Coordinate with each Lower Tier on Servicing Master Plans		Growth management policy works in concert with planning for services and road infrastructure.

2022 Goals / Objectives		Comments
Review and Update Zoning Bylaws for each Lower Tier.		Coordinate review since the documents are all fairly similar.
Review long range policy or community- based project work and set priorities, plan for resources.		Upon completion of zoning bylaw updates be prepared to commence a new long-range project or policy development.
Implement file tracking mechanism and coordinate with website updates as well as reporting obligations on department performance.		There will likely be software costs associated with this implementation.
Ongoing performance management and revision of process if necessary.		Coordinate with Management Committee on any adjustments to performance management tracking, analysis and reporting.
Ongoing coordination with Lower Tiers on Servicing Master Plans.		
Develop and implement process improvements identified through the preparation of written procedures.		There will undoubtedly be some processes that require update, improvement or renew efficiency.

2023 Goals / Objectives		Comments
Evaluate effectiveness of intensification, density and redevelopment policies.		An effective growth management strategy.
Implement new Long-range policy and/or project work		The growth over the 2021 and 2022 years will have significant impact on what long range work may need to be addressed.

## Financial Allocation/Deployment Plan

Service	FTE Requirements by Year			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Planning and Development				
<b>Total Program FTE Requirements</b>	##	6	6	6

### FTE Variances

- In December 2019 1 FTE Planner was extended, on contract for one year. That position was left vacant in March 2020 and filled with temporary support for planning application review by a private planning firm on a contract basis. MHBC Planning Ltd. has been providing this service part time since April 2020. It was intended that a new planning model be in place in 2020 and these services would no longer be required. On October 1<sup>st</sup> the contract was extended until new Planning staff were implemented, in part in concert with a new planning model.
- In November 2020 a Senior Planner was hired following approval of the position by County Council. Employment begins December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and ongoing files will gradually be transferred back to the County from MHBC throughout January.
- In November 2020 staffing changes at the Local level left a vacancy for a Planner. Given the extent to which a new single tier service model has been planned and proposed the County hired a Planner in December 2020 to serve locally under the current two-tier model until a decision has been made and implementation can begin on a single tier planning service. Failing that, the new Planner can be transferred to the employ of Perth East. The new Planner will begin employment with the County on January 4<sup>th</sup> 2020.
- A half time planning assistant has been on loan from Legislative Services since January 2020. It is proposed that this position be filled by a permanent, full time Planning Technician with expanded duties including: management of all notices, preparation of circulation maps and mailing lists, file tracking, and web site maintenance. This position would also fulfill the role of Land Division Secretary with appropriate specialized training and be a liaison between Planning, the Land

Registry Office and the various law firms that draft agreements and certificates for new lots. This position has not yet been approved by County Council and therefore has not been posted or filled.

## Training and Development

An updated training and professional development plan has been presented in the “Single Tier Service Model for Perth County: Program Document 2020”. It recognizes cost effective opportunities through the Harvard Manage Mentor program and the Ontario Professional Planners Institute. Further, the training and professional development program for this department is intended to support individual learning and skill development so that each Planner and Technician can work on their specific weaknesses and strengths. Professional Development opportunities must be tailored to the duties of the assigned roles, with a vision for succession planning within the department.

### Comments:

The 2021 budgeted expenses represent an increase of 18% over the 2020 operating expenses – exclusively resulting from additional staff for the proposed single tier planning service model. Revenue is also proposed to increase as a result of implementing a cost recovery strategy for Planning Applications thus resulting in an overall decreased budget.