Appendix 'B'

Development Review Process Assessment

City of Markham

KPMG LLP

Final Report
December 3, 2019

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Executive Summary

The City of Markham (City or Markham) retained KPMG LLP (KPMG) in September 2019 to conduct an assessment of the City's development review process. Our engagement team included Gladki Planning Associates, which provided planning and development subject matter knowledge.

Throughout our engagement, staff and industry stakeholders emphasized Markham's reputation for highly skilled staff, customer service and effective team-based approach to development review. Our work builds on that foundation.

Markham's development review process is working well but there are significant opportunities for improvement. This report includes 21 recommendations to help ensure the City's development review process remains efficient, effective and impactful as Markham continues to grow and the nature of development evolves.

Markham is fast growing. The volume, pace and complexity of development is increasing as the City accommodates new residents and new jobs, transitioning from lower to higher density growth. Our recommendations will help ensure that the development review process responds to these new pressures and continues to provide the vital public goods that make the City an engaged, diverse and thriving place to call home.

Objectives, Scope & Work Plan

Markham is seeking to ensure that its development review process is efficient, streamlined and effective; clear and transparent; and, supports excellence in the built environment.

Our assessment included four development application types: Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, Site Plan Control Applications and Plans of Subdivision Applications.

Our approach comprised four phases, shown in Figure 1. Our work was accelerated to meet the deadlines provided by the Province of Ontario's Audit and Accountability Fund, through which this work was funded.

Figure 1: Work Plan

This report and its recommendations are grounded in a robust evidence base that draws on 7 sources of data and information:

— A review of more than 40 documents;

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- More than 30 hours of one-on-one interviews with 20 senior City staff and external commenting partners, including the Regional Municipality of York (York Region) and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA).
- Three focus groups with over 25 industry representatives and an online industry survey;
- Two workshops with 20 managers from across the development review process;
- A half-day process improvement workshop with 15 frontline development review staff;
- Two co-design workshops with 15 managers and 10 frontline staff; and,
- KPMG leading practice.

See Chapter 2 for more information about our approach.

Current State Findings

Markham's development review process is achieving many of the City's objectives. Staff and industry stakeholders consistently identified the City's reputation for highly skilled staff, customer service and effective team-based approach to development review as strong points that differentiate Markham from its municipal peers.

The overarching structure is in place but there is room for operational improvements. Our current state findings identified 28 challenges impacting Markham's development review process. These challenges include:

- Conflicting or contradictory comments provided to applicants that result in longer development review timelines and applicant frustration;
- Late-stage requests from commenting partners that could have been accommodated more effectively earlier in the process;
- Inefficient circulation processes that add to staff workloads;
- Unclear roles and responsibilities that lead to duplication of effort, re-work and staff frustration;
- Undeveloped project and application management tools that result in process inefficiencies; and,
- Applicant escalations that disrupt established workflow processes and result in the ad hoc prioritization of applications.

Our complete current state findings are included in Appendix 1.

Recommendations

This report includes 21 recommendations to help ensure Markham's development review process is efficient, effective and impactful. Our recommendations build on what works by:

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- Implementing low cost tools to streamline the circulation process and empower frontline staff;
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities to eliminate duplication and reduce conflicting or contradictory comments;
- Simplifying circulation processes to reduce process steps and accelerate review timelines;
- Establishing a protocol to reduce the negative impact of stakeholder escalations; and,
- Refreshing performance measures to better manage and evaluate the development review process.

Our recommendations should be aligned with the City's implementation of ePLAN, which is already helping improve the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the development review process.

A summary of our recommendations is included in Figure 2 on Page 9. Chapter 3 includes a detailed discussion of each recommendation.

Implementation Roadmap and Next Steps

Chapter 4 presents our implementation roadmap with prioritized actions for each of our 21 recommendations.

The successful implementation of these recommendations will require sustained executive-level support and dedicated project leadership. Most importantly, it will require cooperation and collaboration with applicants and the many internal and external commenting partners involved in the development review process. To help ensure success, we also provide a recommended implementation structure and high-level change management and communications frameworks.

How to Read this Report

This report has four chapters including this Executive Summary. Chapter 2 presents our approach, including our objectives, scope, methodology and work plan. Chapter 3 presents our recommendations, and Chapter 4 presents our implementation roadmap and related implementation structure, including change management and communications frameworks.

Our current state findings are included in Appendix 1. Appendices 2 and 3 include supporting material related to our approach.

Limitations

Given the tight timelines associated with the provincial Audit and Accountability Fund, which funded this project, an in-depth quantitative assessment of the development review process was outside the scope of our work. Moreover, while the City is working towards more effective information and data management through the implementation of ePLAN, the City does not possess the comprehensive development review-related data sets required for such an assessment. As a result, our analysis relied on a robust qualitative evidence base, such as interviews, focus groups and

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workshops. While these activities were structured to be broad-based and representative, they could not be comprehensive given time and budget.

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Figure 2 presents our recommendations. They are organized into the five layers of our assessment framework. More information about our methodology is included in Chapter 2. Our detailed recommendations are included in Chapter 3.

Figure 2: Recommendations

Layer	Findings
Process	1.0 Develop and implement standardized comment templates to streamline workflow processes and accelerate review timelines. 1.1 Develop criteria to structure the recirculation process to reduce application churn and late-stage comments. 1.2 Clarify and simplify the circulation process for technical commenting partners. 1.3 Establish a standardized in-person meeting structure to align internal commenting partners, resolve conflicting comments and enhance customer service. 1.4 Establish regular standing meetings with external commenting partners and review how and when each external commenting partner is engaged in the development review process. 1.5 Undertake a review of the City's site plan control and delegation by-laws to identify additional delegation opportunities and speed up review timelines. 1.6 Update and publish existing Terms of Reference (TORs) for required studies and review opportunities for additional TORs to encourage process consistency and improved application quality. 1.7 Streamline the report approval process to reduce process inefficiencies and increase development review staff capacity.

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Layer	Findings
	1.8 Develop a mandatory escalation protocol to reduce the negative impact of stakeholder interventions during the formal development review process. 1.9 Adopt a formal continuous improvement program to maximize the impact of existing process improvements.
People & Organization	2.0 Define and document development review-related roles and responsibilities to reduce process inefficiencies. 2.1 Empower the lead Planner on each development application to be fully in charge of all aspects of file management and operational decision making. 2.2 Equip lead Planners with enhanced project management tools and training. 2.3 Formalize Project Review meetings as a governance mechanism to resolve difficult application-related issues. 2.4 Implement a file transfer protocol to reduce the process inefficiencies associated with staff turnover and absences.
Governance	3.0 Establish a performance measurement framework to improve the management and evaluation of the development review process. 3.1 Begin the transition to staff time tracking to improve process management and performance measurement.

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Layer	Findings
Technology & Information	4.0 Review the implementation plan for ePLAN to help ensure a smooth transition to the new technology system and the full utilization of its capabilities. 4.1 Improve the City's online development review portal to help improve application quality.
Customer	5.0 Measure customer satisfaction with the development review process (e.g., annual surveys) to track performance and continually improve the user experience with this City service. 5.1 Establish formal two-way learning opportunities for staff and industry to improve application quality and facilitate collaboration.

Chapter 2: Approach & Work Plan

2: Approach & Work Plan

The City retained KPMG in September 2019 to conduct an assessment of the City's development review process. Our engagement team included Gladki Planning Associates, which provided planning and development subject matter knowledge.

The City's Commissioner of Development Services sponsored the work. A senior-level interdepartmental Project Team provided oversight. The Project Team included representatives from Planning and Urban Design, Engineering, Economic Growth, Culture and Entrepreneurship, Operations, Environmental Services and Building Standards, among others. A Manager from the Development Services Commission provided day-to-day support.

Objectives, Scope & Methodology

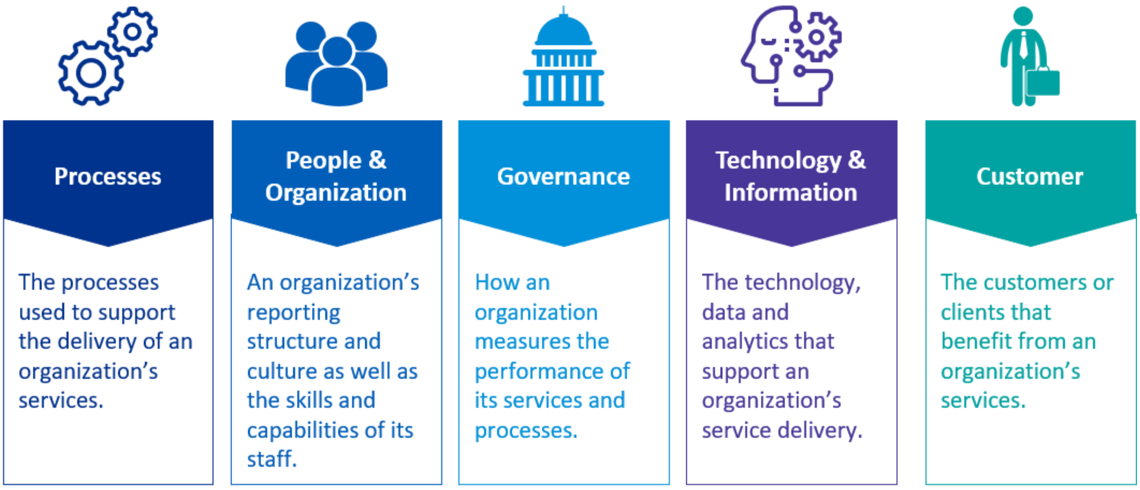
Markham is seeking to ensure that its development review process is efficient, streamlined and effective; clear and transparent; and, supports excellence in the built environment.

Our assessment included four development application types: Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, Site Plan Control Applications and Plans of Subdivision Applications. For each application type, our scope included processes, management practices, roles, responsibilities, timelines, performance measures, information and technology.

Our scope was interdepartmental. We engaged and examined all major Departments involved in the development review process – including Planning and Urban Design, Building Standards, Engineering, Operations, Environmental Services and Fire Services, among others.

Our assessment framework for this engagement is built on our Target Operating Model (TOM) methodology. A TOM is a framework for understanding and analyzing an organization or service. The TOM used for this engagement had five layers, described below in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Assessment Framework



2: Approach & Work Plan

Work Plan

Work commenced on September 16, 2019 and closed on November 29, 2019. Our approach comprised four phases, shown in Figure 4. Our work was accelerated to meet the deadlines provided by the Province of Ontario’s Audit and Accountability Fund, through which this work was funded.

Figure 4: Work Plan

	1. Plan	2. Discover & Describe	3. Ideate & Innovate	4. Report
Overview	• Establish a strong project foundation and align on the engagement schedule	• Build a robust evidence based to understand the current state and identify improvement opportunities	• Review and refine improvement opportunities	• Synthesize findings into a final report and implementation roadmap
Activities	• Kick-off meeting • Stakeholder engagement strategy	• 20 one-on-one interviews with senior staff and external commenting partners • Two focus groups with manager-level staff • Two industry focus groups and an online survey • Process improvement workshop	• Two co-design workshops with managers and frontline staff • Additional industry consultation • Additional stakeholder briefings	• Draft final report and roadmap • Present final report and roadmap
Outputs	• Revised work plan and project reporting schedule • Stakeholder engagement strategy	• Opportunities report summarizing current state and improvement opportunities for further development	• Validated improvement opportunities	• Final report and roadmap

1. Plan

We worked closely with the City’s Project Manager to confirm the assessment’s objectives and work plan. On September 18, 2019, we facilitated a kick-off meeting with the Project Team to validate the assessment’s updated project objectives and work plan. We also reviewed and refined a stakeholder engagement strategy, including the identification of stakeholders, tactics and engagement timelines.

2. Discover & Describe

During the second phase, we built the foundations of a robust evidence base to understand the current state and identify improvement opportunities.

We conducted an in-depth review of more than 40 documents provided by the City. Documents included organizational charts, process maps, guidelines, performance measures and previous reviews and studies. A list of documents reviewed is included in Appendix 2.

We also completed approximately 38 hours of stakeholder engagement with more than 65 internal and external stakeholders. Our stakeholder engagement activities included:

2: Approach & Work Plan

- 20 one-on-one interviews with senior City staff, elected officials and external commenting partners, including York Region and the TRCA;
- Two focus groups with 20 manager-level staff representing Departments engaged in the development review process; and,
- Two focus groups with 25 industry representatives, including developers and consultants as well as representatives from Building Industry and Land Development Association.

We also created and distributed an online industry survey for industry representatives unable to attend our in-person focus groups. A complete list of the stakeholders engaged in our work is included in Appendix 3.

One-on-one interviews were typically 30 to 60 minutes in length. We followed a semi-structured approach that included interview questions distributed in advance but allowed interviewees to identify new issues. Focus groups were two hours in length and followed a similar, semi-structured approach.

Alongside interviews and focus groups, we also conducted a process improvement workshop with 15 frontline staff. We used a Lean approach to map the major processes for each of our four application types, identifying pain points, strengths and improvement opportunities.

We synthesized our findings into an interim report. The interim report included a summary of the current state as well as a long-list of improvement opportunities for additional development during Phase 3. The interim report was presented to the Commissioner, Development Services and the Director, Planning and Urban Design on October 23, 2019. We also presented the interim report to the Project Team on October 25, 2019.

3. Ideate & Innovate

During the third phase, we developed the key improvement opportunities included in our interim report through two co-design workshops with manager-level and frontline staff. During the workshops, we worked alongside staff to review and refine seven key improvement opportunities. Outputs from the workshop were incorporated into this report.

4. Report

During the fourth and final phase, we synthesized our findings into this final report and implementation roadmap. Draft versions of this report were shared with the Commissioner, Development Services and the Director, Planning and Urban Design on November 14, 2019 and the Project Team on November 20, 2019. We also presented the key findings in this report to industry representatives on November 25, 2019. Revisions have been incorporated into this final version.

Chapter 3: Recommendations

Recommendations

This chapter presents our recommendations to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of Markham's development review process.

Our recommendations are organized into the five layers of our assessment framework and grounded in an evidence base that draws on seven sources of information:

- A review of more than 40 documents;
- More than 30 hours of one-on-one interviews with 20 senior City staff and representatives from York Region and the TRCA;
- Three workshops with 25 industry representatives and an online industry survey;
- Two workshops with over 20 managers from across the development review process;
- A process improvement workshop with 15 front-line staff;
- Two co-design workshops with 15 managers and 15 front-line staff; and,
- KPMG leading practice.

Additional detail about our methodology and evidence base is included in Chapter 2.

Unless otherwise noted, recommendations apply to all four development application types within the scope of our review.

These recommendations should be read and understood alongside the City's ongoing ePLAN implementation. There may be opportunities to accelerate the implementation of these recommendations through ePLAN and/or enhance the implementation of ePLAN by implementing these recommendations. We have noted recommendations that will be impacted by ePLAN's implementation in the body of this Chapter.

These recommendations were reviewed by the Chief Administrative Officer, Development Services Commissioner, Director of Planning and Urban Design and the Project Team. Our recommendations were also shared with industry representatives during a roundtable meeting on November 25, 2019.

Revisions and edits have been incorporated into this final draft.

1. Process

This section presents our recommendations related to the Process layer of our assessment framework.

Process Recommendations	
1.0	Develop and implement standardized comment templates to streamline workflow processes and accelerate review timelines.
1.1	Develop criteria to structure the recirculation process to reduce application churn and late-stage comments.
1.2	Clarify and simplify the circulation process for technical commenting partners.

Recommendations

Process Recommendations	
1.3	Establish a standardized in-person meeting structure to align internal commenting partners, resolve conflicting comments and enhance customer service.
1.4	Establish regular standing meetings with external commenting partners and review how and when each external commenting partner is engaged in the development review process.
1.5	Undertake a review of the City's site plan control and delegation by-laws to identify additional delegation opportunities and speed up review timelines.
1.6	Update and publish existing Terms of Reference (TORs) for required studies and review opportunities for additional TORs encourage process consistency and improved application quality.
1.7	Streamline the report approval process to reduce process inefficiencies and increase development review staff capacity.
1.8	Develop a mandatory escalation protocol to reduce the negative impact of stakeholder interventions during the formal development review process.
1.9	Adopt a formal continuous improvement program to maximize the impact of existing process improvements.

1.0 Develop and implement standardized comment templates to streamline workflow processes and accelerate review timelines.

Internal and external stakeholders stated that there is significant inconsistency in how development application comments are summarized, consolidated and transmitted to applicants. While some departments and some planners provide a standardized format for summarizing application comments, the practice is not widespread. Similarly, applicants are not required to use a standardized format to identify how they have addressed City comments at re-submission.

This process inefficiency leads to applicant and staff frustration. Conflicting or contradictory comments are easily missed, applicants spend time and effort collating comments, and staff are unsure if comments have been adequately addressed. It also contributes to "comment trickle", whereby comments are sent to applicants at different times by different commenting partners, rather than consolidated into a single package.

To close this gap, the City should develop and implement standardized application submission templates for staff and applicants.

The staff template would be used by the lead Planner to collect, collate and transmit consolidated application comments to applicants at each application milestone, i.e., after first and subsequent circulations. The staff template should itemize each comment, including commenting partner and commenting date. To avoid duplication

Recommendations

and reduce the administrative burden on the lead Planner, a single template should be used by all Departments. The City should consider placing the staff template online in a location that is easily accessible by all commenting partners, such as the City's AMANDA system.

The applicant template would be used by applicants to demonstrate how comments have been addressed at each application milestone, i.e., on submission and subsequent resubmissions. It should identify how each comment was addressed and the related application changes and where to locate them in the documents provided.

Submission templates would help accelerate processing times by facilitating the early identification of conflicting or contradictory comments and decrease the administrative burden on staff and applicants associated with reviewing comments and how they have been addressed.

The implementation of ePLAN may offer additional opportunities to streamline and automate the comment templates included in this recommendation.

1.1 Develop criteria to structure the recirculation process to reduce application churn and late-stage comments.

Our evidence base indicated that applications are generally circulated to all internal and external commenting partners on each recirculation, even when the issues to be resolved are narrow and involve a limited number of commenting partners. Overly broad circulations increase application churn and contribute to late-stage, unexpected comments – a significant industry pain point.

To reduce this development review process irritant, the City should develop criteria to determine which commenting partners should receive each recirculation. The criteria should be structured to limit recirculations to commenting partners with i) unresolved issues and/or ii) commenting partners that are impacted by changes in the most recent submission.

As an added measure, the City should consider implementing an opt-in rule for internal commenting partners. Following each circulation after submission, each commenting partner would be required to opt in to the next circulation. If the commenting partner did not opt in, they would not participate in the next circulation, reducing the overall number of commenting partners and increasing commenting partner capacity for more value-adding work.

To facilitate an opt-in approach, commenting partners should be encouraged to be as explicit as possible in their comments and any steps that should be taken to address those comments. Explicit comments and related instructions will make it easier for the lead Planner to determine whether comments have been adequately addressed or if commenting departments should be re-engaged.

1.2 Clarify and simplify the circulation process for technical commenting partners.

The circulation process for technical commenting partners is not well-defined, leading to the duplication of effort and staff frustration. Our process improvement workshop revealed that technical commenting partners (Environmental Services, Fire Services

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and Operations) often receive the same application from multiple sources, including the lead Planner, application intake and the lead engineer. In many cases, these applications are at different stages of the review process, contributing to version control issues and re-work.

The City should identify a single lead responsible for circulating applications to technical commenting partners and for receiving their comments. The development engineer assigned to the file is well positioned for this role given the current "one window" structure for technical commenting partners. This would also align with leading practice in other municipalities with a similar single point of contact approach for technical review.

This recommendation should be considered alongside the implementation of ePLAN to align with its functionality.

1.3 Establish a standardized in-person meeting structure to align internal commenting partners, resolve conflicting comments and enhance customer service.

Development review is collaborative. Success requires frequent cooperation and communication across staff teams and between staff and applicants. A standardized in-person meeting cadence is a leading practice used across North America to facilitate collaboration, cooperation and communication. In-person meetings:

- Encourage internal commenting partners to identify a single, shared City position;
- Facilitate the early identification and resolution of conflicting comments, reducing review cycles and overall application timelines;
- Reduce the administrative burden associated with scheduling ad hoc meetings, particularly for the lead Planner; and,
- Enhance customer service by allowing staff and applicant teams regular opportunities to quickly identify and resolve issues.

Our recommended meeting structure is identified in Figure 5. This structure was developed through our co-design process. It builds on Markham's existing informal practice. To support the recommended meeting structure, applicants should be provided with a single set of consolidated comments whenever possible.

Figure 5: Recommended Meeting Structure

Process Milestone	Meeting	Description
Pre-Consultation	Internal Meeting #1	Internal staff meeting to review application and align on key issues to be resolved.
	External Meeting #1	Staff-applicant meeting to review application and align on next steps.

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Process Milestone	Meeting	Description
Following First Circulation	Internal Meeting #2	Internal staff meeting to review consolidated comments, reconcile any conflicts and identify a consistent, unified position to articulate to the applicant.
	External Meeting #2	Staff-applicant meeting to review consolidated comments and discuss next steps.

Internal and external meetings should be attended by relevant staff from Engineering, Planning & Urban Design, Fire, Environmental Services and Operations. Similarly, applicants should be encouraged to bring all relevant consultants to staff-applicant meetings. To reduce scheduling challenges and encourage attendance, the City should consider introducing pre-calendared "meeting days": weekly or bi-weekly blocks of time reserved for staff and applicant meetings.

The lead Planner should chair the internal and external meetings and take responsibility for the meeting agenda and record of decisions. The lead Planner should also retain the discretion to identify required participants from both staff and applicant teams.

To facilitate implementation, the City should consider opportunities to leverage existing meeting structures, like district meetings and Project Review meetings.

1.4 Establish regular standing meetings with external commenting partners and review how and when each external commenting partner is engaged in the development review process.

The City should establish monthly standing meetings to review and discuss development applications with the Region of York (Region) and the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO). This recommendation builds on the City's existing practice with the Toronto & Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), which was identified as a timely and effective way to identify and resolve issues to reduce commenting cycles.

Monthly standing meetings with external commenting partners should be used to:

- Discuss open development applications;
- Address application-related issues; and,
- Review the City's development application pipeline to facilitate resource planning.

Standing meetings should be aligned with the meeting structure included in Recommendation 1.3 to facilitate external commenting partner engagement in the development review process, particularly during the pre-consultation phase.

The City should also review the role of external commenting partners in its development review process and establish formal guidelines for engaging the Region

Recommendations

and MTO. Internal stakeholders and representatives from external commenting partners advised us that the City currently lacks standard operating procedures about when and how external commenting partners are to be engaged. This contributes to the inefficient circulation process identified in Recommendation1.1 and often delays development review timelines.

1.5 Undertake a review of the City's site plan control and delegation by-laws to identify additional delegation opportunities and speed up review timelines.

Markham's site plan control and delegation by-laws have not been amended since 2009 and 2006, respectively. Markham staff advised that neither by-law has ever been comprehensively reviewed. Internal and external stakeholders consistently advised that the current by-laws do not reflect the growing volume and complexity of development applications and are out-of-step with municipal peers. The site plan control and delegation by-laws review should include:

— Additional staff delegation. A common practice in other Ontario municipalities, delegated site plan approval can streamline the development review process by reducing the time and resources required for Council approval.

— Exemptions for certain minor variances: Minor variances that have low to no impact on neighbouring properties should be considered for exemption from the site plan control process. Subjecting low to no impact applications to the full site plan control process was identified as a significant pain point by staff.

— Application to heritage buildings. Small, single unit heritage buildings are currently subject to site plan control regardless of need or complexity. Internal stakeholders indicated that site plan control is seldom appropriate for smaller, single unit applications and can draw staff time and system resources away from more complex applications.

— The relationship between site plan control and the zoning by-law amendment process. Internal stakeholders and industry representatives indicated that the relationship between site plan and zoning is often unclear, which results in site plan-related issues being brought forward into the zoning by-law amendment review process. The City should identify opportunities to reduce duplication across these two application types, ensuring each serves a distinct planning purpose.

1.6 Update and publish existing Terms of Reference (TORs) for required studies and review opportunities for additional TORs to encourage process consistency and improved application quality.

Terms of Reference (TORs) are a standard project management tool used to encourage consistency and transparency in complex business environments. In the development review context, TORs can be used to clearly define the requirements for each application component, encouraging process consistency across districts and applications as well as better application quality. TORs are used in many Ontario municipalities to provide guidance to staff and applicants.

Recommendations

Our evidence base indicates that the City has developed but not implemented TORs for some application components. As a first step, the City should review, update and implement existing TORs, and make these TORs available on the City's online planning portal.

The City should then work with industry to identify additional opportunities for TORs across the development review process. The City should consider implementing TORs for all major application-related studies (e.g., urban design, transportation, Stormwater, planning rationale, etc.). The regular review of TORs and related opportunities will also help foster a culture of continuous improvement across key development review stakeholders.

1.7 Streamline the report approval process to reduce process inefficiencies and increase development review staff capacity.

Our process improvement workshop indicated that the approval or sign-off process for development review-related reports involved many steps, extending development review timelines and contributing to staff frustration. Workshop participants indicated that preliminary and final reports for OPA, ZBA, SPC and Plans of Subdivision typically require review and approval by up to five individuals, including:

- The Senior Development Manager;
- The Director, Planning & Urban Design;
- The Director, Development Engineering;
- The Commissioner of Development Services; and,
- The City's Chief Administrative Officer.

The City should review the current report approval process and identify opportunities to reduce the number of approval steps. The City should also consider encouraging broader adoption of eScribe, an online platform for report review and approval.

Streamlining the report approval process will also help empower frontline decision-making, strengthening the role of the lead Planner. See Recommendation 2.1 for more information about the role of the lead Planner.

1.8 Develop a mandatory escalation protocol to reduce the negative impact of stakeholder interventions during the formal development review process.

Our evidence base indicated that applicants frequently contact senior City staff and elected officials to inquire about the status of an application and discuss other application-related issues. These stakeholder interventions can result in numerous process inefficiencies, including:

- Time-consuming internal follow-up and reporting requirements;
- The ad hoc re-prioritization of development review applications;
- Extended development review timelines; and,
- Inefficient workload management for development review staff.

Recommendations

To reduce the negative impact of escalations, the City should establish an escalation protocol that includes criteria to trigger a response to escalations and a streamlined reporting process. Figure 6 below outlines the escalation criteria and reporting process that were developed during our co-design workshops.

Figure 6: Escalation Criteria and Reporting Process

Category	Escalation Criteria	Reporting Process
Purpose	Identify reasonable criteria to determine when an escalation should warrant a fulsome response.	Reduce the administrative burden created by unplanned stakeholder interventions by standardizing the tasks and tools used to respond to them.
Description	Escalations to senior City staff and elected officials should be permitted on a "last resort" basis. This means that prior to escalating an application-related issue, applicants should first try to resolve the issue with the lead Planner and relevant district manager. Applicants should be able to demonstrate that previous attempts to resolve the issue through these regular process channels have not been successful.	The reporting process should include: — An escalation submission form (a short submission form completed by applicants to document and submit the details of the escalation); — An escalation reporting template (a short, e.g., 1-2 page, information template including key application-related information and a staff response to the issues identified by the applicant in the submission form; and, — A standardized response timeline for follow-up by staff to establish clear expectations for stakeholders and help staff better manage workloads. Where feasible, the reporting process should be integrated with ePLAN, e.g., the intake form should be submitted and managed through ePLAN or online if possible.

To help ensure the effectiveness of the protocol, the City should develop a communications and roll out plan that includes presentations to industry and elected officials. The protocol should also be made accessible on the City's online development portal and included in staff training and onboarding.

Recommendations

To enhance process management, the City should begin collecting data on stakeholder interventions. Data collection would establish a baseline and allow for more in-depth analysis about the impacts of escalations and help identify and resolve underlying causes, such as recurring process bottlenecks.

1.9 Adopt a formal continuous improvement program to maximize the impact of existing process improvements.

A continuous improvement (CI) program is a widely used mechanism to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of complex processes and services. A formal CI program improves performance by creating a formal mechanism to review, revise, document and implement incremental and strategic process improvements on an on-going basis.

Our analysis indicates that the City has undertaken a number of process improvement exercises over the last five to 10 years (i.e. memo standardization, digital approvals for staff reports) but many of the recommendations from these efforts have not been consistently implemented or effectively monitored.

To maximize the value and impact of work already done, the City should adopt a formal CI program to review and implement existing process improvement work. The program should include:

- A clearly defined process improvement lead with accountability for the program across the complete, end-to-end development review process;
- A review of existing process improvement work and the identification of findings and recommendations that remain relevant and should be implemented;
- A clearly defined approval authority to sign off on process improvements and related process changes; and,
- Monitoring and evaluation of improvements, including a regular review cycle to determine effectiveness and the need for further change.

To further empower the lead Planner as the application lead, we also recommend that they be mandated to regularly gather improvement opportunities from their development review teams. These opportunities can then be reviewed and actioned by the process improvement lead.

2. People & Organization

This section presents our recommendations related to the People & Organization layer of our assessment framework.

People & Organization Recommendations	
2.0	Define and document development review-related roles and responsibilities to reduce process inefficiencies.

Recommendations

People & Organization Recommendations	
2.1	Empower the lead Planner to be fully in charge of all aspects of file management and operational decision making.
2.2	Equip lead Planners with enhanced project management tools and training.
2.3	Formalize Project Review meetings as a governance mechanism to resolve difficult application-related issues.
2.4	Implement a file transfer protocol to reduce the process inefficiencies associated with staff turnover and absences.

2.0 Define and document development review-related roles and responsibilities to reduce process inefficiencies.

Our evidence base indicated that the roles and responsibilities of key development review stakeholders are not well defined. The lack of clearly defined roles and responsibilities contribute to process inefficiencies, including:

- Duplicative review cycles as staff and commenting partners review and comment on the same issues; and,
- Excessive review cycles as staff and commenting partners review and comment on issues outside their mandate.

To clarify development review-related roles and responsibilities and reduce process inefficiencies, the City should define and document a responsibility assignment matrix or RACI (responsible, accountable, consulted, informed) for each development application type. At a minimum, the RACI should document:

- The mandate of each internal and external commenting partner (i.e., the subject matter for which the commenting partner is responsible);
- Application-related approval authorities and accountabilities;
- The roles and responsibilities of applicants; and,
- The roles and responsibilities of elected officials.

To help ensure the effectiveness of the responsibility assignment matrix, the City should:

- Reflect the RACI in job descriptions as they are updated;
- Include the RACI in development review-related training, including staff onboarding;
- Embed the accountabilities included in the RACI into ePLAN;
- Review and promote the RACI with elected officials and applicants. For example, by including the RACI on the City’s online development portal.

Recommendations

Once established and promoted, the City should begin tracking any significant incidents related to ambiguities in roles and responsibilities (e.g., when they result in application delays). See recommendation 1.9 for more information on continuous improvement.

2.1 Empower the lead Planner to be fully in charge of all aspects of file management and operational decision making.

There is a clear consensus among staff and industry that the lead Planner is and should be the lead for each development application. This consensus is aligned with standard practice in other North American municipalities.

The City's current business model requires Planners to:

- Co-ordinate development applications from pre-consultation to final approval;
- Manage applicants and the public as the development application's primary point of contact; and,
- Apply city-building knowledge and expertise when collating comments from internal and external partners and reconciling conflicting perspectives.

In practice, however, lead Planners are not fully empowered with the required authorities to perform these functions effectively. This results in delays, conflicting comments and other process inefficiencies.

For example, the City's current business model requires application review and approval from a broad range of internal and external commenting partners. In most cases, commenting partners retain the authority to withhold approval regardless of the issue's relative importance or the lead Planner's position. This can lead to delays and unnecessary escalations to more senior decision-makers, negatively impacting customer service and contributing to application churn.

The City should empower the lead Planner to address these issues by:

- Centralizing accountability for decision-making on all application-related issues in the Development Services Commission; and,
- Identifying the lead Planner as the accountable file lead in the responsibility assignment matrix included in Recommendation 2.0.

Operationally, this means that the City's application review teams will be led by lead Planners who are empowered to identify application-related City priorities, resolve conflicting comments and proactively manage files.

This recommendation should be read alongside recommendations 2.2 and 2.3.

2.2 Equip the lead Planner with enhanced project management tools and training.

File management and co-ordination is one of the lead Planner's core responsibilities, as noted above in Recommendation 2.1. Our document analysis and stakeholder interviews indicate that the lead Planner has few project management tools and templates available to help fulfil this responsibility.

Recommendations

Project management tools are a standard industry practice that can make file management easier by reducing the time spent on administrative tasks, clarifying timelines and improving the documentation of key decisions.

The City should develop a standard suite of project management tools to support the lead Planner. These tools should include:

- Project schedules;
- Checklists for key decisions and project milestones;
- Templates for all application-related communications and reporting;
- Standardized agendas and decision registers for all application-related milestone meetings; and,
- Application management tools, like tracking logs, to assist planners and more senior staff monitor applications across commenting partners and throughout the full application lifecycle in a consistent and comparable manner.

These tools should be made available in an accessible location, such as the City's internal development portal and adopted into training and onboard of all development review-related staff.

2.3 Formalize Project Review meetings as a governance mechanism to resolve difficult application-related issues.

Internal stakeholders indicated that Project Review meetings are an effective way to resolve difficult application-related issues, such as conflicting comments. While these meetings happen today, they vary significantly across applications and districts in terms of regularity, participants/attendance rate and overall effectiveness.

The City should build on this strength and formalize Project Review meetings as a governance mechanism to resolve difficult application-related issues. Operationally, this means that:

- Project Review meetings should be standardized across all Development Districts;
- A pre-determined procedure should be developed for planners and other development review staff to put items on the agenda for discussion;
- Participation should be determined according to the applications included on the meeting agenda but should typically include all relevant staff from the Development District and other internal commenting partners; and,
- Simple templates should be used by the lead Planner or supporting administrative staff to document application-related decisions.

This more standardized approach to Project Review would provide development review staff with a predictable, easy-to-use mechanism to resolve difficult issues, reducing the churn associated with the ad hoc resolution of these issues. The meetings can also be used as a tool to review development review workloads and application volumes across staff and commenting partners.

Recommendations

2.4 Implement a file transfer protocol to reduce the process inefficiencies associated with staff turnover and absences.

Staff turnover and absences contribute to late-stage comments and extended review cycles, particularly given the multi-month (and sometime multi-year) timelines associated with complex applications.

To address these challenges, the City should develop a simple file transfer protocol. The protocol should include:

- How and when information is collected and shared between staff;
- How and when the applicant and other development review staff is informed of the file transfer; and,
- A file transfer checklist to help ensure that all appropriate steps have been taken, including activities to update roles and permissions in IT systems.

Applicants identified staff turnover as a significant source of frustration. The file transfer protocol should be led by the district manager and will help eliminate the disruptions associated with staff turnover, increasing applicant satisfaction and the consistency of the development review process across individuals and districts.

3. Governance

This section presents our recommendations related to the Governance layer of our assessment framework.

Governance Recommendations	
3.0	Establish a performance measurement framework to improve the management and evaluation of the development review process.
3.1	Begin the transition to staff time tracking to improve process management and performance measurement.

3.0 Establish a performance measurement framework to improve the management and evaluation of the development review process.

Performance measurement is critical to organizational success, particularly for complex, interdepartmental services like development review. Our analysis indicates that the City's current approach to performance measurement is underdeveloped and inconsistent:

- Many critical elements of the development review process are not currently tracked or measured, such as total circulation time, total commenting partner review time and total staff time;

Recommendations

- Inaccurate review timelines, which cause staff and applicant frustration;
- Performance measurement tools and maturity that varies significantly across departments; and,
- Reporting mechanisms and related systems that are highly manual (e.g., spreadsheets) and time-intensive.

The City should establish a performance measurement framework to improve the management and evaluation of the development review process. The framework should be grounded in leading practice and analysis of past performance. It should include:

- The identification of end-to-end and department-specific key performance indicators (KPIs), including efficiency and effectiveness measures;
- KPI collection procedures;
- KPI reporting procedures, including the identification of appropriate KPIs for each major stakeholder group and how they will be shared (e.g., a high-level monthly dashboard with strategic KPIs for senior-level staff and a weekly report with operational measures for managers); and,
- A process for reviewing the effectiveness of KPIs.

The new performance measurement framework should be integrated into the implementation and rollout of ePLAN, including the identification of new KPIs and automation opportunities.

We have included example KPIs in Figure 7. These KPIs are based on KPMG leading practice and our stakeholder interviews. They are not exhaustive and meant as a starting point for further review and discussion.

Figure 7: Example Key Performance Indicators

Category	KPI
Efficiency	— Total elapsed time from complete application to approval. — Total elapsed time for each circulation. — Total elapsed time for each commenting partner for each circulation. — Total elapsed time with the applicant from complete application to approval. — Total elapsed time with the applicant for each circulation.
Effectiveness	— Applicant satisfaction surveys. — Public satisfaction surveys. — Number of new comments by circulation. — Number of comments unaddressed by applicants.

Recommendations

3.1 Begin the transition to staff time tracking to improve process management and performance measurement.

Time tracking is a standard industry practice that can provide important business insights and improve the overall management and performance of complex processes and services. In the development review context, time tracking would:

- Help establish realistic application processing timelines;
- Provide insight into staff workloads and productivity, allowing management to better allocate work across individuals and districts;
- Allow the City to develop more complex and useful performance measures, like total staff time elapsed on an application; and,
- Better understand the overall costs of the development review process, a fee-based service.

The transition to time tracking is a significant change that is outside the scope of this review. Initial steps that the City could take immediately to start the transition include:

- The development of a business case for time tracking, identifying the benefits and associated costs;
- The determination of appropriate technology, including existing City tools used in other departments and integration opportunities with ePLAN; and,
- The establishment of a simplified time tracking process – including how time tracking data is entered, stored and used as well as the key process milestones used to track time by staff.

4. Technology and Information

This section presents our recommendations related to the Technology and Information layer of our assessment framework.

Technology & Information Recommendations	
4.0	Review the implementation plan for ePLAN to help ensure a smooth transition to the new technology system and the full utilization of its capabilities.
4.1	Improve the City's online development review portal to help improve application quality.

Recommendations

4.0 Review the implementation plan for ePLAN to help ensure a smooth transition to the new technology system and the full utilization of its capabilities.

There is broad-based optimism about ePLAN and a consensus among both staff and industry that "going paperless" will lead to improved coordination, consistency and overall system efficiency.

Many internal and external stakeholders expressed anxiety about the potential ePLAN learning curve, expressing a need for live, on-demand support to manage the transition. Nearly all stakeholders from Building Standards, which has fully implemented ePLAN, advised that live, on-demand support was critical to the Department's successful internal and external rollout of the new technology.

The City should review the implementation plan, including change management and communications, associated with the ePLAN implementation to:

— Assess current project resourcing, including opportunities to identify dedicated applicant and staff support person(s) to assist with the rollout of additional application types in early 2020. A system roll-out of this size in comparable organizations typically requires a core team of at least 2 to 4 dedicated project staff supplemented by a broader network of subject-matter experts and administrative supports;

— Better understand what worked and did not work during the roll-out of ePLAN in Buildings Standards, replicating any leading practices;

— Refresh the training calendar and determine what methods or approaches will help enhance their learning and eventual use of the system. This work should be done in consultation with staff and applicants; and,

— Identify opportunities to integrate the ePLAN implementation with the recommendations and roadmap included in this report.

4.1 Improve the City's online development review portal to help improve application quality.

A majority of staff and industry stakeholders indicated that development review-related information can be difficult to find online. Interviewees generally found the online planning portal (https://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/home/business/planning) difficult to navigate and use, noting that information could be out of date, unavailable or hard to find, e.g., the current zoning by-law and past studies.

The online planning portal is an important tool to help applicants improve application quality. Better application quality leads to fewer comments and circulations, reducing processing timelines. Using the portal to proactively share information and process-related updates will also result in fewer ad hoc requests.

The City should undertake a review of the online planning portal. The review should include an inventory of existing content and the identification of frequently requested information, including reports, studies and guidelines. The review should be undertaken in consultation with industry and external commenting partners to help

Recommendations

ensure that it is easy-to-use and client-friendly. It should also include the development of a refresh schedule to help ensure current content is accurate, up-to-date and comprehensive.

Many industry stakeholders identified the City of Toronto's Application Information Centre as a leading practice that Markham should consider.

5. Customer

This section presents our recommendations related to the customer layer of our assessment framework.

Customer Recommendations	
5.0	Measure customer satisfaction with the development review process (e.g., annual surveys) to track performance and continually improve the user experience with this City service.
5.1	Establish formal two-way learning opportunities for staff and industry to improve application quality and facilitate collaboration.

5.0 Measure customer satisfaction with the development review process (e.g., annual surveys) to track performance and continually improve the user experience with this City service.

Formally and consistently soliciting feedback from applicants will enable the City to gain insight into the effectiveness of the development review process and staff. Current industry feedback is collected anecdotally, through channels like the City Builder's Forum or applicant calls to senior staff and elected officials.

The City should develop applicant satisfaction surveys to better track and continually improve the customer experience. The City should consider two types of user feedback survey:

— An annual survey distributed on an industry-wide basis to understand system-level satisfaction and trends; and,

— Randomly selected, pulse-style surveys following application completion milestones to gather real-time insights into immediate challenges and opportunities that require action.

Effective customer satisfaction surveys are short, easy-to-complete and generally involve one to five questions. The City should consider measuring applicant satisfaction with the following aspects of the development review process:

— Timelines;

— Customer service;

— Clarity and transparency; and,

Recommendations

— Cost.

The results of the surveys should be published internally and externally (at appropriate levels of detail), and can form part of the performance measurement framework and continuous improvement system included in Recommendations 3.0 and 1.9.

5.1 Establish formal two-way learning opportunities for staff and industry to improve application quality and facilitate collaboration.

The staff-applicant collaboration at the centre of the development review process depends on mutual understanding. Staff and industry stakeholders identified a need for more frequent and formal opportunities to get together and share experiences and knowledge outside of the development review process.

The City should build on the success of the City Builder's Forum and establish formal two-way learning opportunities for staff and applicants, particularly for manager-level and frontline staff. Opportunities we have seen in other jurisdictions include:

- Training sessions for entry-level industry consultants on City processes, standards and guidelines to enhance application quality; and,
- Training sessions for entry-level staff on development strategies and land economics to enhance understanding of the applicant context and related development pressures.

The City should also work with industry and industry associations to identify professional networking events and other development opportunities, such as industry conferences, to foster collegiality.

Senior City staff also identified leadership training as a significant gap during our stakeholder interviews. To close this gap, the City should consider and explore additional opportunities for internal professional development, growth and mentorship.

Chapter 4: Implementation Plan

Implementation Plan

This Chapter presents our plan to implement the recommendations included in Chapter 2. It has five sections, described in Figure 8. Our implementation plan is based on KPMG leading practice.

Figure 8: Implementation Plan Sections

#	Section	Description
4.1	Implementation Structure	High-level resourcing and governance required to successfully implement the recommendations and promote a continuous improvement culture.
4.2	Implementation Roadmap	Specific actions and timelines for each of the recommendations included in Chapter 3.
4.3	Implementation Scorecard	Performance measures to monitor progress and help demonstrate success.
4.4	Change Management Framework	A framework to drive effective change management.
4.5	Communications Framework	A framework to structure effective communications.

4.1 Implementation Structure

Successful implementation of the recommendations included in this report will require dedicated resources and effective governance.

Based on the scope of the recommendations included in Chapter 3, we recommend the creation of a dedicated Process Improvement (PI) Team to lead, monitor and report on the implementation of the report's recommendations. We anticipate one full-time project management resource along with one to two support staff able to dedicate 25-50% of their time to the project. Based on the roadmap included in Section 4.2, we anticipate staff will be required for approximately 12 months, with the bulk of activity occurring during the first six months.

The capabilities of the PI Team should include:

- Program and project management;
- Change management;
- Communications;
- Stakeholder engagement (internal and external);

Implementation Plan

- Business process improvement; and,
- Experience with planning and/or development application reviews.

The PI Team will also need to draw on subject matter specialists (e.g., urban planners, engineers, etc.) on an as-needed basis throughout the implementation.

Alongside the PI Team, Markham should establish a clearly defined, interdepartmental governance structure to facilitate implementation-related decision-making and empower the PI Team to drive change. We recommend a Process Improvement (PI) Committee with the following membership:

- The Commissioner, Development Services (Chair)
- The Director, Development Planning & Urban Design
- The Director, Development Engineering
- The Director, Environmental Services
- The Director, Operations
- The Assistant City Solicitor
- The ePLAN Project Lead

The mandate of the PI Committee should include strategic direction and oversight of the implementation, decision-making on key approvals and monitoring implementation progress and overall project success.

Our implementation roadmap, included in Section 4.2 includes key activities for the PI Team and key approvals for the PI Committee.

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4.2 Implementation Roadmap

This section presents our implementation roadmap, beginning on the next page. It includes implementation actions for each of our 21 recommendations. We also include actions to set-up the implementation structure included in Section 4.1.

Our recommendations and roadmap should be read alongside the City's implementation of ePLAN. We anticipate that ePLAN offers opportunities to accelerate and/or extend our recommendations. Similarly, there may be opportunities to incorporate the findings from this report into the implementation of ePLAN.

We have included a 12 month timeline, which assumes the implementation structure and the appropriate resources described in Section 4.1. In some cases, noted in our roadmap, full implementation may stretch beyond 12 months.

Implementation Plan

Implementation Structure	Timeline for Implementation: 0-3 months	4-6 months	6-12 months
Recommendation	**Description of Activities**		
Establish a dedicated Process Improvement (PI) Team to lead, monitor and report on the implementation of recommendations from this report.	• Develop roles and responsibilities for the PI Team. • Recruit PI Team lead and members with the capacity and capability to deliver the recommendations in this report. Develop the terms of reference. • PI Team to develop the work plan with detailed milestones for each aspect of the implementation roadmap. • Develop the strategic and tactical Change Management and Communications plans outlined in Chapter 4. • Execute the implementation roadmap as described throughout Chapter 4. • Institute a "sustainment" structure that supports ongoing review of the implementation of key recommendations.		

Implementation Plan

Process		Timeline for Implementation: 0-3 months / 4-6 months / 6-12 months
Recommendation		**Description of Activities**
1.0	Develop and implement standardized comment templates to streamline workflow processes and accelerate review timelines.	• Inventory submission memos and lessons learned from commenting partners. • PI Team to prepare draft submission memo templates leveraging internal leading practice. Finalize templates and submit to PI Committee for approval. • Make the templates publicly available on the online planning portal.
1.1	Structure the circulation process to reduce application churn and late-stage comments.	• PI Committee to approve circulation approach described in Recommendation 1.1. • PI Team, in consultation with internal commenting partners, to identify and document required process, training and system (i.e., Amanda and ePLAN) changes to implement circulation updates/changes. • Consider implementing opt-in rule on a pilot basis in a single Development District to refine before full roll-out.
1.2	Clarify and simplify the circulation process for technical commenting partners.	• PI Team, in consultation with technical commenting partners, to develop new process for circulation to technical commenting partners. • PI Team to document proposed circulation process and submit to the PI Committee for approval. • Implement the new circulation process.
1.3	Establish a standardized in-person meeting structure to align internal commenting partners, resolve conflicting comments and enhance customer service.	• PI Committee to approve the meeting cadence described in Recommendation 1.4. • PI Team to document proposed meeting approach, including timelines, objectives and outcomes, attendee checklist, roles/responsibilities, project management tools and templates. • Launch meeting cadence for go-forward applications. Consider implementing on a pilot basis to refine before full rollout.

Implementation Plan

Process		Timeline for Implementation: 0-3 months / 4-6 months / 6-12 months
Recommendation		**Description of Activities**
1.4	Establish regular standing meetings with external commenting partners and review how and when each external commenting partner is engaged in the development review process.	• Catalogue lessons learned from TRCA standing meetings. • Consult with external commenting partners to gain buy-in and identify a support resource from their organization. • PI Team to develop proposed meeting structure details (time, agenda, objectives, etc.) and include in Terms of Reference. • PI Committee to approve Terms of Reference. • Begin standing meetings.
1.5	Undertake a review of the City's site plan control and delegation by-laws to identify additional delegation opportunities and speed up review timelines.	• PI Team to draft Terms of Reference for by-law review project and submit for approval to PI Committee. • Consider seeking Council approval for Terms of Reference to help prioritize review. • Undertake the review, documenting and evaluating any process-related changes. • Seek Council approval for delegation opportunities identified.
1.6	Update and publish existing Terms of Reference (TORs) and review opportunities for additional TORs encourage process consistency and improved application quality.	• Inventory existing TORs, identifying TORs that can be implemented immediately and those that require updating. • PI Committee to approve "ready to go" TORs and make publicly available on the online portal. • PI Team to engage industry and staff to identify additional TORs for development. • Consider identifying a specific TOR lead to take ownership of TOR development process.
1.7	Streamline the report approval process to reduce process inefficiencies and increase development review staff capacity.	• Document approval requirements and review timelines for all development review related reports. • PI Team, working with senior staff, to develop streamlined approval steps and related timelines. • PI Committee to approve new approval process. • Update process documentation and RACI matrix with new approval process for reports.

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Process

Recommendation		Timeline for Implementation: 0-3 months / 4-6 months / 6-12 months — Description of Activities
1.8	Develop a mandatory escalation protocol to reduce the negative impact of stakeholder interventions during the formal development review process.	• PI Team, in consultation with staff and stakeholders, to document the escalation protocol as described in Recommendation 1.8. Documentation should include development of templates for escalation-related intake and reporting. • PI Committee to approve the escalation protocol. • Implement the protocol, focusing on communications with industry and elected officials. • Begin tracking escalations to support continuous improvement.
1.9	Adopt a formal continuous improvement program to maximize the impact of existing process improvements.	• PI Team, in consultation with staff and stakeholders, to develop Terms of Reference for the CI program, including mandate, resource requirements, objectives and a high-level work plan. • PI Team to inventory existing but "on the shelf" process improvement projects to identify "quick wins." • PI Committee to approve the CI program Terms of Reference. • Consider transitioning the PI Team to support the CI program.

Implementation Plan

People and Organization

Timeline for Implementation: 0-3 months | 4-6 months | 6-12 months

Recommendation		Description of Activities
2.0	Define and document development review-related roles and responsibilities to reduce process inefficiencies.	• PI Team to document existing roles and responsibilities, leveraging existing documentation and job descriptions. • PI team to develop draft RACI matrix and submit to PI Committee for approval. • Reflect the RACI in job descriptions as they are updated and include in development review-related training including staff onboarding. • Embed the accountabilities included in the RACI into ePLAN. • Review and promote the RACI with elected officials and applicants. • Post the RACI on the City's online development portal.
2.1	Empower the lead Planner to be fully in charge of all aspects of file management and operational decision making.	• Identify the planner as the accountable file lead in the RACI included in Recommendation 2.0. • Undertake training of existing and new staff about the planner's lead role in development review.
2.2	Equip lead Planners with enhanced project management tools and training.	• PI Team to collect existing project management tools/templates and assess for relevance. • PI Team to work with development review staff to assess needs for tools and templates. Consider beginning with those identified in Recommendation 2.2. • Develop draft materials and gather feedback from development review staff. • PI Committee to approve tools and templates. • Develop a training calendar including internal and third party providers/modules to facilitate uptake.
2.3	Formalize Project Review meetings as a governance mechanism to resolve difficult application-related issues.	• Develop Terms of Reference for Project Review Meetings, using Recommendation 2.3 as a guide. • PI Committee to approve Terms of Reference. • Implement new approach.
2.4	Implement a file transfer protocol to reduce the process inefficiencies associated with staff turnover and absences.	• PI Team to document the file transfer protocol in consultation with staff including details described in Recommendation 2.4. • PI Committee to approve the file transfer protocol. • Include the protocol as part of go-forward offloading activities for existing staff.

Implementation Plan

Governance		Timeline for Implementation: 0-3 months / 4-6 months / 6-12 months
Recommendation		**Description of Activities**
3.0	Establish a performance measurement framework to improve the management and evaluation of the development review process.	• PI Team to inventory existing performance measures used across the development review process, including metrics, systems, collection frequency and use. • PI Team to develop detailed project plan to develop performance measurement framework. Planning should be integrated into ePLAN, considering new tools, capabilities and automation opportunities. • Conduct jurisdictional scan to identify valuable development review process KPIs, using those included in Recommendation 3.0 as a starting point. • Develop the performance measurement framework and submit to PI Committee for approval.
3.1	Begin the transition to staff time tracking to improve process management and performance measurement.	• Research leading practice for time tracking in other jurisdictions including Ontario municipalities. • Develop the business case for time tracking at the City and a work plan to implement it. Integrate planning into ePLAN. • PI Committee to approve business case. • Implement time tracking including any technology requirements/enhancements.

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Technology & Information

	Recommendation	Timeline for Implementation: 0-3 months / 4-6 months / 6-12 months — Description of Activities
4.0	Review the implementation plan for ePLAN to help ensure a smooth transition to the new technology system and the full utilization of its capabilities	• PI Team to assess current staffing and future staffing needs based on 2020 go-live and leading practices described in Recommendation 4.0. • Gather additional leading practices and lessons learned from the Building Standards department. • Develop a business case for an on-demand support resource to accompany the ePLAN roll-out in Development Services. • Consult staff and industry for their training needs and preferences related to ePLAN. • PI Team and ePLAN team to review respective roll out plans to find alignment. • Include ePLAN review as a component of the new CI program described in 1.9. • PI Committee and ePLAN governance to review and approve updates/changes to the ePLAN roll-out.
4.1	Improve the City's online development review portal to help improve application quality.	• Inventory the existing online portal, including content and accuracy of content. • Gather additional leading practice by reviewing other online development review portals. • Consult industry and staff about their information-related needs. • PI Team to develop plan to update online portal and go-forward approach to keeping site up-to-date, including a schedule and accountable lead. • Update the online development portal with new materials. • Consider enhancements to the portal's user interface.

Implementation Plan

Customer		Timeline for Implementation: 0-3 months / 4-6 months / 6-12 months
Recommendation		**Description of Activities**
5.0	Measure customer satisfaction with the development review process (e.g., annual surveys) to track performance and continually improve the user experience with this City service.	• Gather leading practices for customer satisfaction surveys, including those already used in the City (e.g., content, platforms, frequency, use, etc.). • PI Team to develop customer satisfaction surveys, using Recommendation 5.0 as a starting point. • Implement surveys and begin collecting data.
5.1	Establish formal two-way learning opportunities for staff and industry to improve application quality and facilitate collaboration.	• Gather feedback from staff and industry about ideas/programs to support two-way learning opportunities including those described in Recommendation 5.1. • PI Team to develop a business case for a two-way learning program (work plan, costs, anticipated benefits). • PI Committee to approve business case. • Identify lead resource with ownership of the program. • Implement the program.

Implementation Plan

4.3 Implementation Scorecard

This section presents a scorecard to help measure the implementation of the recommendations included in Chapter 3. Demonstrating progress will help build buy-in with internal and external stakeholders, facilitating change.

This scorecard should be reviewed and approved by the PI Committee and reviewed on a monthly basis by the PI Team.

Figure 9: Implementation Scorecard

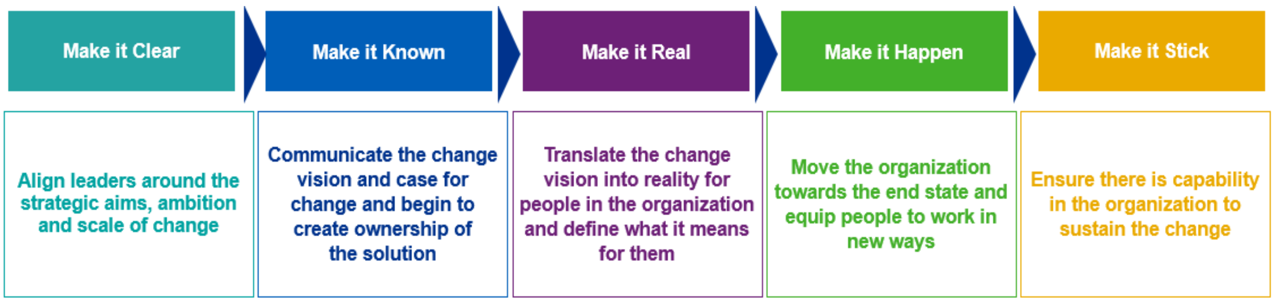
Success Factor	Does this Exist? (✓/✗)
Implementation Structure	
• The recommendations and roadmap included in this report have been approved by City Council.	
• A clear project governance structure is in place and working well (see Section 4.1).	
• Sufficient staff capacity and resources are dedicated to the work ahead and are working well (see Section 4.1).	
Project Management	
• Work plans exist to support the implementation of all recommendations.	
• A holistic communications strategy and the accompanying communications plans are developed for the relevant recommendations.	
• Recommendations are implemented according to roadmap timelines; delays are justified and communicated.	
• Recommendations that have been implemented are reviewed every six to 12 months for effectiveness.	
Customer Centricity	
• Applicants are engaged in the implementation process (e.g., regular status updates are shared at the City Builder's Forum).	
• The applicant experience is measured and improving (see Recommendation 5.0).	

Implementation Plan

4.4 Change Management Framework

Effective change management aligns leaders and staff around change that is clearly defined, justified and well-communicated. Figure 10 presents KPMG's change management framework as a starting point for the development of a detailed change management plan to support the implementation of the recommendations included in Chapter 3.

Figure 10: KPMG's Change Management Framework



To help ensure internal and external stakeholders are ready, willing and able to implement change, Markham should:

1. **Make it Clear:** ensure senior City leadership understands and is committed to the importance of visible, aligned and ongoing support for an improved development review process. Formalize this support in the establishment of the PI Committee included in Section 4.1.

2. **Make it Known:** develop and implement a detailed communications plan that clearly articulates the overall case for change to each stakeholder group. Consider identifying champions in each development review-related Department to help spread the message. Ensure approval of this report and its roadmap is widely communicated.

3. **Make it Real:** stand up the PI Team included in Section 4.1. Clearly define the PI Team's roles, responsibilities and mandate. Develop detailed change management plans for the recommendations included in Chapter 3.

4. **Make it Happen:** Begin implementation. Resolve issues and mitigate risks by escalating them through appropriate channels. Focus on high-impact recommendations and continuously monitor the effect of implementation on each stakeholder group.

5. **Make it Stick:** use the Implementation Scorecard to measure progress and maintain momentum. In the long-term, use the CI Program included in recommendation 1.9 to review and calibrate changes on an ongoing basis.

Implementation Plan

4.5 Communications Strategy

Communications is a critical change-enabler. This section presents five strategic principles to support effective communications during a significant, process-driven transformation:

1. **Equip leaders and change agents**: equip leaders and other change agents with easy-to-use key messages and communication tools.
2. **Develop tailored key messages**: identify different stakeholder groups and develop targeted key messages for each group.
3. **Communicate consistent messages:** communicate consistent messages emphasizing the case for change and anticipated benefits.
4. **Reinforce messages:** repeat and reinforce key messages and progress through a variety of tactics and channels with each stakeholder group.
5. **Engage industry:** communicate directly and regularly with this stakeholder groups.

These principles should be used as a starting point for the development of a tactical communications plan to support the implementation of the recommendations included in Chapter 3. A tactical communications plan should define the communications-related activities that accompany each recommendation/change as well as the overall improvement project. An effective tactical communications plan should include:

- The overall case for change;
- The unique key messages that accompany each initiative or recommendation;
- The key audience(s) when communicating each key message;
- The roll-out timelines; and
- The methods and channels that are to be used when communicating.

Figure 11, on the next page, provides additional detail on each of the five communications principles included in this section.

Implementation Plan

Figure 11: Communication Principles

Principle	Outcomes	High Level Tactics
Equip leaders and change agents.	Organizational leadership and change champions have the tools needed to promote the case for change.	• During the first 90 days, provides a refresher course in change management and effective communications for leaders and change agents. • Continuously update key messages and communication tools for leadership to ensure they remain relevant and effective.
Develop tailored key messages.	Different stakeholder groups are targeted with specific key messages, increases the chances of success.	• Identify different internal and external stakeholder groups involved in the development review process. • Review how the overall implementation roadmap will impact each group as well as the implementation of specific recommendations. • Develop targeted key messages that speak to how each stakeholder group will be impacted by the change, identifying each group's unique case for change.
Communicate consistent messages	Key messages are developed and are consistent across initiatives and time, and align with the broader goals of the Development Services Commission.	• Identify near-term milestones and any quick wins/ • Develop and leverage key messages consistently through all communications to build consistency, credibility and support. • Create a common look and style for change communications. Use it consistently in materials so that communications are recognizable.

Implementation Plan

Principle	Outcomes	High Level Tactics
Reinforce messages	Multiple opportunities are created for key stakeholders to provide input.	• Provide regular communications which set specific, clear and relevant expectations and then report back on progress. • Use existing communication channels (email, internal portals, the online planning portal) to regularly share information. • Develop standards and messages for the change writ-large, and cater messaging in tactical communications plans that support individual initiatives. • Encourage two-way dialogue and feedback from stakeholders to continuously improve communication approaches.
Engage industry	Initiatives underway are consistently communicated to industry stakeholders to maintain their awareness and buy-in.	• Provide structured, formal updates to industry groups, leveraging existing mechanisms, like the City Builder's Forum. • Follow up with all industry stakeholders engaged by KPMG to provide a status update and opportunity to review and validate this report.

Appendix 1: Current State Summary

Current State Summary

This Appendix summarizes our findings about the challenges facing the development review process. The challenges are organized into the five layers of our analytical framework, described in more detail in Chapter 2.

These findings were included in our interim report, which was reviewed and validated by the Development Services Commission, Planning and Development Director and the Project Team.

Process

This section sets out our findings related to the processes layer of our analytical framework.

Process Challenges

Conflicting Comments and Late Comments

- Conflicting comments and late-stage comments can be difficult for staff and industry to resolve, increasing processing timelines and negatively impacting applicant satisfaction.
- Comments are not consistently summarized by staff or applicants at key application milestones (e.g., resubmissions), increasing the administration burden on staff and applicants.

Broad Late-stage Circulations

- Applications are often circulated to all commenting partners, even though outstanding issues are narrow. The broad circulation encourages net-new comments, which lead to additional cost and extended timelines.

Application Streaming

- Application streaming is inconsistent. In most cases, applications of varying size, complexity and quality are processed and resourced in the same way, resulting in a suboptimal allocation of staffing resources.

Relationship with External Commenting Partners

- The City's relationship with MTO and York Region could be strengthened, and currently causes delays to review timelines and frustrates staff and applicants

Commenting Timelines

- The review timelines for internal and external commenting partners are not based on anticipated work effort or application complexity. These timelines are seldom met and drive staff and applicant frustration.

Process Improvement Follow-through

- There is a culture of continuous process improvement but changes are not consistently documented, implemented or measured.

Current State Summary

Process Challenges

- Similarly, Terms of Reference for application requirements were developed in the past, but were not formally adopted or publicized.

Complex Endorsement Process

- The endorsement process for SPC applications is complex and difficult to understand for staff and other stakeholders.

Project & Practice Management

- Project and practice management tools are underdeveloped, contributing to process inconsistencies.

SPC and Heritage Delegation

- Lack of SPC and Heritage delegation creates reporting burden for staff and increases approval times.

Relationship between ZBA and SPC Applications

- The relationship between ZBA and SPC applications is beginning to blur, with increasing amounts of detail required at the ZBA stage.
- The same issues are often reviewed at the SPC stage, creating duplication for staff and industry.

Rigid Application of Guidelines and Standards

- According to industry, the application of guidelines and standards can be overly rigid, particularly on unique or infill sites, which are increasingly becoming the norm as Markham transitions into a higher density community.

People & Organization

This section sets out our findings related to the People and Organization layer of our analytical framework.

People & Organization Challenges

Unclear Roles and Responsibilities

- The roles and responsibilities of staff, commenting partners and elected officials are not well defined across the development review process, which can cause duplication of effort and re-work as well as significant frustration for frontline staff.

Underpowered Application Lead

- The City Planner is the application lead but often lacks the tools and experience

Current State Summary

People & Organization Challenges

to drive applications forward and overcome process delays and conflicting comments.

Application Resourcing

— Application volumes are high relative to available staff resources, which can drive staff frustration and extend processing timelines. Many internal and external stakeholders advised that Markham's staffing model was lean in comparison to other municipalities.

Knowledge Transfer Mechanisms Lacking

— Existing knowledge transfer mechanisms and file transfer procedures are limited. As a result, staff turnover can disrupt the development review process, extending timelines and contributing to net-new, late-stage comments.

Excessive Approval Steps

— Sign-off requirements can be excessive and duplicative for Council-related reports (preliminary report, final report, SPC endorsement report), increasing processing timelines and contributing to conflicting comments.

Inconsistent Escalations from Senior Staff

— Escalations from applicants and senior staff are inconsistent and often unexpected, driving additional reporting requirements and re-prioritizing applications.

Governance

This section sets out our findings related to the Governance layer of our analytical framework.

Governance Challenges

Inaccurate development review timelines

— There is a significant gap between application processing timelines and the experience of staff and applicants. Existing timelines are not based on processing effort (historical or anticipated), reducing the transparency of the development review process.

Limited measurement and KPIs in place across the development review process

— Many critical elements related to the development review process are not currently tracked or measured.

No Portfolio-wide View of Application Pipeline

— Senior staff do not have a portfolio-wide view of the application pipeline that identifies

Current State Summary

Governance Challenges
application volumes and bottlenecks. Existing reporting is inconsistent and ad hoc.

Technology & Information

This section sets out our findings related to the Technology and Information layer of our analytical framework.

Technology & Information Challenges

Inconsistent Tools

— Many departments use different technology tools to track and monitor development applications and application comments. These systems are not integrated and contribute to duplication.

ePLAN Change Management

— Internal and external stakeholders are broadly excited about the potential for ePLAN to streamline the development review process and enhance collaboration and creativity.

— In the near-term, staff and industry identified a need for additional training and change management to ensure the rollout and transition is smooth and the tool is used to its fullest potential.

Online Portal

— The City's online portal can be hard to navigate for users.

— Certain core process documents are not currently accessible online, such as the City's zoning by-law.

Customer

This section sets out our findings related to the Customer (applicant and public) layer of our analytical framework.

Customer Challenges

Poor Application Quality

— Poor application quality, particularly on application submission, drives staff re-work and increases processing timelines.

Premature Escalations by Applicants

Current State Summary

Customer Challenges
— Applicants often escalate files to senior staff and/or elected officials as a matter-of-course. The reporting requirements related to escalations create additional work for front-line staff and result in ad-hoc and inconsistent prioritization of applications. — There are not criteria in place to trigger or direct senior-level involvement in a file. **Reactive Customer Service** — According to industry, while staff are responsive to issues raised, they tend not to be proactive in addressing issues or identifying challenges. **Ineffective Process-wide Communication** — Significant process changes are not effectively communicated to industry and can sometimes be a surprise. **"Us vs. Them" Culture** — Industry identified that in some instances, the relationship between staff and applicants can sometimes be adversarial, a barrier to strong working relationships. — Many industry stakeholders identified a need for a broader recognition of their importance to achieving the City's development-related objectives.

Appendix 2:
Document Register

Document Register

In support of our analysis, we reviewed 44 documents related to the development review process. Figure 12 below details the documents that were reviewed.

Figure 12: Documents reviewed as part of this engagement

#	Document Description
1	AMANDA system – corresponding PLAN Folder design
2	AMANDA system – corresponding SPC Folder Design
3	Application Volumes: by type, and district (2019)
4	Conditional Permits Guide
5	Construction Activity Report: 2009-2019 dashboards
6	Development Engineer Job Description
7	Development Process Dashboard
8	Development Services Organizational Structure
9	District Team Maps
10	Engineering Technologist Job Description
11	Environmental Engineer Job Description
12	Environmental Technician Job Description
13	ePLAN Project Charter
14	ePLAN System Summary
15	ePLAN: Proposal Award
16	ePLAN: Proposal Award - Staff Report
17	ePLAN Workflow: Subdivision, Zoning Amendments, Official Plan Amendments
18	Official Plan Amendment: High level summary document
19	Online development portal
20	Operating Costs and Revenue: Planning, Engineering, and Building (2015-2019)
21	Plan of Subdivision Approval: High level summary document
22	Plan of Subdivision: Process Flowcharts

Document Register

#	Document Description
23	Plan subtype: Zoning Amendment - processes
24	Planner 1 Job Description
25	Planner 2, Development Job Description
26	Process Flow Chart: Site Plan Approval
27	Process Improvement Record: from industry
28	Process Improvement Record: from staff
29	Process Service Levels (summarized for all application types)
30	Process: Building Permit
31	Process: OP/Rezoning amendment
32	Process: OPA
33	Process: Planning and Development Applications
34	Process: Pre-Consultation to Circulation
35	Process: SPC (Site Plan)
36	Process: Subdivision to Draft Approval
37	Roles and Responsibilities: Plan of Subdivision
38	Senior Development Engineer Job Description
39	Senior Development Planner Job Description
40	Site Plan Applications: 2014-2018 endorsement volumes
41	Timelines: site plan control
42	Transportation Engineer Job Description
43	Workflow: Site Plan Control Requirement and Circulation
44	WSCS Final Report: development process review

Appendix 'B'

Appendix 3:
Staff Engagement Register

Staff Engagement Register

We engaged 51 city staff and elected officials during our work using multiple methods including one-on-one interviews, focus groups and a process improvement workshop. The staff engaged during our work are detailed below in Figure 13 and organized by first name.

Figure 13: Stakeholder Consultation Record

Name, Role	Interview	Focus Group	Process Workshop
Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer	x		
Arvin Prasad, Commissioner, Development Services	x		
Audrey Farias, Senior Planner, Urban Design			x
Biju Karumanchery, Director, Planning and Urban Design	x	x	
Bradley Roberts, Manager, Zoning and Special Projects		x	
Brenda Librecz, Commissioner, Community and Fire Services	x		
Brian Lee, Director, Engineering	x		
Celia Fan, Systems Engineer			x
Christin Miller, Supervisor, Zoning			x
Chris Bird, Director Building Standards	x	x	
Daniel Brutto, Planner II			x
David Miller, Manager - Developement		x	
Francesco Santaquida, Assistant City Solicitor	x	x	x
Frank Scarpitti, Mayor of Markham	x		
Frashed Kawasia, Senior Development Engineer			x
Geoff Day, Senior Planner			x
George Macris, Chief Fire Prevention Officer		x	
Gord Miokovic, Manager, System Engineering		x	
Hailey Miller, Technician			x
Henry Lo, Senior Transportation Engineer			x
Jim Jones, Regional Councillor and Chair, Development Services Committee	x		
Keith Irish, Councillor and Chair, Development Services Committee Public Meetings	x		
Kevin Ross, Manager, Development Finance and Payroll		x	

Staff Engagement Register

Name, Role	Interview	Focus Group	Process Workshop
Liz Wimmer, Senior Planner, Urban Design			x
Luiz Juarez, Planner II			x
Margaret Wouters, Manager, Policy and Research		x	
Mark Visser, Senior Manager, Financial Strategy & Investments		x	x
Michael DiPasquale, Supervisor, Waste Management Operations			x
Miguel Ibrahim, Engineering Technologist			x
Morgan Jones, Director, Operations	x		
Nathalie Orsi, Supervisor, Administration Supervisor		x	
Nhat-Anh Nguyen, Senior Manager, Development and Environmental Engineering	x		
Parvathi Nampoothiri, Acting Manager, Urban Design	x	x	
Peter Solymos, Supervisor, Waterworks			x
Peter Wokral, Senior Planner			x
Phoebe Fu , Director, Environmental Services	x		
Raymond Law, Senior Manager, Business, Fleet and Public Realm		x	
Regan Hutcheson, Manager, Hertiage District		x	
Reza Fani, Manager, Development Engineering		x	
Robert Marinzel, Supervisor, Survey, Utility and Technical Unit		x	
Ronji Borooah, City Architect	x		
Sabrina Bordone, Senior Planner			x
Sally Campbell, Manager, Development - East	x	x	
Sheila Kerz, Supervisor, Permit Administration			x
Stacy Larkin, Agreements Coordinator			x
Stephanie DiPerna, Manager, Plans Review		x	
Stephen Chait, Director, Economic Growth, Culture and Entrepreneurship	x	x	
Stephen Corr, Senior Planner			x
Stephen Dearborn, Technical Coordinator Roads			x

Staff Engagement Register

Name, Role	Interview	Focus Group	Process Workshop
Stephen Lue, Manager, Development - Central		x	
Tania Lewinberg, Public Realm Coordinator			x

Appendix 'B'