



Guide to Site Plan Control



Effective January 1, 2023

Introduction

Site Plan Approval is an important process in ensuring development within the City of Orillia is well-planned, meets current standards and integrates well into the surrounding community. While this guide is meant to provide an overview of the Site Plan Approval process, City of Orillia Planning staff are available to meet with interested applicants to answer any questions and provide guidance.

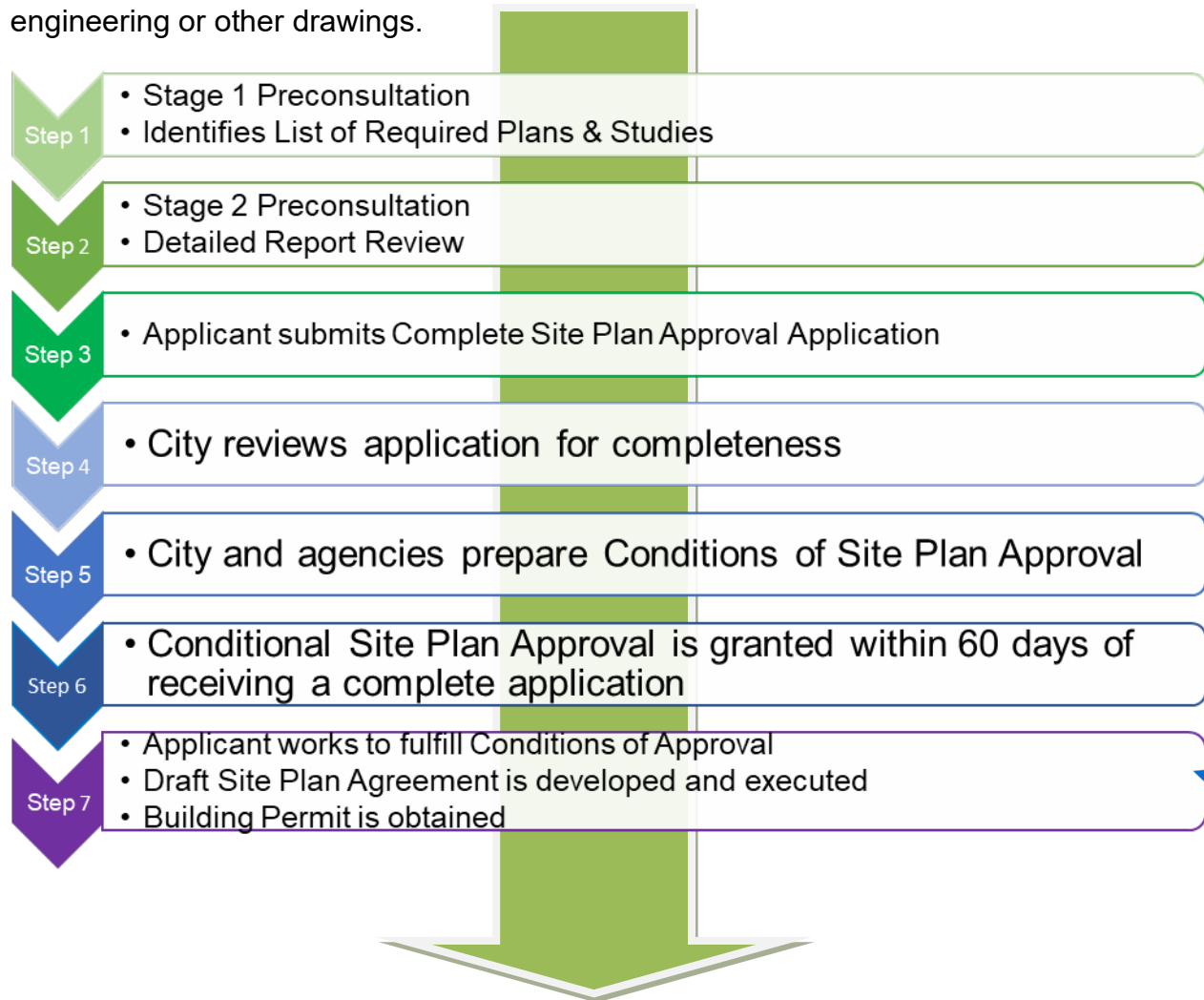
What is Site Plan Control and why is it required?

Site Plan Control is a tool used to ensure that proposed development is properly planned, will meet the City's policies, by-laws, engineering standards, and will have the necessary approvals in place prior to the start of construction. The applicant is responsible for completing a series of drawings and studies to help City staff understand and visualize the proposal and to confirm all of the details related to the development. Staff are then able to compare these details with the requirements of various engineering standards, transportation requirements, zoning provisions, and other applicable criteria. Once all of these details have been confirmed and approved, a Site Plan Agreement is drafted between the applicant and City (sometimes in coordination with a solicitor) so that site preparation and construction can take place. The City will aim to grant Conditional Site Plan Approval within 60 days of receiving a complete application. However, the process of fulfilling the Site Plan Conditions of Approval can vary depending on the complexity of the development and the quality of the submissions. Fulfilling conditions of Site Plan Approval can take between 2-12 months to complete.



Site Plan Process

The road to development often begins with a very rough concept, plan or idea. Typically an applicant discusses their idea with a City Planner early in the process, either by phone or in-person. If the idea requires Site Plan Approval, City staff will ask the applicant to apply for Stage 1 Preconsultation with the submission of a Conceptual Site Plan and, in some cases Conceptual Building Elevations, prior to the preparation of engineering or other drawings.



Site Plan Process Explained

Step 1: The formal Site Plan Approval process begins with the preparation of a Conceptual Site Plan (and in some cases Conceptual Building Elevations) and mandatory Stage 1 Preconsultation. Stage 1 Preconsultation provides an opportunity for the applicant to discuss their proposal with City staff in order to identify any important issues and to discuss other required plans, studies or further requirements needed for the application. Effective January 1, 2020, a fee must be paid for Pre-consultation. For the current fee schedule please visit <https://www.orillia.ca/en/city-hall/planningapplicationfees.aspx>.

Step 2: Once the list of required plans and studies has been identified, then the applicant can begin to work on Stage 2 Preconsultation. During Stage 2 Preconsultation, the required studies will be reviewed by the City and its peer reviewers to ensure the required studies conform to the City's Official Plan, Terms of Reference, Engineering Design Criteria, and other City policies and guidelines. Until the City states that it is satisfied with the required studies, the formal application cannot be submitted for completeness. Effective January 1, 2020, a fee must be paid for Pre-consultation. For the current fee schedule please visit <https://www.orillia.ca/en/city-hall/planningapplicationfees.aspx>.

Step 3: Once the applicant has prepared all of the required plans, studies, information and material determined during the two Preconsultation stages, a complete application can be submitted, along with the application fee. For the current fee schedule, please visit <https://www.orillia.ca/en/city-hall/planningapplicationfees.aspx>.

Step 4: Planning staff will review the application for completeness. The City has 30 days to deem the application complete or incomplete.

Step 5: Once an application has been deemed complete, then City staff and agencies will work to develop the Conditions of Site Plan Approval.

Step 6: It is the goal of the City to grant Conditional Site Plan Approval within 60 days of receiving a complete application. Once an application has been deemed complete, the applicant cannot initiate their own revisions to the proposed development. If the applicant chooses to revise the proposed development on their own volition (and not as a result of comments received), then the applicant will be required to re-apply and may be required to go through the Preconsultation process again (at the discretion of the General Manager of Development Services and Engineering).

Step 7: Once Conditional Site Plan Approval has been granted, then the applicant can begin to fulfill the Conditions of Approval.

All of the plans must be reviewed to ensure compliance with City and Provincial standards. These plans must be circulated to internal departments and external agencies, as needed, in order to ensure all elements of good planning are considered.

These considerations may include transportation impacts, parking and lighting, the provision of trails, accessibility, enrollment changes at local schools, etc.

Staff compile all comments received and send these back to the applicant. The applicant is then responsible for addressing these comments to the satisfaction of the approval authority who provided the specific comment (this could be the City, an external agency or Provincial Ministry). Once this is done, the applicant submits the revised plans. It is important to note that this step must be repeated until all the issues have been addressed. A quality submission is extremely important and can save the applicant time and money during this process.

Once the final submissions have been approved, a Site Plan Agreement between the developer and the City can be drafted. If a Site Plan Application is complex, the involvement of the City's Solicitor will be required. The applicant is responsible for these costs and the City will therefore require a deposit to ensure these fees are paid. The City Planner will be able to advise if the application is "complex" early in the process so the applicant is aware of this prior to submitting a Site Plan Application. Since the majority of details will have been worked out at this point in the application process, it is possible the applicant may apply for a building permit at this time.

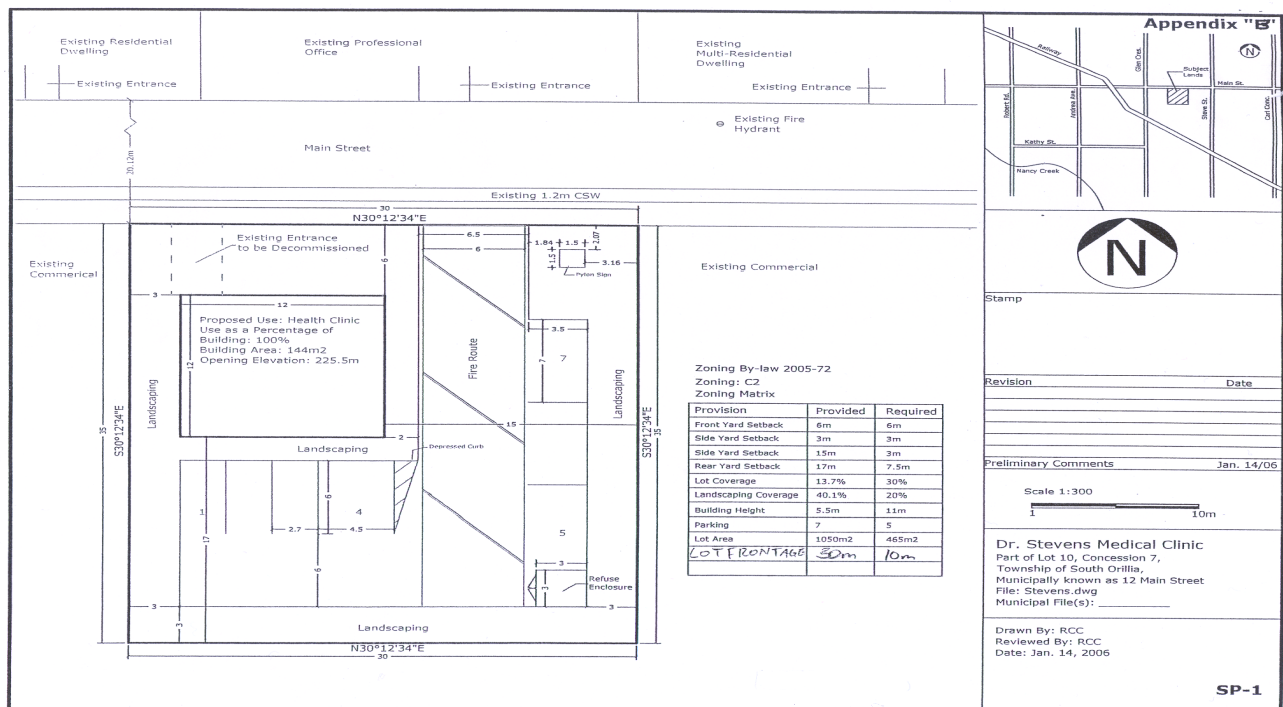
Once the Site Plan Agreement is ready for execution, securities will be collected. Securities are a monetary deposit which ensures that if the applicant fails to carry out the work identified on the Site Plan and in the Agreement, the City can do so that this burden does not fall on taxpayers. (For more information on securities see the "Fees and Securities" section on page 6). Once the agreement has been executed, the Building Permit can be issued and the development of the site can begin!

Site Plan Drawing

A Site Plan drawing illustrates the proposal using a bird's eye view and provides a summary of the development that will take place on a site. At minimum, a preliminary site plan drawing must include the following in order to apply for Stage 1 Preconsultation:

- North arrow
- Identification of abutting streets
- Location and number of parking spaces
- Identification of Fire Route
- Address of the property, and the lot dimensions
- Proposed building footprint location, size and setbacks from lot lines
- Identification of driveway entrances
- Identification of the main entrance into the building
- Identification of the nearest fire hydrant and/or Siamese connection at the building

EXAMPLE OF A SITE PLAN DRAWING



A Site Plan drawing used for the Complete Application requires additional details, a full list of which can be found in the 'Additional Resources' section of this guide. Site Plan drawings are typically prepared by an engineer, architect or other professional designer.

Site Plan Application Requirements

As part of the Site Plan Application, the applicant needs to provide as much information as possible to demonstrate that the proposal meets all required criteria. During the Preconsultation process, City staff will indicate which of the following may be required in order to consider the application “complete”:

- Site Plan
- Site Servicing Plan
- Site Servicing / Storm Water Management Plan / Functional Servicing Plans
- Storm Water Management Report
- Traffic Impact Study
- Entrance Analysis
- Traffic Impact Study
- Erosion Control Plan
- Lot Grading Plan
- Functional Servicing Report
- Archeological Assessment
- D4 Assessment Study (per MOE)
- Environmental Site Assessment
- Heritage Impact Study
- Lighting Plan/Photometric Analysis
- Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
- Parking Needs Study
- Record of Site Condition
- Shadow Study
- Snow Storage Study / Plan
- Tree Preservation Plan
- Hydrogeology/ Hydrology Study
- Shoreline Protection Plan
- Heritage Character Statement
- Environmental Impact Study
- Species At Risk
- Other site specific studies if necessary

Fees and Securities

Cost is an important factor in any development process. The Site Plan Application fees depends on the size of proposed development. For the current fee schedule please visit <https://www.orillia.ca/en/city-hall/planningapplicationfees.aspx>. There several application fees for a Site Plan Approval application: Stage 1 Preconsultation, Stage 2 Preconsultation, Complete Application Fee, and Site Plan Development Agreement Administration Fee.

In addition to the application fees, other financial considerations may include: consultant fees, Engineering Review Fees, Building Permit fees, Development Charges, inspection fees, parkland dedication fees as well as securities. Securities are deposits collected by the City to ensure that if for any reason the required site works cannot be completed by the applicant, the City can undertake actions to either complete or remediate these works. Securities are an important monetary consideration and are returned once the work has been inspected and approved as complete.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why do I need to follow the Site Plan process?

Site Plan Approval is needed to ensure all development is done in a practical, safe and organized manner. This process ensures proposed development is considerate of traffic flow, pedestrians, accessibility, landscaping, storm water run-off, sight triangles and fits within neighbouring properties and uses. This is important for short-term and long-term site use, and helps ensure the City is developed in a responsible manner. The City cannot issue a Building Permit unless Site Plan Approval has been granted for developments required to go through Site Plan Approval.

2. How much will this process cost me?

It is difficult at the outset of an application to calculate all of the fees associated with the Site Plan Approval process, because the Engineering Review Fees and Parkland Dedication Fees are calculated to near the end of this process. In addition to City related fees and securities, the applicant should also consider costing related to consultant, engineering and surveying fees, and any infrastructure improvements required as a result of the proposed development such as sidewalks, road widenings and easements.

3. How long will the Site Plan Approval process take?

The City is committed to granting Conditional Site Plan Approval within 60 days of receiving a complete application. However, the length of the Preconsultation process and the length of time it takes the applicant to fulfill the Conditions of Site Plan Approval depends on the complexity of the project and the quality of the submissions. As the application becomes more complex, it often triggers the need for more consultation and in-depth review. It takes time for these specific details to be provided by the applicant (or consultant) and in turn takes additional time for committees, agencies, and staff to review these submissions. Typically, a Site Plan Application can be described as Basic, Standard or Complex. A Basic application typically takes about 2 months to fulfill the Conditions of Approval and only Stage 1 Preconsultation is required. A Standard application requires two stages of Preconsultation and it can take up to 6 months to fulfill the Conditions of Approval. A Complex application will require two stages of Preconsultation and can take up to 12 months to satisfy the Conditions of Approval. A description of these various types of applications can be found under the “Additional Resources” section on page 10 of this guide.

4. How can I speed up this review process?

The Site Plan review process depends on both the applicant and City staff. The Development Services and Engineering Department has developed a process which allows staff to quickly and efficiently forward documents to necessary departments and approval authorities and compile the information to send back to the applicant. Electronic (PDF) submissions of all documents help staff accomplish this. The applicant

can help meet/exceed target dates by providing complete and detailed information, drawings and studies. Often this is achieved with the help of a knowledgeable and reputable consultant. It is extremely important that the applicant and/or consultant address all comments provided by staff in their submissions and that all the drawings are consistent.

5. Is there a chance my application will not be approved?

As long as the Zoning By-law and Official Plan permit the use and the proposed development meets technical site requirements of the City and other approval authorities, there is no reason the application would not be approved. Preconsultation is a crucial step in determining if there are any “red flags” that would stop the development from moving forward or if there are additional development approvals required in order to proceed with the Site Plan Application.

6. Since this involves a legal agreement, do I need to involve my lawyer?

In most cases, the Site Plan Agreement includes standard provisions to ensure the work is carried out as agreed to by both the applicant and the City. However, agreements which involve conveyancing will require the expertise of lawyers to prepare and complete these transactions. In complex agreements, additional provisions are often needed to clarify additional items that are not straightforward. This is usually done in consultation with the City’s solicitor. In either case, it’s up to the applicant to determine if they’d like to have their lawyer review the draft agreement based on their comfort level with the content.

7. Should I hire a planning consultant?

Depending on the complexity of the proposed development, an experienced planning consultant can help the applicant understand the process. In most cases, the consultant takes full responsibility for the application, including correspondence with the City, facilitation of the required drawings and studies and review of the site plan agreement. Since both timing and cost depend greatly on the quality of submitted applications and drawings, the use of a consultant can save the applicant time, money and work in the long run. A list of local consultants can be found in the “Additional Resource” section of this guide.

8. What work, if any can I do on the site before the Agreement is signed?

The City has a Site Alteration By-law which must be adhered to prior to execution of any Site Plan Agreement. Any work proposed prior to execution (signing) of the Site Plan Agreement should be discussed with the City’s Development Coordinator to determine the applicability of the Site Alteration By-law.

9. Can I get a Building Permit before my Site Plan Agreement is signed?

In cases where Site Plan Approval is required, a Building Permit cannot be obtained until the Site Plan Agreement is finalized and executed (signed). The applicant can,

however, apply for a Building Permit once notified by the City Planner that the agreement is substantially complete. This allows the applicant to submit an application and start the Building Permit review process while the conditions of the agreement are being completed. Since, in many cases, the person undertaking the site plan process and the person applying for the building permit are two different individuals (often a consultant versus a contractor) it is very important that these two applicants communicate closely regarding the status of the Site Plan Agreement.

10. Is the Building Permit the end of the Site Plan Process?

Once the Building Permit is issued, construction may begin, however, the process is not entirely over. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they work with the Environment and Infrastructure Services Department to apply for any required Applications for Service, Road Occupancy Permits, etc. There are also inspections during and following construction to ensure the property is being developed according to plan. Once construction is complete, inspections by City staff are carried out to confirm everything has been done correctly and securities are returned.

We're here to Help!

In addition to this guide, additional resources are provided in the following section titled "Additional Resources".

If you have any questions about the Site Plan Approval Process, or wish to discuss further, staff from the Development Services and Engineering Department would be more than happy to assist you.

Contact Information

In Person: Third Floor of the Orillia City Centre, 50 Andrew Street South

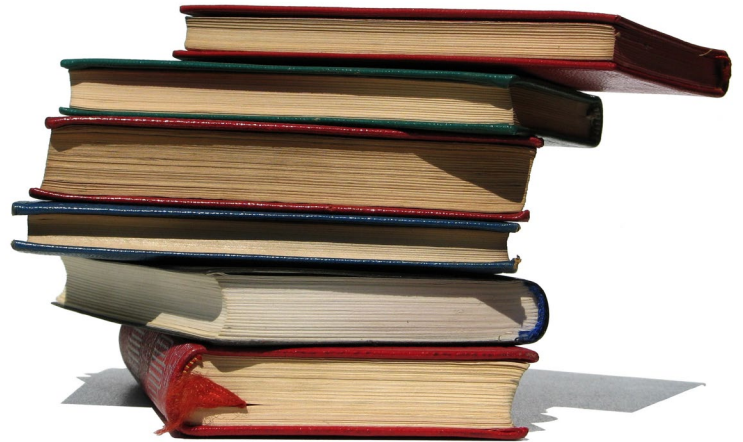
Email: planning@orillia.ca

Phone: 705-325-2622

Additional Resources

Click on the linked documents below for more information.

- [City of Orillia Development Services Website](#)
- [Site Plan Drawing Requirements](#)
- [Site Plan Stream Descriptions \(Basic, Standard, Complex\)](#)
- [Sample Site Plan Agreement](#)
- [Sample Undertaking Agreement](#)
- [Site Plan Application](#)
- Fees
 - [Planning Fee Schedule](#)
 - [Development Charges](#)
 - [Building Permits](#)
- [Local Consultants List](#)
- [City of Orillia Official Plan](#)
- [City of Orillia Zoning By-law](#)



If viewing printed guide, links provided are also available at <https://www.orillia.ca/en/city-hall/site-plan-control.aspx>