

## 10-Step Guide to Site Development

Site plan approval is required prior to obtaining a building permit for major building renovations or additions and for the construction of a new commercial, industrial, institutional or multiple residential building.

As some parts of this process vary according to municipality investors need to contact the local Planning Department to obtain the relevant application information.

### **Step 1:**

Preliminary review of site plan

The applicant consults municipal staff at the preliminary or conceptual design stage.

Most municipalities offer this service free of charge to explain the process and advise on city standards, zoning requirements, site design and time schedules.

Since each municipality may have different submission requirements, request a site plan application form as this will generally outline submission requirements.

### **Step 2:**

Site plan application submission requirements

- a) Site plan application form (completed, signed and witnessed) and fees
- b) Multiple copies of existing site condition plan with the following information:
  - location of driplines and trunks of trees and their related elevation
  - location of existing driveways, paved areas, and gravel-surfaced areas
  - location of buildings to be demolished and buildings to be retained
  - existing topography of the land, showing contour lines, and clearly illustrating severe slopes, both top and bottom of banks

c) Multiple copies of a site plan showing the proposed development with the following information:

- A key map showing the location of the property, true dimensions, bearings, and area of the property
- The location and dimensions of all existing and proposed buildings and structures including basements and mezzanines
- The dimensions of all yards (i.e. setbacks of all buildings and structures from property lines)
- The location of off-street parking and loading areas including the dimensions of parking spaces and loading areas and setbacks of such areas from property lines
- The width of driveways and aisles accessing parking stalls and loading areas
- The dimensions detailing entrance and exit locations to and from the site
- The location of outdoor containers and/or vaults, central storage and collection areas or other facilities for the storage of garbage and other waste or recyclable material
- The location, height, and type of fencing and landscaped areas
- Percentage of lot coverage of buildings and hard surface areas
- Landscaped areas
- The location of curbing, outdoor storage areas, and existing and proposed sidewalks
- Existing and proposed connections to municipal services
- Storm water management areas

Additional information that maybe required:

- Underground parking area designs shown on a separate plan
- Preliminary storm water management concepts
- Elevation plan
- Traffic study

**Step 3:**

The Applicant submits completed application and plans to the City Hall Planning Department.

**Step 4:**

A letter is usually sent to the applicant accepting the complete application. If information is missing or the application is not complete you may receive a phone call or letter. Note that the application will not be processed if it is incomplete. Some municipalities may attach an example development agreement that lists the standard conditions of approval that could be registered on title as a condition of site plan approval.

**Step 5:**

The application is usually circulated to departments and other agencies for comments. Expect this process to take approximately ten business days.

**Step 6:**

The applicant will be asked to a meeting to review the proposed site plan, comments and revisions that were received through the circulation.

**Scenario a)**

The application concerns an existing development with minor changes:

The site plan may simply be stamped approved (with possible conditions) and sent to the owner for their agreement.

**Scenario b)**

The application concerns a Greenfield development or major changes to an existing facility:

Site plan approval is issued with a summary of conditions that is usually registered on title (as per Section 41 of the Planning Act).

Scenario c)

The applicant may be requested to make changes and resubmit the plan.

Scenario d)

The application is refused with reasons.

This decision can be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). The Board can approve the application with or without conditions or refuse it.

### **Step 7:**

If the approved site plan and agreement will be registered on title there will normally be a few days required to format the site plan to a registrable format and to prepare the legal documents.

### **Step 8:**

Once the applicant agrees by signing the agreement it is registered on title. This agreement runs with the title when the property is sold.

Legal Services prepares the Section 41 Development Agreement and registers the agreement after all signatures and fees are received.

### **Step 9:**

Compliance with pre-building permit conditions

The municipality will issue a letter of approval with the conditions which are often registered on title.

Pre-building permit conditions may include but are not limited to the following:

- Submission and approval of grading and drainage control plan
- Submission and approval of storm water management design
- Dedication of road widenings
- Submission and approval of site lighting design
- Submission and approval of cost estimate
- Posting of a Letter of Credit
- Fulfillment of regional conditions

## **Step 10:**

### Building Permit

The permit is issued after:

- Submission, review and acceptance of the building permit application and fee. Architectural, structural, electrical and mechanical drawings to ensure that they comply with the Ontario Building Code maybe required.
- All required fees<sup>1</sup> have been paid which may or may not include:
  - Development charges
  - Service connection fees
  - Sidewalk fee
  - Stormwater management fees
  - Damage deposit fee
  - Park land dedication fee
- Confirmation that all pre-building permit conditions, listed as part of the site plan approval process, have been met.

Start of construction

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<sup>1</sup> Fees and charges vary considerably from one municipality to another and undergo regular review. For the most current information please contact the Planning Department in question.