



Site Plan Approval and Pre-Consultation Efficiency Review

Prepared for Norfolk County

January 11, 2022

Prepared By:
Baker Planning Group

PO Box 23002 Stratford
Stratford, ON
N5A 7V8

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Executive Summary	2
3	Legislative Framework	3
3-1	Pre-Consultation	3
3-2	Site Plan Approval	3
3-3	Norfolk County Site Plan Control By-law (2014-97)	5
4	Existing Norfolk County Process Review	6
4-1	Formal Pre-Consultation Process	6
4-2	Site Plan Approval Process	8
5	Stakeholder Consultation	12
5-1	Norfolk County Staff	12
5-2	Norfolk County Stakeholders	13
5-3	Benchmarking of Comparative Municipalities	14
5-4	Summary of Stakeholder Consultation	19
6	Recommendations	20
6-1	Formal Pre-Consultation	21
6-2	Site Plan Approval	26
6-3	Planning Department Organization Structure	32
7	Conclusion	34
	APPENDIX A - NORFOLK COUNTY CONSULTATION SESSION DECEMBER 2, 2021	35
	APPENDIX B - BENCHMARKING TABLES	36
	APPENDIX B - BENCHMARKING TABLES	38
	APPENDIX C - STANDARD SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE	39

1 Introduction

The County of Norfolk is committed to continuous service improvement internally and externally through its various departments, including the Planning Department. Through Norfolk Council's Strategic Priorities, the Planning Department Work Program and the Council-approved Economic Recovery Plan, the County committed to streamlining the approvals process under the Planning Act, as well as establishing processes to improve communication and customer service, and promoting a culture of innovation.

Based on these directives, Norfolk County issued a request for services for a third-party review of Norfolk's development review process, focused on the Pre-Consultation and Site Plan Approval processes. In response, Baker Planning Group was retained by Norfolk County in November of 2021 to undertake a Development Service Review study for Pre-Consultation and Site Plan Approval.

The review includes the following central components:

1. A comprehensive review of existing County policies and procedures
2. Benchmark analysis with other similar Ontario municipalities, including a formal survey to identify best practices and lessons learned
3. Conduct stakeholder interviews with County staff and external stakeholders

2 Executive Summary

Baker Planning Group completed a thorough and comprehensive review of Pre-Consultation and Site Plan Approval processes in Norfolk County to consider and develop a detailed set of recommendations targeted at short-term, med-term and long-term service improvements. The recommendations are based on the following key research pillars:

1. Review and evaluation of existing Norfolk County policies and procedures.
2. Consultation with Norfolk County Staff through a live online interactive group session.
3. Consultation with comparative municipalities including primary research regarding Site Plan and Pre-Consultation practices, an online survey, and virtual follow-up meetings.
4. Stakeholder consultation with representatives of the development industry, senior municipal staff and members of Council

The resultant recommendations are outlined in Section 6 of this report.

3 Legislative Framework

3-1 Pre-Consultation

Section 41(3.1) of the Act requires municipalities to have Pre-Consultations with any applicant who requests one. It also permits municipalities to require Pre-Consultations for certain application types, including Site Plan as well as Zoning By-law and Official Plan Amendments. As such, most municipalities have some requirement for Pre-Consultation, either for all applications, certain types of applications, or only the most complex and significant proposals.

The Act does not address in any greater detail the particulars of how a Pre-Consultation should be carried out. As such, the process and applicant experience tends to vary from municipality to municipality. Nevertheless, there are aspects of the process which generally remain consistent across most municipalities, likely due to the tendency for municipalities to compare and modify their procedures and policies in accordance with similar municipalities. Generally, Pre-Consultations are intended to inform the applicant of what the next steps toward approval are and provide high-level comments. They also serve as a medium for the applicant to ask questions and receive help. As such, applicants who file planning applications in multiple municipalities, come to expect a certain standard of service and customary norms although there is no legal basis for such norms. This report addresses these norms and other informal standards through comparison to municipalities similar to Norfolk County.

3-2 Site Plan Approval

At a Pre-Consultation meeting, the municipality should provide the applicant with a list of requirements in writing, which spans across all applicable departments.

Section 41 of The Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 (the “Act”) sets out the regulations for Site Plan Control and allows the council of a local municipality to control matters on and around a site proposed for development including:

- Access for pedestrians and vehicles
- Walkways
- Lighting
- Waste facilities
- Landscaping
- Drainage
- Exterior design

Site Plan Control is intended as a technical review between staff and applicant to ensure that a development proposal is well-designed, fits in with the surrounding uses and negative impacts are minimized. Unlike other planning applications like official plan or zoning by-law amendments, there is no requirement under the Planning Act for public process and there are no third-party appeal rights. Site Plan Approval is intended to be a predictable and technical exercise to manage particulars of an otherwise permitted development.

The authority for Site Plan Approval may be delegated, in whole or part, to staff by Council by way of by-law. Norfolk County Council adopted By-law 2014-97, delegating all applications under Section 41(2) of the Planning Act (Site Plan) to municipal staff.

To use the Site Plan Control tool, a Site Plan Control Area must be described in the Official Plan and by Site Plan Control By-law designating all or any part of the area as a Site Plan Control Area. Norfolk County designates all the lands comprising Norfolk County as the Site Plan Control Area with exemptions including single, duplex, and semi-detached dwellings and farm buildings, further detailed below. It is noted that Site Plan Control only applies to developments that meet the definition outlined in Section 41(1) of the Act which excludes minor additions.

Submission of plans

The mode for Site Plan Approval is also laid out in the Act. Section 41(4) lists the types of drawings and plans that a municipality may require the applicant to submit including plan view, elevations, cross-sections etc. Section 41(4) sub. 2 provides a separate requirement for residential buildings with less than 25 dwelling units, exempting these types of developments from some of the requirements.

Conditions of approval

Section 41(7) of the Act grants municipalities the ability to impose conditions upon Site Plan Approval. This includes the construction and maintenance of site components such as walls, fences, landscaping, grading, pedestrian walkways etc. Section 41(6) provides that the municipality cannot limit height or density of the proposed buildings via the Site Plan Control process.

Timeline and appeals

Site Plan Approval must be granted within 30 days of the submission. If the municipality fails to approve within this window, the applicant may appeal to the Tribunal. The only other appeal right the applicant has regarding Site Plan Control is pursuant to the conditions imposed by the municipality under sub-section 7.

Often a grey area in regard to timeline is the municipality's prerogative to deem an application complete. Since the 30-day window does not begin until an application has been deemed complete, municipalities may be reluctant to do so. However, this is considered poor practice and applications which are complete should be deemed such at the earliest opportunity. Applications which are not complete should be returned to the applicant equally as expediently with clear communication about what is deficient about their application so they may resubmit.

Fees

Section 69(1) of the Act provides that fees charged shall be designed to meet the cost the municipality expects to incur in reviewing the application. In other words, municipalities cannot use planning review fees as a revenue source, only to recover costs of undertaking Site Plan review. Section 69(2), however, provides that the municipality may waive or reduce the fee requirement where it would be unreasonable to require payment.

Section 69(3) provides that any person required to pay a fee may pay the amount under protest and thereafter appeal to the Tribunal against the fee or amount of the fee within thirty days of payment.

Nothing in the Act prevents a municipality from 'under-charging' for planning fees in order to incentivize or lessen impact on applicants.

3-3 Norfolk County Site Plan Control By-law (2014-97)

The Norfolk County Site Plan Control By-law (the 'By-law') designates the entirety of Norfolk County as the Site Plan Control Area and delegates Council's approval powers to the Director of Community Planning or their delegate.

Section 5 of the By-law provides the following classes of development which require Site Plan Approval:

- a) all medium and high density residential development, including:
 - i. a lot upon which site plan approval has been required under a subdivision or other development agreement; or
 - ii. a lot zoned R3, R4, R5, or R6 zones;
- b) all commercial, industrial and institutional development in residential zones;
- c) all development in commercial zones;
- d) all development in employment or industrial zones;
- e) all development in institutional zones;
- f) all development in Open Space Tent and Trailer Zone;
- g) all development of and expansions to Medical Marijuana Production Facilities, and,
- h) all development larger than the maximum permitted area under section 12.2 Value Added-Agriculture of the Zoning By-Law of Norfolk County 1-Z-2014 (provides a maximum floor area of 560m² and requirement that it be secondary to main farm use, among other criteria).

Section 6 of the By-law specifically exempts the following types of developments:

- a) development of farm buildings and the residence of the farm operator, except in accordance with subsection 5.1 h) of this By-Law;
- b) development in the form of residential freehold street townhouse units approved as part of a registered plan of subdivision;
- c) development in the form of single detached, duplexes or semi-detached dwellings, except in cases where specially required

In summary, generally all forms of development in Norfolk County require Site Plan Approval except for farm buildings, 1- and 2-unit residential dwellings, and townhouses if they have already been approved by way of registered plan of subdivision.

4 Existing Norfolk County Process Review

The following flow charts summarize the existing Site Plan and Pre-Consultation processes at a high level. These flow charts are intended to serve as a base for discussion and visualizing recommendations. It is noted that each stage may contain several sub-stages and is not necessarily indicative of workload or time consumed.

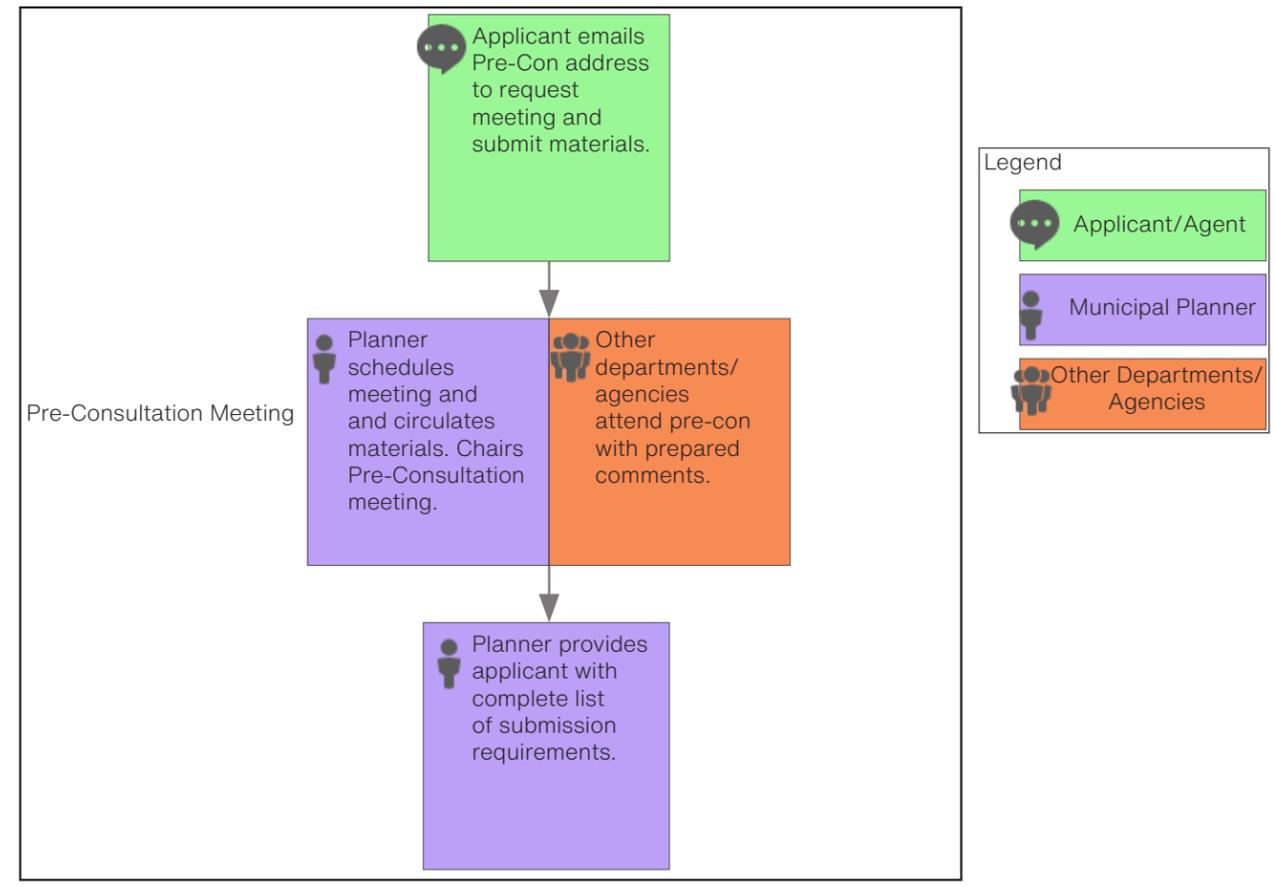
4-1 Formal Pre-Consultation Process

It is our understanding that in Norfolk County, Formal Pre-Consultation is typically required for all types of land use planning applications set out in the Planning Act except for Committee of Adjustment applications. Consideration may be given to waive Formal Pre-Consultation for minor applications.

Applicants are required to provide general details and a concept plan to the Planning Department and formally request Pre-Consultation. Staff have recently developed a Formal Pre-Consultation form to assist with ensuring the necessary information is provided to municipal staff. Should the request for Formal Pre-Consultation be considered complete, the Planning Department proceeds to circulate the materials to the appropriate departments and agencies for comment. Once comments are received, a meeting date is scheduled. At this meeting, municipal staff and agencies provide comments to the applicant verbally, with written comments following the meeting.

At this time, the schedule for Formal Pre-Consultation is two days per month (three meetings per meeting day) for standard meetings, and one day per month (four meetings per meeting day) for minor meetings.

Existing Pre-Consultation Process



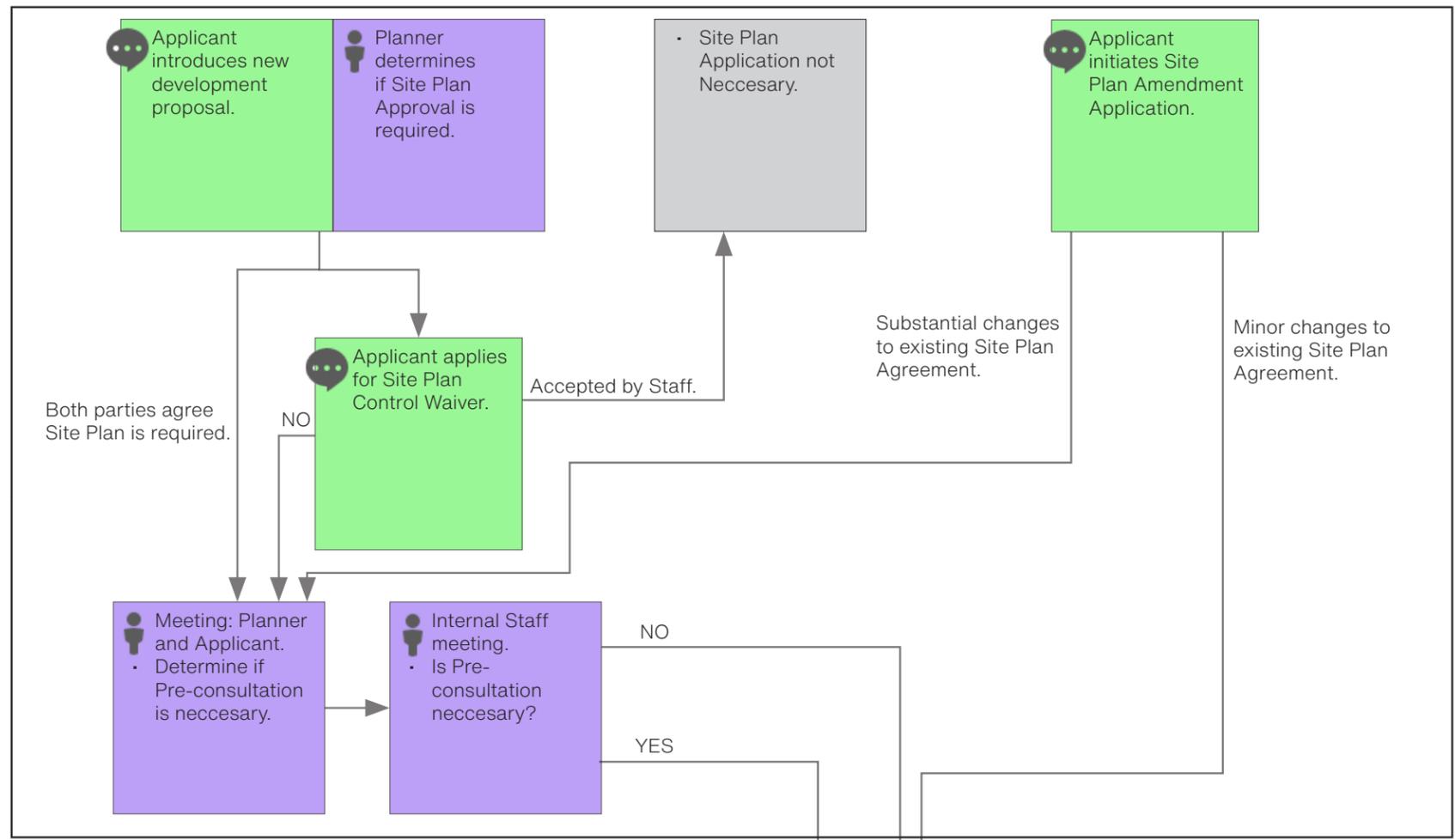
4-2 Site Plan Approval Process

Norfolk County's Site Plan Approval process can generally be divided into six stages for simplicity of discussion. The first phase is referred to as "Project Inception".

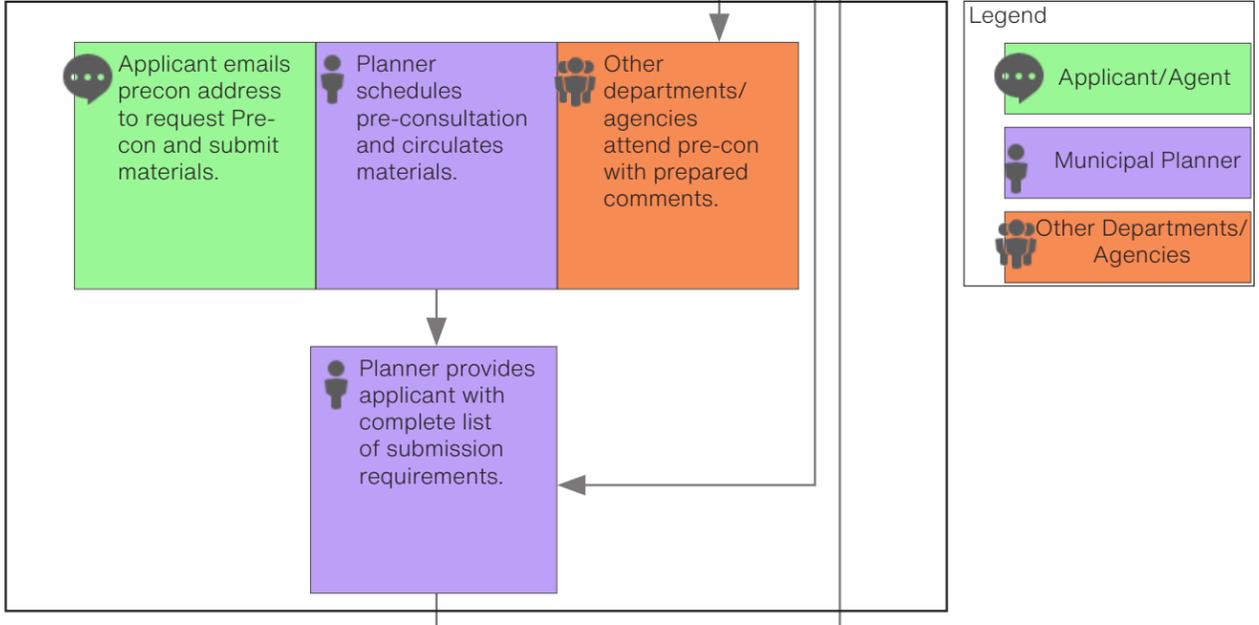
1. Project Inception - Applicant liaises with municipal staff and completes the Formal Pre-Consultation request information. Municipal staff then schedule a Pre-Consultation meeting and invite all relevant parties.
2. Formal Pre-Consultation - Once the Formal Pre-Consultation is scheduled, the Project Inception phase ends, and most (nearly all) Site Plan applications proceed to the "Pre-Consultation" phase, which is the same as identified in the "Formal Pre-Consultation" stage above.
3. Site Plan Submission - After Formal Pre-Consultation process is completed and the municipal planner has provided the applicant with the written comments, the applicant is then able to file the Formal Site Plan Application. After reviewing the submission, the planner may either deem the application complete, or decide that the application is not complete and inform the applicant of such, including specifications of what is missing from the application and how to rectify it.
4. Circulation - Once the Site Plan application has been deemed complete by the planner, the 30-day statutory time begins. At this point the planner in charge of the file prepares a circulation notice which is sent to the relevant departments and agencies for comment. Norfolk's internal timeline for comments is set at 2 weeks, or up to 3 weeks for a more complex application, however Norfolk Staff noted during consultation that these comments can take 3 to 5 months to receive in practice. Once all the comments are received, it is the planner's responsibility to resolve any conflicting comments between agencies, consolidate into a 'Site Plan Comments Letter' and circulate to the applicant. This letter essentially details all the matters which the municipality requires be resolved prior to approval. It is noted that there is usually a team meeting at this stage, however Norfolk Staff noted that it is somewhat difficult to calibrate the comments. There is also no meeting with the applicant at this stage unless specifically requested by the applicant.
5. Resubmission - After the applicant has received the Site Plan Comments Letter, they can revise their drawings to the municipality's specifications and resubmit. When the planner receives this resubmission a similar process is recycled, where the resubmission is again circulated to the relevant departments/agencies to determine if their comments have been met. Norfolk staff indicated that there are usually about 2 to 3 resubmissions required on average for a given Site Plan application.
6. Approval - After the planner and the other departments/agencies are satisfied that the comments have been met, the final stage is approval. The planner notifies the applicant that no further resubmissions are required and sends them a copy of the draft agreement for their signature. Site Plan Approval is currently issued by the file Planner.

Existing Site Plan Process

Project Inception

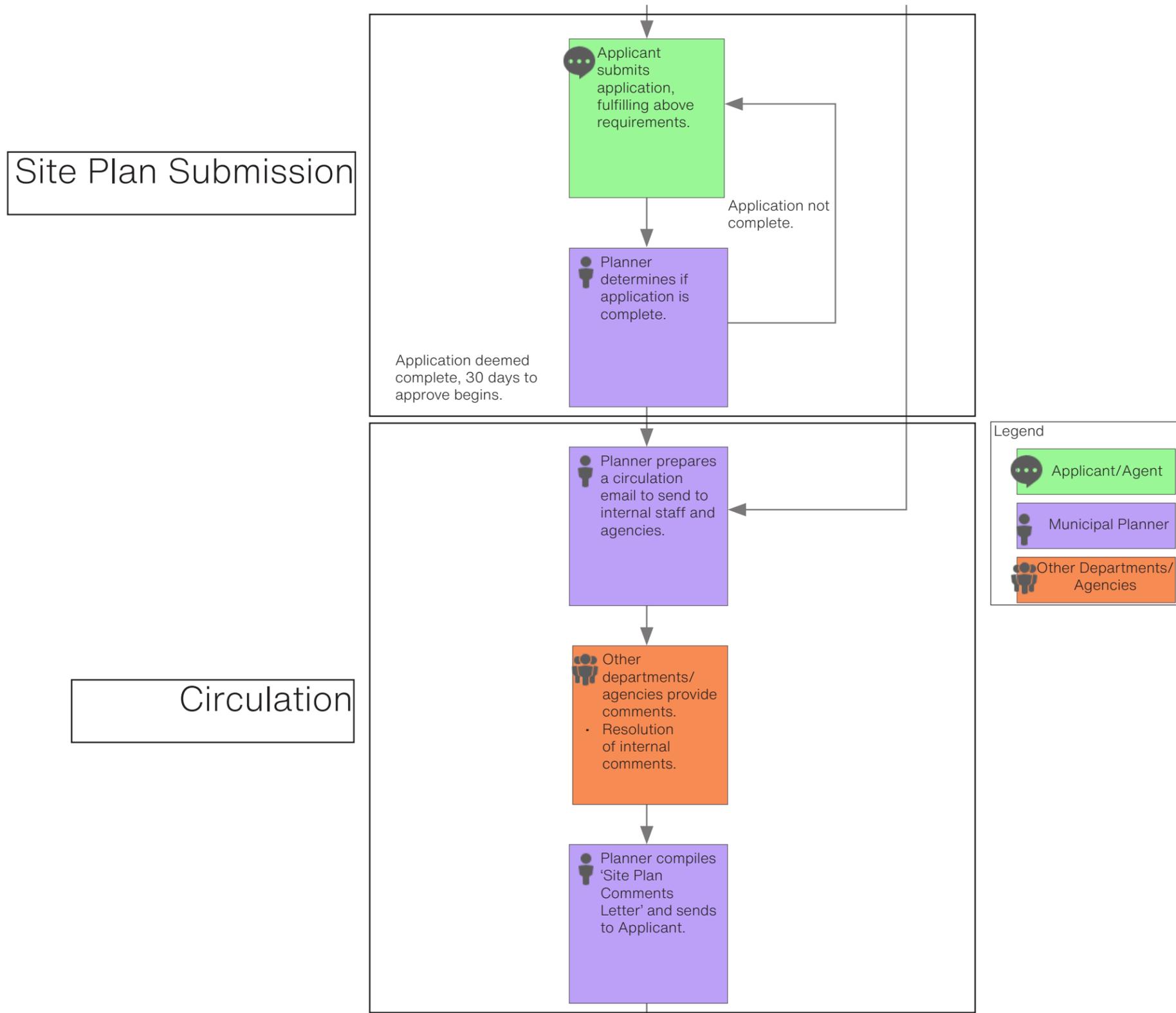


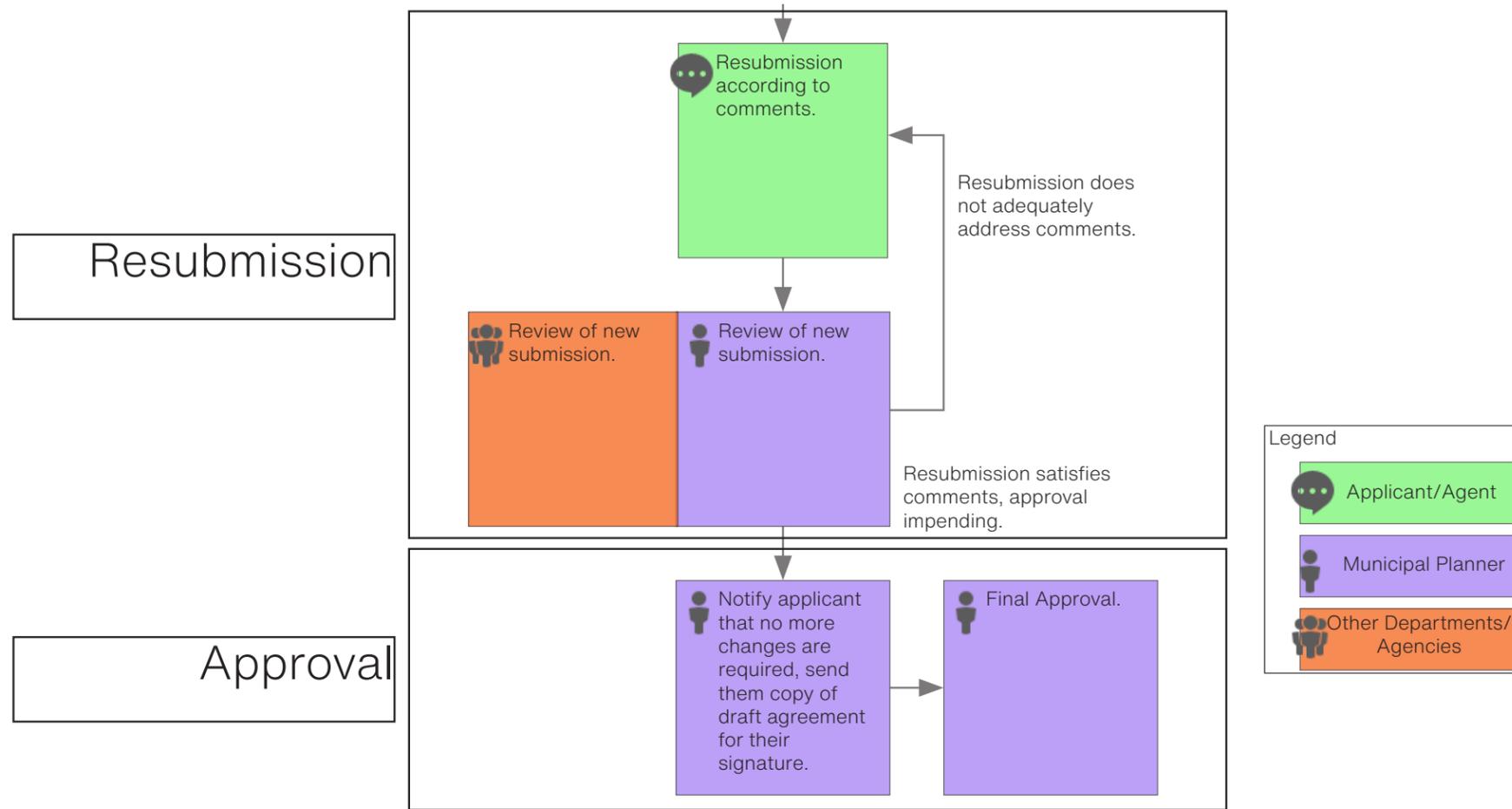
Formal Pre-Consultation



Legend

- Applicant/Agent (Green box with speech bubble icon)
- Municipal Planner (Purple box with person icon)
- Other Departments/Agencies (Orange box with group of people icon)





5 Stakeholder Consultation

5-1 Norfolk County Staff

Baker Planning Group conducted a virtual group consultation session on December 2nd, 2021 with Norfolk County staff typically involved in both the Formal Pre-Consultation and Site Plan Approval processes. The purpose of this session was to clarify internal procedures and gather insight into the areas of the process that work well and areas that need improvement and/or modification.

During the consultation, staff members were asked to post notes on the process flowchart to indicate strengths, weaknesses, areas of concern, or process clarifications [Appendix A]. The group moved through the process section by section and had continuous verbal discussions in addition to the notes posted. These comments, in concert with other research and consultation helped identify the key concerns and inform the recommendations outlined in this report. The major findings are summarised below. While the section below summarizes the major emergent themes, all comments received were considered in the development of the recommendations provided in this report.

Pre-Consultation

Norfolk County Staff generally agreed upon two major concerns regarding the Formal Pre-Consultation process.

First, the schedule and pace of the Pre-Consultation meetings is too high for the current staff capacity. It was agreed that a variety of converging factors were causing this including:

- Not enough staff for the number and frequency of Pre-Consultation meetings.
- Hours worked to prepare and conduct a Pre-Consultation often exceeded the fee charged to the applicant (currently \$446)
- Pre-consultation is required too frequently (no 'paper Pre-Consultation' options to reduce meeting time or types of applications where Pre-Consultation is not necessary)

As such, typical timelines for applicants to schedule a meeting and receive comments are longer than desired.

Secondly, the submissions that applicants make are often insufficient for adequate Pre-Consultation review, containing insufficient detail or omitting required drawings altogether. Nevertheless, Pre-Consultation usually moves forward without sufficient drawings, leading to confusion later in the process. Again, a multitude of factors contribute to this concern including:

- Lack of clear Pre-Consultation submission requirements (no standard Pre-Consultation form available on website)
- Staff proceed with Pre-Consultation without proper submission

- Lack of staff coordination prior to Pre-Consultation meeting (e.g. Development Engineering, Building and Planning meeting internally to review comments and confirm accepted joint path)

In staff's opinion, these issues lengthened the timeline for the Pre-Consultation process. For example, Staff may have additional or modified comments upon receiving the more detailed submissions if the applicant did not provide a fulsome submission set at Pre-Consultation and/or be required to revise departmental comments as a result of reviewing comments from other departments.

Site Plan

In reviewing the Site Plan process, Staff identified several strengths and weaknesses. As part of the exercise, Staff were asked to rank each of the six phases of the Site Plan process from strongest to weakest in terms of optimization and clarity. No trend emerged from this, indicating that no single phase is a key source of concern, nor is any phase without need for improvement. Rather, it is more likely that all phases would benefit from overarching streamlining and process improvements.

Similarly, two themes emerged from Staff discussions. First, there is confusion internally and externally about submission requirements. It is not clear to applicants what type of development would constitute a minor vs. regular vs. major Site Plan Application. It is also unclear what the submission standards would be for each type of application. As such, submissions are often incomplete or drawings and studies are not done to required standards.

The second theme noted by Staff was lack of clarity about internal timelines. Generally, the approval process is significantly longer than the required statutory deadlines. Nevertheless, the number of required resubmissions is generally fewer than other comparable municipalities. This indicates that the time for the municipality to provide comments for each submission (and/or resubmission(s)) is longer than other comparable municipalities, but may be more thorough and comprehensive. Staff noted that applicants express concern with respect to timelines to reach approval.

Additionally, lack of documentation about the submission requirements and timelines makes it difficult to train new municipal staff.

Concern was expressed by staff that requirements for Site Plan Approval are often challenged by Applicants and in turn, staff are often contacted by members of Council. This dynamic seemingly has created a culture of indecision amongst staff, concerned that their professional recommendations and opinions will be questioned and on occasion, requested to be modified.

5-2 Norfolk County Stakeholders

As part of the review process, Baker Planning Group conducted consultations with external stakeholders that represented the range of individuals that interface with these processes (outside of municipal staff). The stakeholders included four (4) private practitioners that have experience in Norfolk as well as senior staff and

members of Council.

These interviews were conducted in November and December of 2021 and were conducted in an open-ended manner, such that the interviewees could discuss the experiences which were most notable to them.

It was noted by the interviewees that acquiring a Pre-consultation meeting typically took between 3 to 5 months, longer than typical for comparative municipalities. It was also noted that time to receive comments after a Pre-Consultation meeting was much longer than typical, in some cases up to several months. Similar complaints about the length of the Site Plan Approval process were noted. It is our opinion that a variety of factors are contributing to this real or perceived delay, and resolution to these factors is detailed in the “Recommendations” section of this report.

Stakeholders provide several comments as to the nature of the Pre-Consultation review, the comments received as part of the review, and how it is executed by Norfolk County. One concern was that the level of detail in the Pre-Consultation review surpassed what would normally be expected. While little guidance is given in the Planning Act as to how Pre-Consultation should be carried out, it is typical for Pre-Consultation to focus only on any major barriers with the application and to discuss the submission requirements. Usually, a more fulsome review would be reserved for the subsequent planning applications. In addition to the nature of the review, Stakeholders noted that sometimes comments received from different departments would conflict with each other, leading to confusion and additional delays. To prevent such confusion, it is recommended that the planner in charge of the file consolidate and resolve any conflicting comments prior to the Pre-Consultation meeting, or at least prior to sharing the comments with the Applicant. A staff meeting prior to Pre-Consultation may be one method of resolving this issue. We understand Norfolk Staff are working on this approach and the continued practice is supported.

As referenced in the “Legislative Framework” section of this report, the process of deeming a Site Plan Application complete entails a brief review to ensure that all the required materials have been correctly submitted. The Planning Act provides that once a Site Plan Application has been deemed complete, the municipality has 30 days to approve. Any detailed level of review and circulation should occur after the application is deemed complete. This phase is not intended to be a review in and of itself. Stakeholders identified that Norfolk County often took longer than would be normally expected to deem applications complete, seemingly using this phase to conduct a preliminary review before commencing the 30-day statutory time. This can occur in other municipalities, but stakeholders expressed concern with this approach. It is recommended that when Site Plan submissions are made, Staff deem them complete expeditiously and in good faith on the basis that the correct materials are provided, rather than their agreement with the content of the materials. If incomplete, Staff should provide clear reasons for such to the applicant.

5-3 Benchmarking of Comparative Municipalities

To provide comparison and context for the process review, eight (8) comparative Ontario municipalities were selected for survey and consultation, each being a single-tier municipality with a similar population to Norfolk County.

Based on publicly-available information from each municipality's website, these municipalities were benchmarked in comparison to Norfolk County [Appendix B]. Baker Planning Group also pulled on experience working in municipalities across southwest Ontario.

In addition, a survey questionnaire was sent to and completed by Registered Professional Planners from each of the 8 municipalities which contained 15 generally open-ended questions about the Pre-Consultation and Site Plan processes [Appendix C]. Of the eight (8) municipalities, three completed the survey through a telephone interview. In some cases, 'real-world' practices or policies differed from the public-facing municipal documents. As such, some research obtained from municipal websites conflicted with the more nuanced details obtained from comparative and stakeholder interviews. In these cases, the latter details were prioritized as being more correct.

Below, the information received from the comparative municipalities is consolidated and presented in comparison to the information received from Norfolk Stakeholder Consultation to answer key questions regarding the Pre-Consultation and Site Plan processes.

Pre-Consultation

When should Pre-Consultation be required?

In Norfolk County, the Director has discretion as to when to require or waive Pre-Consultation. However, from the Norfolk consultation session, it was confirmed that in practice, Pre-Consultation is almost always required for Site Plan Applications. In four (4) of the eight (8) evaluated municipalities, Pre-Consultation is stated as always required (not including Committee of Adjustment Applications). In two (2) municipalities, it is strongly recommended but left to the discretion of the applicant. In one (1) municipality, it is on a voluntary basis. However, the survey questionnaires revealed that some municipalities, although maintaining that Pre-Consultation is required, commonly use 'paper pre-cons' instead of actual meetings. This means that in cases where a live meeting would be unnecessary given the scope of the proposal, the proposal and comments are exchanged by email with no actual meeting.

As such, Norfolk County's practice of requiring Pre-Consultation for Site Plan (and larger) Applications is similar to the standard of other municipalities, but has room for improved efficiency with the incorporation of 'paper pre-cons' in cases where a live meeting is not essential.

What Drawings/Studies should be required for Pre-Consultation?

The Norfolk County website provides guidance for required Pre-Consultation submission materials. The Pre-Consultation form also provides a short list of suggested drawings but provides that they do not need to be professionally made. Norfolk County Staff identified that a source of concern is the poor quality of Pre-Consultation submissions. They noted that it is difficult to provide effective comments in response to such submission materials. Further, when a more fulsome and detailed submission is made later on, Staff are then able to accordingly provide more detailed comments, which sometimes leads to conflict with the applicant because they were not expecting these additional comments. Some other municipalities featured more extensive and detailed Pre-Consultation submission requirements.

Meeting Schedule

Through consultation it was revealed that the frequency and number of meetings varied significantly between municipalities. For example, one municipality noted that they only have 6 meetings per month, and this was enough to meet demand. From Norfolk County stakeholder interviews, it was noted that it could sometimes take as long as 4 to 5 months to book a Pre-Consultation meeting and another 4 to 5 months to receive comments. As such, it is likely that the current Pre-Consultation meeting schedule is insufficient to meet demand and should be accordingly increased. It is our opinion that one month is a reasonable timeframe between meeting request and meeting date.

What circulation timeframe is reasonable to provide meaningful and complete comments?

Municipalities generally agreed that two to three weeks is a reasonable time frame for comments, although some noted that during busy times this ends up being longer. Regarding the time between Pre-Consultation and when the applicant receives the comments, one municipality sends them within two days, another within a week. In regard to Norfolk's internal policy, comments are to be received between 2 and 4 weeks depending on the application type. As noted above, these deadlines are often not met. Norfolk Staff noted that these delays were not common, rather due to recent and temporary staff shortages and abnormally high workload.

Are there instances where virtual (Zoom meeting or equivalent) or in-person meetings are not required?

Municipalities were divided in their approach to requiring meetings versus 'paper pre-cons'. Haldimand and Brant typically always have Pre-Consultation meetings except for very minor applications, such as Committee of Adjustment applications. Other municipalities indicated that they are likely to not have a Pre-Consultation meeting if the comments are clear and concise. Reserving meetings only for applications which require a more fulsome discussion.

Do you plan to keep Pre-Consultation virtual (not in-person) in the future after social distancing requirements are lifted? Why or why not?

Municipalities generally agreed that they would keep Pre-Consultation meetings virtual by default, with an option to meet in person if applicants wished to do so.

Who should attend Pre-Consultation meetings?

The comparative municipalities varied significantly in the departments invited to participate in Pre-Consultation. Departments which generally always attended Pre-Consultations in most municipalities included:

- Development Planning
- Development Engineering
- Emergency Services
- Conservation Authority (when applicable)
- Building Department
- Parks and Recreation

Some municipalities additionally included departments such as Policy Planning, Economic Development, and Legal Services.

It is our opinion that to improve clarity and reduce hours spent in meetings, Pre-Consultation invite lists should be as short as reasonably possible. Particularly when applications are more simple and/or a department has no comments, there is little need for them to attend the Pre-Consultation.

Site Plan

What types of development should require Site Plan Approval?

In Norfolk County, generally any development except primary farm buildings and one (1) or two (2) unit residential dwellings, require Site Plan Approval. The comparative municipalities were generally similar in keeping with this approach. The only variation was the number of residential dwellings, with one permitting up to three (3) (e.g. triplex), and another permitting up to four (4) (e.g. fourplex) without Site Plan Approval. In this regard Norfolk County's policy is generally consistent with other municipalities in Ontario. Norfolk County might consider adding 3- and 4-unit residential dwellings to the exemption list.

What classes of Site Plan Application should be available?

Norfolk County has three classes of Site Plan with a fee commensurate to the three levels of magnitude: minor, regular, and major. It was noted by Norfolk County Staff that minor and major Site Plans are very rare. Rather, almost all Site Plan Applications are identified as regular. There are no guidelines or criteria for what a proposed application should be categorized as. Stakeholders also affirmed that they were only familiar with Regular tier applications, some having not realized minor and major existed.

Comparative municipalities similarly often lacked clear criteria for distinguishing between the tiers of Site Plan Applications, and rather would determine based on more subjective factors such as complexity and/or anticipated workload for municipal staff. Of the eight (8) municipalities, only two (2) have only a single type of Site Plan Application. The remaining six (6) would classify the application as minor, regular, major, or use a similar method of classification with different fees for each application type.

A common trend for determining the class of an application is if it requires technical studies, development engineering review, or a Site Plan Agreement. If none, then it is a 'minor' application.

One common factor for determining whether an application can be considered minor is if development engineering would be involved and if a Site Plan Agreement was needed. If not, municipalities considered these applications minor and typically charged a low fee (see Appendix B).

In our opinion, making greater use of the tier structure would be beneficial. It would more accurately distribute the cost to applicants, and allow minor applications to proceed more quickly.

Site Plan and Pre-Consultation Application Fees

As noted, application fees must be established in consideration of cost-recovery. While a municipality can establish lower fees than cost-recovery, the fees cannot exceed this established amount.

Comparing the fee schedules from the various benchmarked municipalities identified that Norfolk County,

on average, generally charges higher fees than comparable municipalities for Site Plan Approval and Pre-Consultation. Nevertheless, it was noted by Norfolk Staff that the time spent on Site Plan Applications often still exceeded these fees.

Refer to Appendix B for more information.

What Drawings/Studies should be required for Site Plan Application?

As referenced in the “Legislative Background” section of this report, municipalities may require certain types of drawings and plans in support of a Site Plan Application from a defined list set out in section 41(4) of the Planning Act. Most comparative municipalities provide a standard reference list of what types of drawings and/or studies are typically required for each type of Site Plan Application. Usually the drawing requirements for minor applications are less onerous than the requirements for major applications. It is standard practice for municipalities to curate the submission requirements to each application, often providing exemptions where particular drawings or studies would have little or no bearing on the review process.

Norfolk County Stakeholders expressed concern that the submission requirements were sometimes too onerous for the relative magnitude of the proposal at hand. As such, it is recommended that Norfolk County review both the standard list of submission requirements, and analyze each proposal with the intent of minimizing undue requirements for the applicant.

Who should be the Final Approval Authority for Site Plan?

In all of the surveyed municipalities, final approval authority is designated to the Manager of Planning, Director of Planning, or similar title to such. This is an area where Norfolk County differs from the comparative municipalities because both of the two senior planners have approval authority.

In our opinion, centralizing approval authority to the Director of Planning is recommended because it provides more consistency and certainty to the approval process.

Resubmissions

Norfolk County Staff identified that Site Plan Applications typically go through resubmission an average of 2 to 3 times. This is a typical or slightly lower number of resubmissions, with 3 to 4 being the approximate average across the comparative municipalities. Further, one respondent noted that while this is the median, they regularly see applications with more submissions than this.

Most municipalities identified that engineering issues are often the reason for requiring resubmission. One noted that the “domino effect” of changes from engineering delayed the process. Another municipality noted that another reason for resubmission is the misinterpretation of comments by the applicant or their agents. Norfolk Staff highlighted meeting with applicants during the “Resubmission” phase as a strength which helped to reduce the number of resubmissions.

What is the average approximate length of time of the Site Plan Approval process (from initial application to final approval)?

The average response to this question from comparative municipalities was approximately 5 months with

a range between 3 months and 6 months. From Staff and Stakeholder interviews, the Site Plan process in Norfolk County often takes an excess of 6 months. As such, from available information, it is likely that Norfolk County's Site Plan process is longer than that of comparable municipalities.

5-4 Summary of Stakeholder Consultation

Based on the findings of the research conducted by Baker Planning Group, there is an opportunity to refine and modify the Formal Pre-consultation and Site Plan Approval processes and to consider organization structures at Norfolk County, including:

1. Modifications to forms, procedures and guidelines
2. Internal staff training, external to the Planning Department
3. Modifying the organizational structure of the Planning Department and review staffing levels
4. Formalizing approval processes with required forms, timelines and pre-established meetings

Having consulted with various stakeholders, it is our opinion that the overall length of processing time is a primary concern. It is evident that Norfolk County's Formal Pre-Consultation and Site Plan Approval processes are longer than comparable municipalities.

Secondary to this concern, although likely related, is lack of clarity on submission requirements and inconsistent application of requirements.. Comparable municipalities typically listed submission expectations and checklists for both Pre-Consultation and Site Plan approval readily available on their websites and on application forms. Similar documents on Norfolk County's website were more difficult to find, and in the case of Pre-Consultation forms, unavailable. As such, Norfolk County Staff identified poor submission quality as a recurrent theme in requests for Pre-Consultation.

Major Concerns:

1. Length of process
2. Confusion over submission requirements
3. Inconsistencies in requirements from one application to the next
4. Inconsistencies in staff commentary on applications that are similar in nature

Other concerns:

1. Unnecessary requirement for Formal Pre-Consultation for certain applications
2. Using deeming process under the Planning Act to manage processing time and workloads
3. Lack of detail available to staff and the public on the various types of Site Plan Applications.

6 Recommendations

Based on the findings of research conducted by Baker Planning Group, there is opportunity for refinement to the Pre-Consultation and Site Plan Approval processes through a series of methods. These recommendations are interrelated, often building off each other, and should be understood collectively as such.

These recommendations are broken down into the following time frames:

- Short Term - These recommendations are immediately actionable. It is recommended that Norfolk County Staff adopt them within the next 6 to 18 months.
- Medium Term - These recommendations require some planning and additional investment of staff time. It is recommended that Norfolk County begin considering and planning for them with the intent of implementing these recommendations in 2023 to 2024.
- Long Term - These recommendations either require a high level of staff time and investment or are able to be considered at a later date given the scale of potential impact on improvements to these processes. A reasonable timeframe to fully implement these recommendations would be in 2024 or later.

Key improvements as a result of each recommendation are described with an expected approximate efficiency increase for the Planning Department as a whole, where applicable (not all recommendations are intended to increase efficiency). The entity or entities who would be responsible for implementing each recommendation is also identified. This study was focused on and limited to Pre-Consultation and Site Plan processes based on the scope laid out in the Request for Proposal and the two-month timeframe of the study.

6-1 Formal Pre-Consultation

Recommendation	Actions	Key Improvements	Assigned To
Short-Term			
<p>Amend requirements for Formal Pre-Consultation.</p>	<p>Introduce "Minor" and "Regular" Formal Pre-Consultation Applications.</p> <p>Minor Applications will consist of a response letter outlining submission requirements and will apply to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Applications requiring two (2) or less technical studies/reports 2. Minor Site Plan Applications 3. Applications, where previous approvals under the Planning Act have been granted <p>Regular Formal Pre-Consultation Applications will include a meeting with staff and follow-up letter outlining submission requirements.</p>	<p>Introducing "Minor" Formal Pre-Consultation will reduce staff time commitments and alleviate the backlog of applications awaiting a meeting date.</p> <p>Will assist staff in recognizing where a proposed application is minor and limited comments are required to move forward with a formal planning application.</p> <p>Provide improved circulation timeline for applicants.</p> <p>The use of "Minor" Formal Pre-Consultation for developments with recent planning approvals will reduce the timeframes for applicants.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 5%</p>	<p>Planning Department</p>

Recommendation	Actions	Key Improvements	Assigned To
Create/Revise Formal Pre-Consultation Application Form.	<p>Require information on the applicant and the subject property as well as a brief proposal synopsis.</p> <p>Applicants to provide a concept sketch.</p> <p>*Staff later noted that this form has been developed, just not yet uploaded to the municipal website.</p>	<p>Reduce processing time and review with the required information being submitted by the Applicant.</p> <p>Implementing consistent requirements for Formal Pre-Consultation.</p> <p>Simplify the process to applicants, with clear requirements.</p> <p>Clarity amongst staff that the sketch requirements and proposal details at the time of Formal Pre-Consultation are less onerous or detailed as is required at the time of the formal planning application.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 5%</p>	Planning Department
Coordinate Staff Training Sessions (one per year).	<p>Planning Department to coordinate a training session with applicable departments and agencies to articulate the purpose and intent of the Formal Pre-Consultation process.</p>	<p>The process is intended to discuss the nature of an application, identify high-level concerns/issues and provide a fulsome and exhaustive list of submission requirements for the Planning Act Application.</p> <p>Greater clarity is required amongst those participating in Formal Pre-Consultation that comments are to be focused to the subject planning application and detailed comments on future applications or permits are not necessary at this stage. The intent is to limit the review time of the various department and agencies for input into the Formal Pre-Consultation process.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 5%</p>	All departments and agencies that interface with planning approvals.

Recommendation	Actions	Key Improvements	Assigned To
Tracking Formal Pre-Consultation Applications.	<p>The Planning Administrator is to establish required processing times for each step within the Formal Pre-Consultation process (time to accept application, time for comments, meeting time and date to release written comments).</p> <p>Work with the IT Department to establish automated reminders if the dates established for each application lapse.</p>	<p>In the short-term, the Planning Administrator, in consultation with planning staff, will develop a flow chart outlining the required steps with Formal Pre-Consultation (Minor and Regular) and set dates for each step.</p> <p>In the long-term (as outlined below), this system is recommended to be digitized with auto-reminders to all commenting staff on upcoming due dates.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 5%</p>	Planning Administrator
Establish Formal Pre-Consultation Meeting Schedule.	Meet once a week, chaired by the file Planner responsible for the application. Planning Administrator responsible for scheduling.	Recommended that meetings be held once per week (1 hour per meeting, with 15-30 minutes for staff discussion and 30-45 minutes for meeting with applicant). With the streamlining of applications requiring Formal Pre-Consultation Meetings, it is anticipated that two to four meetings per week would be required.	Planning Department
Establish Meeting Formal Pre-Consultation Meeting Protocols.	<p>The file Planner is the chair of the meetings. Staff to meet internally for the first 15-30 minutes of the allocated meeting time. This time is utilized to discuss comments from the various agencies and departments and seek to resolve conflicting comments. The Applicant attends the second portion of the meeting.</p> <p>Meeting notes are to be taken by the Planning Administrator at the meeting and sent to the Applicant within 2 weeks.</p>	Planning staff are the delegated approval authority for Site Plan and are registered professionals who ultimately provide recommendations to Council on the appropriateness of planning applications. In this regard, planning staff should be empowered to review proposed applications and navigate potentially competing comments from the various departments and commenting agencies.	Planning Department/ Planning Administrator

Recommendation	Actions	Key Improvements	Assigned To
Formal Pre-Consultation Meeting Minutes – Clear Intent and Binding Agreement.	<p>The Meeting Minutes are the County’s formal requirements for the proposed planning application</p> <p>Unless unforeseen circumstances arise, the Meeting Minutes should be considered binding and the addition of further submission requirements at the time of the formal application should be minimized.</p> <p>The Applicant and the assigned Planner are required to sign the Meeting Minutes as an agreement to the required submission documents.</p> <p>Meeting Minutes should have the contact’s name and phone number for all commenting agencies and departments to allow an applicant to directly follow-up with appropriate person.</p>	<p>The Planning Administrator should attend the Formal Pre-Consultation Meetings with the file Planner and take notes during the meeting. The Planning Administrator should then finalize the Meeting Minutes (for review and approval by the Senior Planner and/or Director of Planning).</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 5%</p>	Planning Department
Medium-Term			
Prepare “Minor” Pre-Consultation Meeting Minutes.	<p>Prepare a template for the Meeting Minutes that includes the fulsome list of submission requirements (to confirm what is required). Include area for the assigned Planner and Applicant to sign and acknowledge the submission requirements.</p> <p>Add standard notes related to parkland dedication, development charges, building permits, access permits, etc. that can be selected where appropriate.</p>	<p>Reduce the time commitment to complete the Meeting Minutes. This will also reduce the review required by external departments and agencies.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 5-10%</p>	Planning Department in consultation with commenting departments and agencies for template comments

Recommendation	Actions	Key Improvements	Assigned To
Prepare "Regular" Pre-Consultation Meeting Minutes.	<p>Prepare a template for the Meeting Minutes that reduces time commitment from staff to finalize and send to the applicant.</p> <p>Planning staff to work with the various applicable department and agencies on standardized comments and advisory notes.</p> <p>Ensure that the template Meeting Minutes include a checklist for submission requirements, and where applicable include a brief overview of criteria to require each study (e.g., threshold criteria to require a Traffic Impact Study).</p>	<p>The stakeholder consultation, both with municipal staff and external stakeholders noted inconsistency in the requirements for similar applications. The inconsistency appears to stem from the organization structure of the Planning Department, the interface with external departments, the input from County Council and the role of planners to resolve conflicting comments amongst departments.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 5%</p>	<p>Planning Department in consultation with commenting departments and agencies for template comments</p>
Update Planning Department Website.	<p>With the completion of a new form and submission requirements, create a centralized webpage for Formal Pre-Consultation.</p> <p>The completed Formal Pre-Consultation applications to be submitted through an online portal and automatically forwarded to the Planning Administrator's email address.</p>	<p>Reduce staff time in confirming submission requirements to applicants.</p> <p>Direct submission to the Planning Administrator to improve timing to receive and circulate.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 5%</p>	<p>IT Department with the Planning Department</p>

6-2 Site Plan Approval

Recommendation	Actions	Key Improvements	Assigned To
Short-Term			
<p>Reassign final approval authority for all Site Plan Applications to Director of Planning.</p>	<p>Update the Site Plan Approval Letter to have the Director of Planning's signature.</p> <p>The Site Plan/Development Planning Coordinator (refer to section 6-3 below) is to prepare the final Site Plan Approval package and provide to the Director of Planning for final approval.</p>	<p>A singular approval authority would assist in ensuring consistent requirements are being imposed on all applicants.</p> <p>With any circulation process there will be a certain level of disagreement among departments. When conflicting comments are unable to be resolved in a timely manner, the Director of Planning should exercise their power as approval authority to expedite the process.</p>	<p>Planning Department</p>

<p>Define the types of Site Plan Approval.</p>	<p>Develop a tiered approach to Site Plan Approval, based on complexity and priority of the various types of development projects.</p> <p>The tiers should be clearly defined and included on the first page of the Site Plan Application Form.</p> <p>Recommended tiers for consideration by the Planning Department area:</p> <p>Stamp Approval: minor site works that limit the increase in gross floor area by less than 10% and do not impact municipal servicing, access or stormwater management. Consider including on-farm diversified uses within the category. Site Plan Agreement and securities would not be required.</p> <p>Minor Site Plan Approval: development with limited on-site modifications or low intensity of use (e.g., street townhouses, triplex, quadraplex, office/commercial buildings that are less than 10,000 square feet).</p> <p>Priority Site Plan Approval: development projects that provide affordable housing, downtown revitalization, etc.</p> <p>Regular Site Plan Approval: All other development projects.</p>	<p>Currently, all development, as defined by the Planning Act requires Site Plan Approval and there is no ability to clearly filter processing times and submission requirements, resulting in a significant number of "Regular" Site Plan Applications.</p> <p>There are several types of development proposals that could be appropriately reviewed through the "stamped" process, removing the need for application forms, fulsome circulation, Site Plan committee meeting and the preparation of Site Plan Agreements.</p> <p>Removes red tape and cost for applicants who seek to undertake minor modifications to their property.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 10-20%</p>	<p>Planning Department</p>
--	---	--	----------------------------

Develop timelines for Site Plan Approval, based on each tier.	Develop a flow chart with associated timelines for each type of Site Plan Application.	Provides greater certainty and organization to all involved parties, including Norfolk Staff and applicants. The level of detail in the review should correspond to the available amount of time.	Site Plan Coordinator
Coordinate Staff Training Sessions (one per year).	Planning Department to coordinate a training session with applicable departments and agencies to articulate the purpose and extent of authority for the Site Plan Approval process.	<p>The process is intended to discuss the nature of an application, identify high-level concerns/ issues and provide a fulsome and exhaustive list of submission requirements for the Planning Act Application.</p> <p>Greater clarity is required amongst those participating in Formal Pre-Consultation that comments are to be focused to the subject planning application and detailed comments on future applications or permits are not necessary at this stage. The intent is to limit the review time of the various department and agencies for input into the Formal Pre-Consultation process.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 5%</p>	All departments and agencies that interface with planning approvals
Develop a Site Plan Review Committee.	<p>Establish a set committee, comprised of one (1) staff person from each applicable department and agency.</p> <p>Site Plan/Development Planning Coordinator chairs this committee. External departments (e.g., Development Engineering) to consider one staff member to be assigned to the Site Plan Review Committee. Other staff to be assigned to the review of all other planning applications.</p>	<p>To improve consistency of requirements and comments, the establishment of a Site Plan Review Committee will ensure that the same staff are reviewing all Site Plan Applications.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 10%</p>	All departments

Medium-Term			
Evaluate Site Plan Approval Fees with tiered approach.	Evaluate the cost of Site Plan Applications to balance with the creation of a new Site Plan Coordinator role. *Planning Staff working with Finance Department on fee structure.	The new staff person is intended to improve processing timelines and ensure consistency and predictability of Site Plan Comments. Potential increases in application fees are intended to be balanced with improved service to applicants.	Director of Planning and Site Plan Coordinator
Amend the Site Plan Control By-law.	To include when development is exempt from Site Plan Approval. To establish the types of Site Plan Approval. To establish list of studies required, with criteria for each study/plan.	Improve consistency in the application of submission requirements. Reduce the approach from applicants to negotiate submission requirements for each application. Clarify the role of the Planning Department in the approval of Site Plan.	Planning Department
Conduct Senior Management and Council Information Session on Site Plan Approval	Conduct a yearly session with Senior Management and County Council on the requirements and processes for Site Plan Approval. A key component to the training session is to provide update on any changes to the process that have been undertaken over the last year. Provide update and summary of the Site Plan Applications processed in the preceding year.	Ensure that members of Council and Senior staff that may be contacted by individual applicants have clear and consistent response messaging. Reduce individual "one-off" negotiations on a particular application, as the messaging is consistent and centralized. Reduces long-term confusion amongst applicants on the flexibility of requirements.	Director of Planning and Site Plan Coordinator

Development Engineering to update guidelines for required studies and reports for the various types of planning applications.	When updating the Development Engineering development manual, consideration to be given to including a specific section on planning applications. The list of required studies and plans should be set out with defined criteria for when they are necessary. The requirements should be consistent with the information contained in the Site Plan Handbook, Site Plan Application Form and Meeting Minutes.	Provide consistent criteria for requiring specific studies and plans. Clear messaging to applicants on the requirements for specific applications. Expected Efficiency Gain: 5%	Development Engineering
Prepare a Site Plan Handbook criteria for each tier of Site Plan Application (Minor, Regular, and Major).	The Handbook should include submission requirements based on the tiers, typical processing times, contact information and description of the scope and threshold for each plan/study.	Applicants being able to easily access and clearly understand the submission requirements will reduce inquiries and improve quality of submissions. a major Site Plan Application. Expected Efficiency Gain: 10%	Planning Department
Update Planning Department Website. *Staff noted this is already underway.	With the completion of a new forms, flow charts and handbooks, create a centralized webpage for Site Plan. The completed Site Plan applications to be submitted through an online portal and automatically forwarded to the Planning Administrator's email address.	Reduce staff time in confirming submission requirements to applicants. Direct submission to the Planning Administrator to improve timing to receive and circulate. Expected Efficiency Gain: 5%	Planning Department with Communications
Long-Term			
Implement software: Bluebeam Revu or AutoCAD LT.	Can provide more detailed and specific comments directly to drawings to prevent misinterpretation of comments. Consider software such as AutoCAD LT or Bluebeam Revu.	Improve the coordination of comments between various departments. Provides centralized and easily reviewed comments to the applicant. Expected Efficiency Gain: 10%	IT Department

<p>Implement software tracking to manage the Site Plan process.</p>	<p>Work with the IT Department to improve the use of the existing internal software to track Site Plan Applications (filters, timeframes, and reminders).</p>	<p>Reduce staff time, particularly the Planning Administrator and Site Plan Coordinator in following up with external departments and agencies in providing comments.</p> <p>Ability for all staff to access to the required information for review.</p> <p>Allows staff to view comments from other staff members to ensure consistency.</p> <p>Assists the Planning Administrator and Site Plan Coordinator in easily and quickly responding to applicant inquiries on Site Plan Application status.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 10%</p>	<p>IT Department</p>
---	---	---	----------------------

6-3 Planning Department Organization Structure

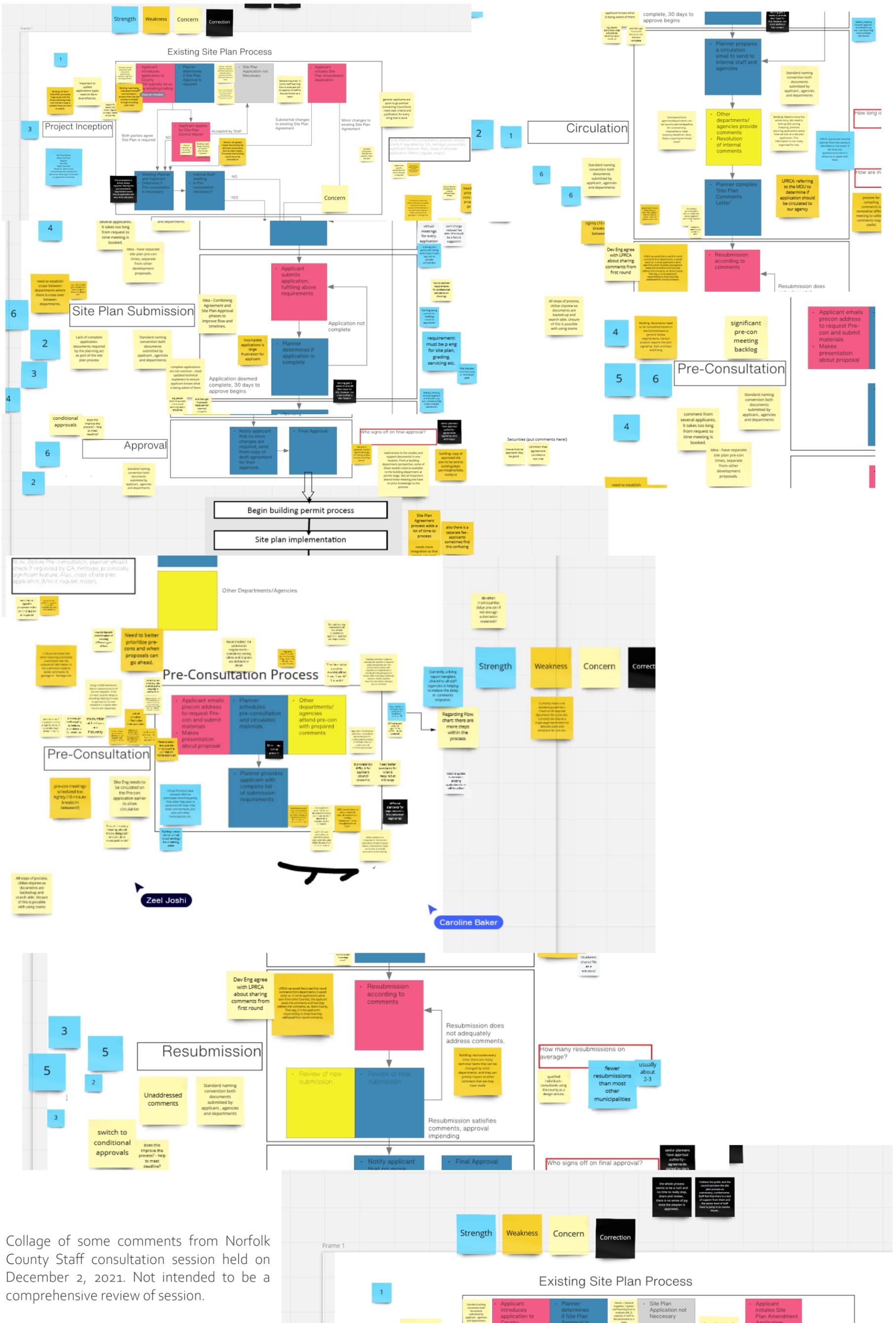
Recommendation	Actions	Key Improvements	Assigned To
Short-Term			
<p>Increase the Planning Administrator role from part time to full time.</p>	<p>The Planning Administrator role will continue to serve as a coordinator for the planning department, a role which is currently spread across all professional planning staff.</p> <p>The Administrator will be a centralized contact to receive all planning applications and would be responsible for a dedicated email address for said applications.</p> <p>The Administrator will accept applications, circulate, issue the notice of complete application, and schedule the required meeting, whether it be Pre-Consultation or Site Plan.</p>	<p>Reduce administrative tasks completed by planning staff.</p> <p>Provide a one-window approach to applicants to improve accessibility to information and processes.</p> <p>Add consistency and organization to schedule Formal Pre-Consultation Meetings and Site Plan Meetings.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 15-20%</p>	<p>Planning Department</p>
<p>Add full-time Site Plan/Development Planning Coordinator role.</p>	<p>Improve capacity and streamline the Site Plan process with a staff planner leading the Site Plan process. This staff person will serve as the Chair of the Site Plan Review Committee. This person would coordinate the entire Site Plan process, including coordinating comments, resolving issues, chairing the Site Plan meetings, and collating and distributing comments. It is intended that this new role will be filled by a registered professional planner or equivalent.</p>	<p>Improve consistency on processes, requirements and timeframes with a single staff person being responsible for all Site Plan applications.</p> <p>The recommended modifications to the types of Site Plan Application, application forms and Site Plan Handbook can be prepared by the new staff person, to ensure reduce time commitment from existing planning staff. This will maintain existing staff time to review and process development applications.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: 25%</p>	<p>Planning Department</p>

Recommendation	Actions	Key Improvements	Assigned To
<p>Reorganize the structure of the Development Planning Department (see Figure 6-3).</p>	<p>All staff reporting to the Director of Planning.</p> <p>The Senior Development Planners will be split to have responsibility for proportionate share of the County (the split to be based on a reasonable equal division in applications, as set out by the Director of Planning).</p> <p>Each Senior Planner will have a Planner that assists with applications.</p> <p>Each team (Senior Planner and Planner) responsible for reviewing and processing Committee of Adjustment Applications, Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, Draft Plan of Subdivision Applications and Draft Plan of Condominium Applications.</p> <p>Site Plan Applications will be streamlined and the responsibility of the Site Plan/Development Planning Coordinator.</p> <p>*This recommendation is not intended to affect the Policy Planning division of the Planning Department</p>	<p>Remove the approach of applicants liaising with any planner and provide a consistent contact to the applicant.</p> <p>The proposed organizational structure provides greater clarity to internal departments on the appropriate planner to contact for specific applications.</p> <p>The organization structure simplifies the assignment of new applications amongst planning staff.</p> <p>Expected Efficiency Gain: included in above</p>	<p>Planning Department</p>

7 Conclusion

The review of Norfolk County's Pre-Consultation and Site Plan Approval process has canvassed the insight of Norfolk County Staff, other stakeholders in the Norfolk development community, and that of Registered Professional Planners in comparative municipalities. The review incorporated primary research into common industry practices and observed the impact of Site Plan Approval and Pre-Consultation methodologies.

Based on this review, the opinions of those consulted, and our opinion, this report has identified short, medium and long term recommendations for Norfolk County to consider implementing.



Collage of some comments from Norfolk County Staff consultation session held on December 2, 2021. Not intended to be a comprehensive review of session.

APPENDIX B - BENCHMARKING TABLES

Table B-1: Site Plan Benchmarking

Information		Site Plan					
Municipality	Population (2016)	Is Pre-Con Required for Site Plan Application?	Developments Subject to Site Plan Control	Types of Site Plan Applications	Fees	Standard drawings/studies required	Final Approval Authority
Norfolk	64,044	Yes, except for very minor applications	All except farm buildings, 1- and 2-unit residential dwellings, and townhouses which have already been approved by a registered plan of subdivision.	Minor, regular, major	See Table B-2		Director of Planning or designate thereof (currently designated to Senior Planners)
Peterborough	81,032	Yes	Everything but agricultural operations	residential, non-res		Site plan, Context plan, Survey, Grading, Elevations, Lighting, Landscape, Servicing	Director of Planning or desingate thereof
Kawartha Lakes	75,423	No	All except farm buildings, 1- and 2-unit residential dwellings, minor additions (as determined by the director)	regular		Site plan, Context plan, Grading, Landscape, Survey (if not, hand-drawn sketch is acceptable)	Director of Planning
Sault Ste. Marie	73,368	"Strongly recommended"	All types of development may be subject to site plan control	regular		Site plan, Landscape, Elevation, SWM/Servicing, Landscape, Lighting	Council
North Bay	51,553	"strongly recommended"	Lengthy list of zones, generally exlcudes low density residential development	over and under 10,000 sf		Site plan, Context plan, Elevation, Landscape, Parking, Lighting	Director of Planning
Belleville	60,716	Yes	All but farm buildings and low-density residential dwellings	residential, comemrcial/institutional, industrial or other		Site plan, Landscape, Grading, Elevation	Unknown
Stratford	31,465	Yes	All except 1-, 2-, and 3-unit residential dwellings	regular, infill, major & minor amendments		Site plan, Grading, Servicing, Elevations, Landscape, SWM	Manager of Planning
Haldimand	45,608	Yes	All except farm buildings, 1- and 2-unit residential dwellings, and developments within hazard or natural areas			Site plan, Context plan, Lighting, Landscape, Servicing/Septic may additionally be required: Grading, SWM, Servicing, Elevation	General Manager of Community and Development Services
Brant	36,707	Yes	All except 1 or 2 family dwellings (outside of heritage zone) and most agricultural uses			Site plan, Elevation, Survey, Landscape, Grading, Elevations may also include: SWM, Traffic, Servicing, EIS	Director of Planning

Table B-2: Fees Benchmarking

Municipality	Application Types	Fees (\$)	Notes
Norfolk County	Minor or Amendment	1191	
	Regular	3594	
	Major	8315	
	Pre-con	446*	
Peterborough	Residential	1,000 + 40/dwelling unit	
	Non-Residential	1,500 + .60/sqm	
	Minor Amendment	800	
	Major Amendment (Residential)	1500	
	Major Amendment (Non-Residential)	2000	
	Pre-con	400	
Kawartha Lakes	Regular	N/A	
	Pre-con	300	
Sault Ste. Marie	Site Plan Agreement	920	
	Site Plan Amendment	350	
	Pre-con	N/A	
North Bay	Over 10,000sf building area	1800	
	Under 10,000sf building area	1300	
	Pre-con	140	
Belleville	Residential	2,000 + 50/dwelling unit	Maximum charge: \$5,000
	Commercial/Institutional	2,000 + 200/200sqm	
	Industrial or other	2,000 + 200/sqm	
	Pre-con	N/A	
Stratford	Regular	3277	
	Infill	1,740	
	Pre-con	0	
Haldimand	Site Plan Approval	5,890	
	Minor Amendment	1311	
	Major Amendment	2622	
	Pre-con	324*	
Brant	Site Plan Approval	8,000	Site Plan Agreement included in Approval fee
	Minor (no agreement)	900	
	Site Plan Amendment	4080	
	Site Plan Multiple Review Fees (3rd and each subsequent revision)	2550	
	Pre-con	500	

*refundable

APPENDIX B - BENCHMARKING TABLES

Table B-3: Pre-Consultation Benchmarking

Information	Pre-Consultation		
	Municipality	Types of Pre-Con	Meeting Schedule
Norfolk	Standard	2 sessions per month (3 meetings each session) = 6 pre-cons per month meeting at least 2 weeks after materials received	Generally all applications
Peterborough	Standard	1 meeting every 3 weeks, meeting 3 weeks after pre-con application (every third Thursday)	All applications except for CoA
Kawartha Lakes	Standard		OP, ZBA, and DPS&C (not site plan)
Sault Ste. Marie	Standard		Strongly recommended for site plan
North Bay		internal meetings bi-weekly, pre-consultations seem unscheduled	Recommended, no clear requirements
Belleville	Pre-con for complex applications (includes site plan) Pre-con for smaller applications (CoA or simple rezoning)	first and third Thursday every month, materials due 5 days before meeting	Required for all applications
Stratford	Standard Paper Pre-Con	"from beginning to end, takes approximately 4 weeks"	Required for all apps except CoA
Haldimand	Standard Paper Pre-Con	first and third Wednesday of each month - 3 meeting slots per meeting date - 6 meetings per month meeting 2 weeks after submission of materials/request for meeting	
Brant	Standard Paper Pre-Con	2/month, meeting 2 weeks after submission of materials	All applications except for CoA (sometimes)

6. What circulation timeframe is reasonable to provide meaningful and complete comments?

7. Who typically attends the meetings?

B: Site Plan

1. Do you have different tiers of Site Plan Applications? If so, what are the criteria for each tier?

a. Do you have a separate standard defined list of studies and plans required for each tier of Site Plan Application?

b. Who has discretion to deviate from the standard defined list of studies and plans (e.g. exempt applicant from certain submission requirements)?

2. What software do you use to track Site Plan Applications? Is there any other helpful software to manage the Site Plan Process?

