

Guide to Planning Application Pre-Consultation

1. Introduction

This guide is intended to assist potential applicants who wish to apply for a Planning Act application on lands within Perth County. This guide has been developed to aid the applicant during the preliminary consultation process in keeping with the provisions set out through By-Law 3509-2016 as well as in accordance with the pre-consultation regulations outlined in the County of Perth Official Plan. The County of Perth requires pre-consultation prior to applying for an **Official Plan Amendment, Approval of a Plan of Subdivision, Plan of Condominium or Consent to Sever**.

Pre-consultation allows the municipal, county and agency staff the opportunity to provide input on a development proposal early in the process. Pre-consultation will allow staff to undertake a review of a development proposal, and to assess the merits of the proposal. Pre-consultation will also outline which studies may be necessary as part of the development, as well as any other types of applications that may be needed.

After pre-consultation, the applicant should understand the viability of the proposal, any required documentation and fees required to submit the application, the approval process and anticipated time line, any potential obstacles that may arise, as well as the public participation and approval process. The applicant should also have enough information to decide whether to proceed, revise, or abandon the project based on the information received during pre-consultation.

2. Pre-consultation versus “Preliminary Conversation”

A pre-consultation meeting is not intended to replace preliminary conversations at the planning department, a phone or e-mail inquiry, or a meeting with staff. Information gathering is a necessary step to get started. Most development proposals start with a conversation and, if they proceed, lead to a pre-consultation meeting.

3. How does the potential applicant start the pre-consultation process?

The applicant should begin the pre-consultation process at the earliest possible time. It is appropriate to contact staff to discuss the development proposal as soon as the specifics of the proposal are known to the applicant. This step is typically taken after preliminary conversations through phone, e-mail, or at the planning department.

The applicant should contact their area Planner (visit <https://www.perthcounty.ca> to learn who the Planner is in your area) and request a pre-consultation meeting. Staff will ask the applicant a number of questions about the proposal, in addition to any information gathered through preliminary conversations, to determine the extent of pre-consultation that will be required and what departmental, agency, or other staff need to be in attendance. As a best practice, staff will provide the applicant with a **Pre-Consultation Submission Requirements & Request Form**.

4. Pre-Consultation Submission Requirements & Request Form

The **Pre-Consultation Submission Requirements & Request Form** ensures that consistent information is provided across all municipalities in the County and provides standardization for the applicant across all municipal jurisdictions. The information provided by the applicant in this form will assist the planner in their background research on the property and the development proposal.

5. What information is required for Pre-Consultation?

In order to start the formal pre-consultation process, the applicant must submit a completed **Pre-Consultation Submission Requirements & Request Form**, with the applicable information.

Planning staff can provide additional clarification and explanation of what information is necessary for the pre-consultation meeting, based on the level of complexity of the proposal.

6. Proposal review

Planning staff will review the pre-consultation form and submitted materials to assess the proposal, and will also circulate to any local, County, or agency staff that may have interest or jurisdiction over the proposal. Examples include local municipal or county public works and roads departments, conservation authorities, Provincial Ministries (such as Transportation, Natural Resources), etc. Once Planning staff have received comments from agency reviewers, a summary of development review will be compiled and forwarded to the applicant.

Note: Depending on the complexity of the development proposal, staff response timeline will vary. Complex proposals that require coordination of internal department and external agency comments will require more time to research and compile than simpler, less complex applications. Staff will provide the applicant with an approximate timeframe on comments and potential scheduling of the pre-consultation meeting.

A pre-consultation meeting may be set up by contacting the County Planning and Development Department by phone or email:

Phone: (519) 271-0531 Ext. 449

Email: planning@perthcounty.ca

Website: <https://www.perthcounty.ca>

7. The Pre-Consultation Meeting

The timing of the pre-consultation meeting, scheduling of attending staff, and circulation of the agenda will be coordinated by the area Planner. The pre-consultation meeting will be based on the staff review of the proposal, and consist of a discussion between staff, agency representatives, and the applicant on matters such as:

- What planning applications are required to proceed (Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Subdivision/Condominium, Site Plan, Consent, Minor Variance etc.);

- What studies and documentation will be required in support of the required applications and the scope of those studies;
- Potential obstacles, challenges, or road blocks that may impact the approval process;
- The public participation process, if any;
- The estimated timeframe to process the application once a complete application is received;
- All application and review fees associated with the development proposal;
- Applicable development charges, building permit fees, etc.

8. After the Pre-Consultation meeting

After the pre-consultation meeting, the area Planner will prepare a summary of the meeting discussion. The written summary and response will be submitted to the applicant shortly after the pre-consultation meeting. Staff will also explain the “next steps” with respect to the type(s) of application(s) required, necessary studies, and the estimated timeline for the approvals process.

Based on the outcome of the pre-consultation meeting, the potential applicant may decide to proceed with the recommendations of the meeting summary and undertake any identified studies required for a complete application. The applicant may also decide to modify or abandon the proposal.

9. Other Planning Tools & Resources

Mapping and aerial photography of your property is available at the County of Perth’s online GIS at the following link: <https://www.perthcounty.ca/en/living-here/maps.aspx>

The County Official Plan text and maps can be found at:

www.perthcounty.ca/en/county-of-perth-official-plan.aspx

Other resources, application guides, fees and forms can be found at:

<https://www.perthcounty.ca/planning>