



## **COUNTY OF PERTH**

Planning and Development Department

### **2022-2024 Business Plan**

December, 2021

This document is formatted for double-sided printing.

No part of this document may be reproduced, stored or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise), or for any purpose, without the express written permission of the County of Perth.

# Table of Contents

Preamble ..... 1

Mission Statement ..... 1

Service Strategy ..... 1

Key Customers ..... 5

Core Businesses/Services ..... 5

Legislated Standards ..... 6

Program Map ..... 6

Key Linkages with Strategic Plan ..... 7

Major Initiatives 2021, 2022, 2023 ..... 9

Financial Allocation/Deployment Plan ..... 12

FTE Variances ..... 12

Training and Development ..... 13

Comments: ..... 13

This document is formatted for double-sided printing, and thus this page intentionally left blank.

# **Business Plan 2021-2023**

## **Planning and Development Department**

December 2020

---

### **Preamble**

This past year saw the department through the first 10 months implementing the new single tier planning service for the county and four lower tiers. Significant changes in the staffing of the team, as well as continued progress on streamlining and documenting fundamental processes, was a focus in 2021. The transition to a single tier service was relatively smooth from a service delivery perspective and immediate upon March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. As with any transition there were some hurdles which staff from both tiers rose to overcome.

The development boom over the past two years has had a dramatic effect on the volume and complexity of property inquiries and development applications seen by the department. Given the exceptional workload, and transition to a new service model, the output of the department is admirable. The development review program continues to be operating within statutory timelines while program improvements and staffing changes happen concurrently.

The outdated policy framework of the County Official Plan and the local zoning bylaws overly complicate both the review process and the experience of developers. Improving the policy regime for the county and lower tiers is the focus of 2022.

### **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 developments and to produce and maintain a policy framework that reflects provincial direction for the public good as well as the values and needs of the community.

The department provides day to day planning services both for the County and each of the member municipalities on matters of:

- Property inquiry and pre-application consultation;
- Consent;

- Subdivision and Condominium;
- Amendments to the County of Perth Official Plan;
- Local Official Plan approvals;
- Part Lot Control approvals;
- Zoning;
- Minor Variance; and
- Site Plan Control

### Standard of Service

Throughout 2021 a culture of education, transparency and seeking solutions to complex problems has been growing. Despite the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 Pandemic the planners have been very engaged in local processes and in building relationships with lower tier colleagues in order to build a development review system that is effective and more user-friendly for property owners, applicants, and staff.

- Planners have been putting effort into presenting information in plain language using visual aids to facilitate decision-making for the Planning Authorities.
- A manual for procedures of the development review program has been drafted and is being edited to share broadly in an effort to be clear about tasks, timelines and roles/responsibilities.
- The Guidelines for Site Plan Control have been reviewed and updated for implementation in each lower tier.
- Templates for notices and reporting have been consolidated and are being reviewed for accessibility and branding. They will also be made available as fillable PDF form on the department's webpages in 2022.
- Lists and contacts of agencies to be notified of planning applications have been created and made into a tracking tool used in each application.
- The application forms have been reviewed and updated, including an instruction guide for each planning application type. The forms will also be made accessible, receive property branding and be available in fillable a PDF format online.
- New application forms are going to be developed for requests to modify conditions of both consents and subdivisions/condos.
- A cost recovery model began in 2021 for planning application fees. Additional work for 2022 will include updating the fees for more planning application types and will work towards consistency in fees across the County.
- File tracking for active applications has been brought into a central excel database to facilitate meeting deadlines and documenting progress.

- Final approvals on consents are now being tracked digitally in one excel database. Communication improvements with MPAC has allowed for the tracking of registration of new properties where consent was granted.
- Next steps for file tracking will be selection and implementation of a software system to automate tracking and notifications, provide information to more people through a login with set permissions and integrate with other systems including GIS and cloud permit.
- The first iteration of measuring service performance is underway. It is intended to be a semi-annual process of analysis and survey towards continual improvement of service and assessment to meet the needs of the County and the lower tiers, with respect to land use planning efforts.

### New Official Plan

A workplan outlining the remaining tasks to complete the new Official Plan (OP) was proposed to Council on November 4, 2021. A draft of the new OP is anticipated in spring of 2022 after editing text and completing the mapping for growth areas in certain settlement areas. During late spring and early summer, work will be done to share the draft OP with the two committees and the stakeholder group for their feedback. A public consultation strategy, specific to natural environment, will be happening concurrently. Public consultation on the OP is scheduled for late summer with potential for adoption in September and submission to the province in October.

It is approximately a one-year timeframe, with the additional Planner hired and dedicated to the workplan for the duration of the year. The Manager of Planning will continue to lead the project and consultations. The workplan outlined in the chart has been prepared to be as realistic as possible and is fairly ambitious. A proactive contingency plan has not been developed; unexpected projects or assignments will cause delays to this schedule as sometimes multiple tasks being worked on in any given week of the year and the tasks are successive, building upon previous steps.

### Ecological Support Expenses

There are updated policies and mapping related to the natural environment in the New OP to produce a systems approach to long term planning for this resource as per the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020. It has proven to be a contentious topic among landowners and in particular agricultural operators regarding perceived restrictions on farming practices. To that end a consultation specific to this sub topic is proposed and includes a direct mailing to affected landowners and consultation options with planning staff.

The mapping of natural systems proposed for the OP was developed based on a scientific model and desktop application using aerial photography. Council has expressed a strong desire to address the concerns of landowners on this topic. The main points of contention have been identified as:

1. That affected landowners be directly notified;
2. That the intent of the policy not to affect normal farm practices such as cropping, grazing and drainage of farmland and that that be clearly communicated;
3. That in all other instances the policy that a landowner must investigate the potential impact of their proposed development on a natural system only when it is clearly warranted (i.e the system has been accurately identified) and that the degree of investigation be matched to the scope and proximity of the development.
4. That the map be corrected without undue hardship to the landowner if it is determined that the model has incorrectly identified a part or boundary of the natural environment system.

It is therefore important to provide the opportunity for the mapping to have a ground truthing exercise applied in cases where the mapping is disputed or questioned.

There are approximately 2,400 properties identified where the updated mapping leads to a change from the current OP that is either greater than 1% by area or greater than 1 hectare in total. It is proposed that each of these landowners be contacted directly. In Huron County, similar direct notification to landowners produced a response rate of 11% of those contacted directly, responded by contacting the planning department for a consult on their own property. Using that rate of response it is estimated that 240 landowners may contact the department and require a varying degree of consult ranging from a few basic questions to a request for a full site visit and mapping accuracy evaluation.

Planning Department staff can conduct site visits with landowners to do basic evaluation of a natural feature's boundary on the property. A simple present/absent evaluation can be completed and logged for mapping amendments prior to the Official Plan's adoption. In certain circumstances it may be necessary to seek ecological expertise to determine the boundary of natural feature and it's characterization via the scientific model. In such cases the County will need to seek that expertise from a third party. Some investigation into potential costs suggest that for detailed site inspection, consult and follow up with the landowner and a written submission to the County could cost up to \$900 per site. An amount of \$100,000 has been identified in the budget and would cover approximately 111 such evaluations (approximately 5% of affected properties and almost half of the expected response rate).

#### Development of a Stewardship Program for Perth County

The Perth County Climate Change Plan, adopted by County Council, includes the development of a Perth County Clean Water Project.

In order to proceed with this implementation strategy, the Planning Department is recommending that \$25,000 be allocated in the 2022 for research to develop a Perth County stewardship program.

Agriculture Canada and the provincial Ministries of Agriculture are in the process of developing the next Agricultural Policy Framework. The Planning Department intends to consult with the Agriculture Canada, OMAFRA, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, Farmers for Climate Solutions, as well as the Perth Federation of Agriculture and the local farm community to explore options for developing a stewardship program that supports soil health, advances agri-environmental goals, supports Perth County farmers in responding to increased climate risks, and contributes to Canadian targets to reduce GHG emissions.

## Key Customers

- County Council;
- Councils and staff of member municipalities;
- Residents and property owners within Perth County;
- Economic Development Staff and Perth County businesses;
- Prospective residents and businesses looking to locate in Perth County;
- Provincial Ministries;
- 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;
- 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;
- 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/Condo 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;
- Intensification and affordability/attainability 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;
- Sharing expertise on subject matter and local circumstances 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 lower tier staff by being stationed in local offices and through regular performance consultation with lower tier staff and Councils;
- Coordinated pre-consultation with static schedule and regular input for lower tier staff;
- File tracking mechanism with automatic or log in access for lower tier staff;
- Increased web-based communication, application capabilities and planning resources;
- Cost recovery next steps, monitoring and adjustment on an annual basis for all planning applications.

### Goal 3: Customer Service Excellence

- Planner available in lower tier offices 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;
- Semi-Annual evaluation and reporting of performance metrics (stats) and indicators (satisfaction);
- Coordination with GIS to ensure stewardship of land use planning data;
- Delegated Approval Authority for minor modifications to conditional consent approval, and draft plan approval of subdivisions and condominiums.

### 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 mixed-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**

- Build and maintain a 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, lower tier staff and community partners on all Planning and land use related topics. Collaboration would include research efforts, policy development and other projects while maintaining that the core business of planning application review and long-range policy maintenance is critical and takes priority.

**Major Initiatives 2022, 2023, 2024**

2022 Goals / Objectives		Comments
Complete the New Official Plan		Edit text. Complete growth plan. Conduct Natural Environment consultation.  Review with Committees and present to Council.  Conduct public engagement and edit. Council Adoption.  Submit to Province.
Share Procedure Manual		Complete the edits and post to website. Invite lower tier staff to use it and provide outreach if requested.
Research and implement file tracking software system.		Coordinate with IT and the Perry Group, select a file management software that can be integrated with lower tier programs and provide access via login.  Upload/Input active file data.  Begin upload/input historic file data.

Build on performance management measurement and processes.		Provide stats, survey and use feedback to improve the process (Semi-annual).
Review Delegated Authority processes.		Evaluate and report recommendations for any amendments to Delegated Authority processes.
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.
Begin review of lower tier zoning bylaws.		Engage development planners in systematic review of zoning bylaws, identifying policy gaps and drafting new text.
Catch up the zoning bylaw consolidations.		Many of the zoning bylaws have not had the amendments consolidated into the document for some time, even years. The amendments need to be tabulated and then reconciled in the documents, key maps and County GIS.
Engage a service provider for natural heritage review of development applications.		The Conservation Authorities have not had the capacity for this service for some time and the County needs to replace with another service provider.
Develop Terms of Reference (TOR) for Environmental Impact Assessment		Engage an ecologist to develop a full and scoped version of an Environmental Impact Assessment to assist landowners in accomplishing this requirement of certain development applications.

2023 Goals / Objectives		Comments
Complete review and update Zoning Bylaws for each Lower Tier.		Finish text, review and update key maps and County GIS data set.

		Initiate amendment, hold public meeting and consultation period. Recommend amendments to bylaw.
Build up resources for development review.		Establish screening tool for archaeological potential. Develop a TOR for hydrogeological/nitrate assessment. Develop TOR for Traffic Impact Assessment.
Continue input of historic file and property information into new software database.		Input all the old consent files and aggregate license files and then archive them.
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.		Encourage and participate in growth management planning to coordinate water, sanitary and storm water infrastructure with suitable lands for development.
Initiate reporting schedule for consumption of land and available lots.		Required tracking for growth planning efforts.
Collaborate with Economic Development on evaluating impacts in commercial areas when development proposals are made.		Potentially leading to a Terms of Reference for developers.

<b>2024 Goals / Objectives</b>		<b>Comments</b>
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 2022 and 2023 years will have significant impact on what long range work may need to be addressed.

Ongoing performance management and revision of process if necessary.		Coordinate with the Management Committee on any adjustments to performance management tracking, analysis and reporting.
Ongoing coordination with lower tiers on servicing master plans.		Encourage and participate in growth management planning to coordinate water, sanitary and storm water infrastructure with suitable lands for development.
Ongoing reporting for consumption of land and available lots.		Required tracking for growth planning efforts.

## Financial Allocation/Deployment Plan

Service	FTE Requirements by Year			
	2021	2022	2023	2024
Planning and Development				
<b>Total Program FTE Requirements</b>	<b>6.33</b>	<b>7.33</b>	<b>6.33</b>	<b>6.33</b>

## FTE Variances

- In 2021 the Senior Planner position was implemented and the team grew to include 3 full time planners in addition to the Manager and Senior. A Planning and Land Division Clerk was also introduced, this position performs the Land Division Secretary-Treasurer role as well as Clerk for the Development Program. A complete transition out of development review support by outsourced planning firms occurred in April 2021.
- One additional full-time planner is required to complete the Official Plan in a timely manner. This is a contract position from November 2021 to December 31, 2022.

## Training and Development

An updated training and professional development plan is included 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 build on their own specific 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 expenses budgeted for 2022 are a 40% increase over the 2021 operating expenses. The increase is attributed to three temporary costs including:

- One full time planner on a temporary contract to assist with the completion of the New Official Plan for the County;
- \$100K as a placeholder for an ecologist on retainer to assist with resolving any identified concerns or disputes with the Natural Environment mapping to provide for a scientific evaluation, an individual consult with the landowner and a report for the County. This will be reserved for more difficult assessments and is considered a cost associated with the New Official Plan.
- \$25K is earmarked for the development of a program for Perth County to cost share environmental projects on private property to align with the County’s Climate Change Action Plan and to acknowledge the public good from the stewardship conducted on private property. The project would require the future allocation of budget to the grants themselves to leverage private investment in stewardship action – possible \$100k annually. The annual costs of grant are the main contributor of an increase in the Planning Dept budget in 2023.

The costs associated with the New Official Plan are intended to be funded from the levy stabilization reserve due to their temporary nature and total \$284,274.