HOW TO IMPACT THE LAND-USE PLANNING PROCESS
A GUIDE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVOCATES

CITY OF TORONTO PLANNING TIMELINE

GOOD CHANCE TO WIN?	WHAT HAPPENS	HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Start

PRE-APPLICATION

TOUGH TO ACCESS, BUT THE BEST TIME TO DEMAND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Developer has an idea, asks City for input & support

Try to meet with Councillor

Developer holds consultations (optional)

Push developer & City to hold consultations. Participate!

OFFICIAL PLANNING PROCESS

PHASE 1: SUBMISSION

GOOD TIME TO PREPARE YOUR PLAN

Developer submits application & proposal to planning staff

Read the application (posted on City website)

Lead planner assigned to project

Contact the planner

PHASE 2: CITY STAFF REVIEW

CAN ACCESS WITH A BIT OF EFFORT.

GOOD TIME TO MAKE YOUR DEMANDS

City-led community consultations

City planner reviews application

Expert & city staff comments

Resubmission (if needed)

Consultations are optional. But you can:
- Encourage city to hold consultations
- Help plan them
- Participate

Meet regularly with Councillor and planner

Planner decides if change (amendment) to the Zoning By-law and/or Official Plan is needed.
If so ...

PHASE 3: PUBLIC MEETING

EASIEST TO ACCESS, BUT LOWER CHANCE OF SUCCESS. (START EARLIER!)

Councillor, developer & planner hold meeting for community input

Possible to:
- Ask Councillor to oppose development
- Ask for changes to the development
- Ask for affordable housing, community space, etc.

PHASE 4: STAFF REPORT WRITING

SOME WAYS TO ACCESS

CHANCE OF SUCCESS FALLS OVER TIME

Planner and other City staff write final recommendation to City Council, based on community input

- Keep talking with Councillor
- Can comment to Planner in writing for a few weeks after public meeting

PHASE 5: COUNCIL DECISION

TOUGH TO WIN, FEWER CHANGES POSSIBLE

Council votes at Council meeting to approve, deny, or request changes

Make your voice heard with:
- official written submission
- formal request to speak
- political campaign

Possible requests:
- oppose development
- approve with conditions

Finish

If Council decision is not in line with provincial acts & policies...

→ **LPAT (LOCAL PLANNING APPEAL TRIBUNAL)**

TIME

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH KEY PLAYERS (SEE LIST ON BACK)

LEARN, RESEARCH & BUILD SKILLS

ORGANIZE COMMUNITY COALITION

OUTREACH TO DIVERSE GROUPS (ONGOING)

CREATE SHARED DEMANDS

GROW COALITION, TRAIN NEW LEADERS

United Way Greater Toronto

THE LAND-USE PLANNING PROCESS

WORDS TO KNOW

DEVELOPMENT

The creation of (or changes to) built forms on a specific piece of land (site).This can include buildings, park space, and other physical structures.

KEY PLAYERS

CITY COUNCIL

An elected group of representatives called City Councillors who make laws (called "by-laws") and big decisions for the City, including things related to land-use planning. Each Councillor is elected by residents of the neighbourhood they represent.

LOCAL COUNCILLOR

The City councillor who represents the neighbourhood where the developer wants to build the new development.

CITY PLANNING STAFF

Work with stakeholders, other City divisions, and City Council to set goals and policies, review and process development applications, and gather public input and conduct research to develop and review plans, regulations and projects

CITY PLANNER FOR THE SITE

One planner is the lead for each proposed development. You can contact them! Their name and contact information will be on the City website, and sometimes on billboards put up at the site.

DEVELOPER

The company that proposes and carries out a plan to get a new development designed, funded, and built.

DEVELOPMENT TEAM

A development team usually includes experts from a number of companies. On any one project, the developer may hire architecture, planning, engineering, heritage, transportation, environmental, or community consultation consultants.

PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Provide advice and direction on development services and do initial reviews of planning applications. A Planning Consultant is stationed in each of four District offices (Etobicoke York, North York, Scarborough, and Toronto and East York)

LPAT (LOCAL PLANNING APPEAL TRIBUNAL)

A provincial tribunal that developers can appeal to get a City Council planning decision overturned. The province may be changing this system soon.

RESOURCES

APPLICATION INFORMATION CENTRE

A section of the City of Toronto website that allows residents to search for details about current planning applications.

https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/application-information-centre/

KEY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

TORONTO MUNICIPAL CODE

Explains how City processes work. It's a good place to learn more about the development process and when and how community members can give input.

toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/lawmcode.htm

The City also has two major land-use planning documents that make rules about what you can build on each piece of land in the City:

OFFICIAL PLAN

A document that guides future growth and development within a city or municipality. Includes things like plans for transit, maps of which areas will get a lot of new housing and other buildings, and plans for making the City do less harm to the environment. It has a big effect on what gets built in the City.

toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/

ZONING BY-LAW

A City-wide law that sets the rules for each piece of land about what uses are allowed — such as housing, stores, or factories. It also makes rules about the structure and design of the building and surrounding land, such as height, density (how much can be built on the lot), and lot size.

toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/zoning-by-law-preliminary-zoning-reviews/zoning-by-law-569-2013-2/

MEETINGS TO ATTEND

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING

Not required by the Planning Act, but may be held for some applications, including most large sites.. Usually organized by City Planning staff. The developer presents their proposal, and community members comment on it.

PUBLIC MEETING

Sometimes referred to as the statutory public meeting to distinguish it from optional community consultations. Its purpose is to consider the City staff report on an application and debate its merits. The public can write in or attend to make their views known.