

Request for Decision

Gearing Up for Growth Advisory Panel

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| Presented To: | City Council |
| Presented: | Tuesday, Jun 14, 2016 |
| Report Date | Wednesday, May 18, 2016 |
| Type: | Managers' Reports |

Resolution

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury approves the recommendations of the Gearing Up for Growth Advisory Panel, as outlined in the report dated May 18th, 2016 from the General Manager of Infrastructure Services.

Finance Implications

The Integrated Land and Property Management System will be funded from the Building Permit Revenue Stabilization Reserve Fund.

Background

In 2015, City Council created the Gearing Up for Growth Advisory Panel and gave the Panel a four-part mandate designed to help Greater Sudbury become a more development friendly community.

Since this time, the Panel met with representatives from the development community to discuss the strengths, weaknesses and opportunity for improvements in the development approval process.

The feedback from the development community, together with the recommendations for improvement, are outlined in the attached report from the Advisory Panel.

The Gearing Up for Growth Advisory Panel is recommending to City Council that the City of Greater Sudbury take another step towards becoming a more development friendly community by:

1. creating a new Integrated Land and Property Management System for the land use planning and building approval processes to make them clear, efficient and accountable;
2. enhancing its formal pre-consultation process for applications made under the Planning Act;
3. continuing to refine its approach to stormwater management, including updating those approaches upon completion of the Subwatershed Plans for Ramsey Lake, Junction Creek and Whitewater Lake;
4. focusing on development approval customers by building on existing successes and providing staff

Signed By

Report Prepared By

Jason Ferrigan
Director of Planning Services
Digitally Signed May 18, 16

Division Review

Jason Ferrigan
Director of Planning Services
Digitally Signed May 18, 16

Recommended by the Department

Tony Cecutti
General Manager of Infrastructure
Services
Digitally Signed May 18, 16

Recommended by the C.A.O.

Ed Archer
Chief Administrative Officer
Digitally Signed May 31, 16

- with the tools required to provide customer services required in an ever changing regulatory environment; and,
5. updating its existing Development Cost Sharing Policy to provide a more flexible and balanced approach to cost sharing for required off-site improvements.

These recommendations are supported by city staff, who worked closely with the Advisory Panel over the last year.

Further reports on the Integrated Land and Property Management System, Subwatershed Plans and Development Cost Sharing Policy will be brought before Council for consideration.

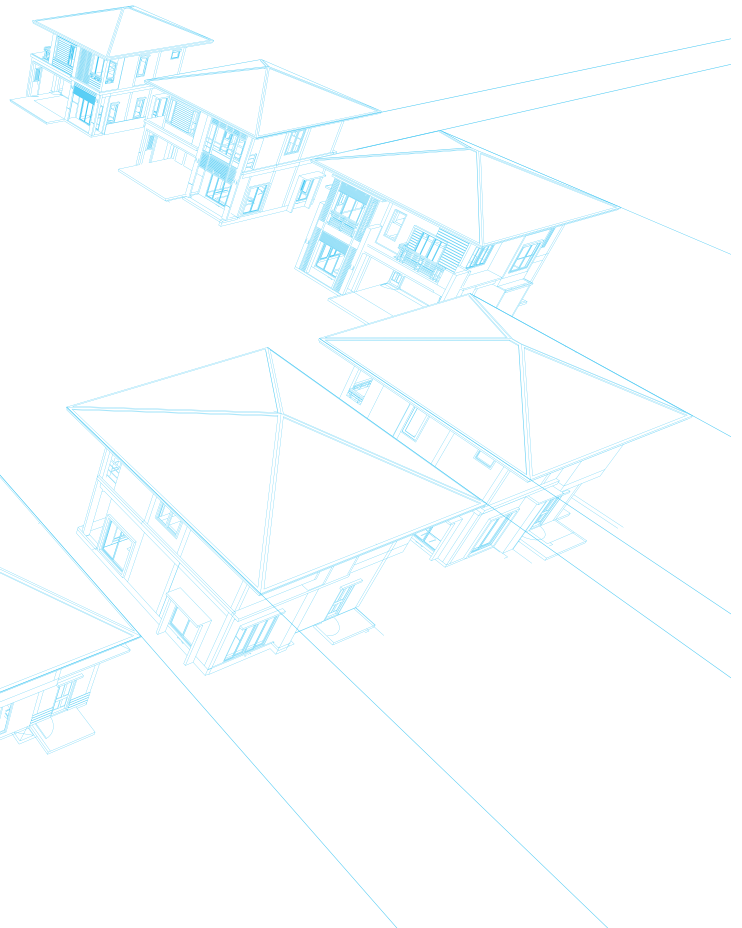
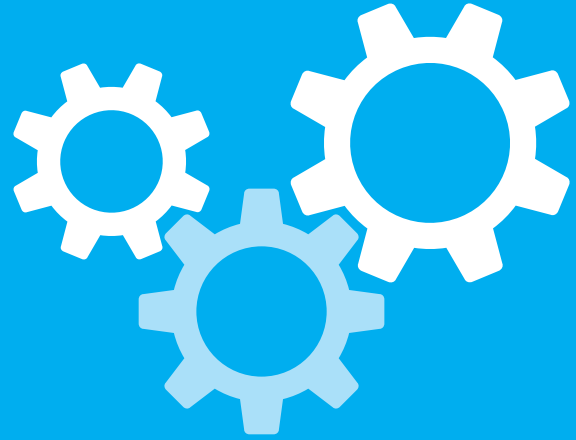
Staff is preparing to launch a new formal pre-consultation process in the Fall of this year and is exploring opportunities to improve customer service training and secure additional customer service feedback.

If City Council agrees with the recommendations of the Advisory Panel, then it should approve the recommendation outlined in the Resolution section of this report.

May 2016

Gearing up for Growth!

Advisory Panel Report





May 2016

Mayor Bigger and Members of Council:

On behalf of the Gearing Up for Growth Advisory Panel, I am very pleased to provide you with this report, which responds to the mandate that you gave us in 2015.

At that time you asked the Panel to explore how to improve the development approval processes, improve interdepartmental co-operation and enhance customer service at City Hall – all with a view towards creating a more development friendly community.

Over the last ten months we consulted with our partners in the development community to better understand how we could achieve this goal. Our partners told us their concerns. Equally important, they also shared their ideas on how to strengthen the development approval process. The initiatives presented in this report are the result of discussions of the Panel. They are achievable and can help us move closer towards our goal.

I would like to thank our partners in the development community for openly sharing their thoughts and ideas. I would also like to thank the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce, Sudbury and District Homebuilders Association and Northeastern Ontario Construction Association for helping us with this important project.

Working together, we will build Greater Sudbury up!

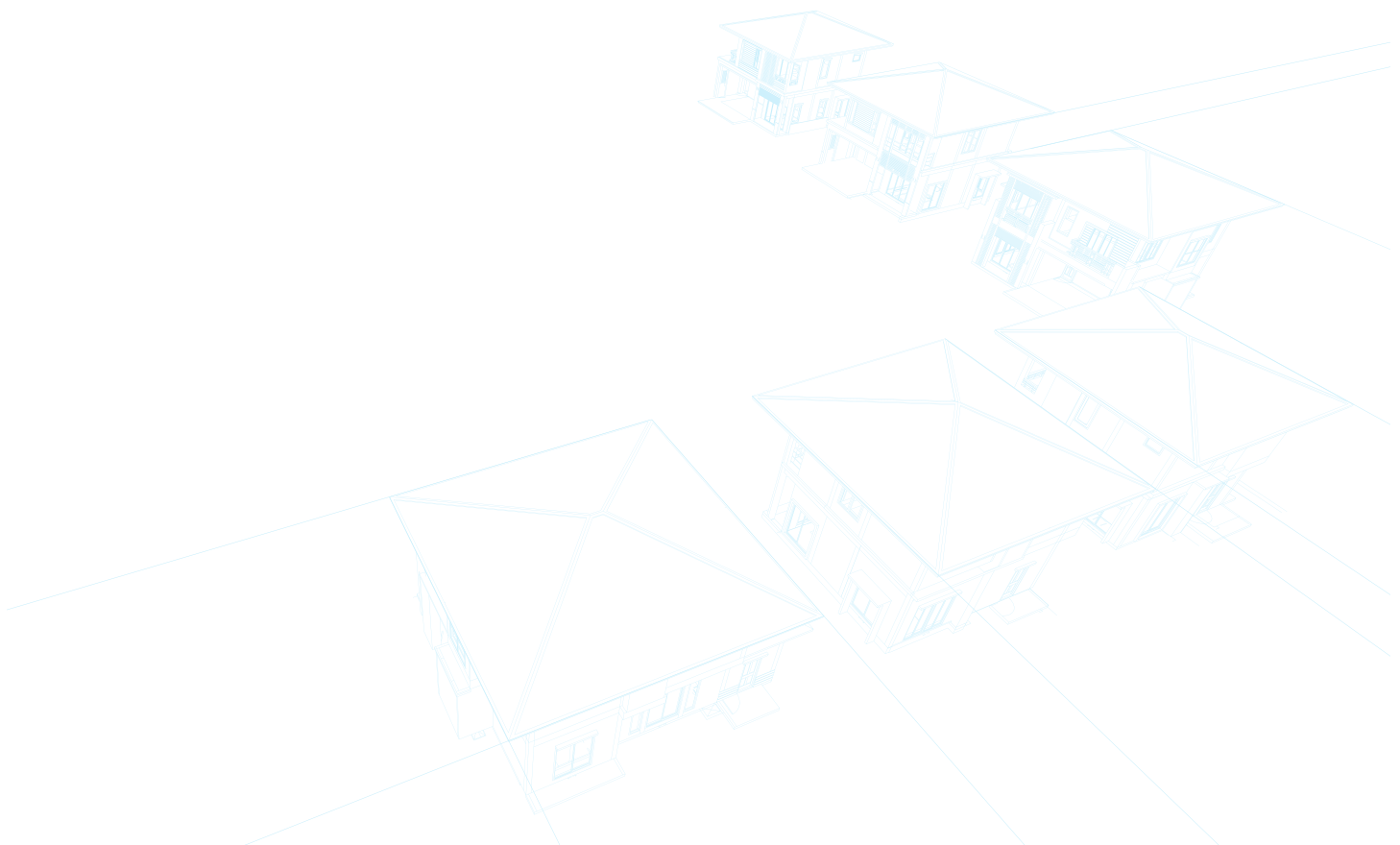
Respectfully submitted:

Fern Cormier
Chair, Gearing Up for Growth Advisory Panel
Councillor Ward 10



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1/ Who are we

The Gearing Up for Growth Advisory Panel consists of range of stakeholders charged by City Council with recommending ways to make Greater Sudbury a more development friendly community.

Getting a project from idea to implementation can be a complicated process in any North American city and Greater Sudbury is no exception. The scope and complexity of the planning, engineering and building permit processes has increased substantially in the last 10 to 20 years.

Depending on its complexity, a project may need to meet numerous federal, provincial, local municipal and other public agency laws, regulations, policies and standards before it can be approved, built and occupied.

This can require an upfront investment of time and capital on the part of a developer, often well before there is any certainty (or minimal risk) in the process and certainly well before there is any prospect of realizing a return on that up-front investment.

The key is to create a process that balances the needs of the development community (who are responding to a market opportunity) with the approval process requirements (which are designed to protect the public interest). Best practices suggest that such processes are clear and certain, easy to understand and navigate, consistent and predictable, as well as efficient. Such processes are also supported by a culture of trust and spirit of partnership.

The City of Greater Sudbury and its partners have strengthened the approval process. For more than 15 years, the City, in cooperation with the major industry associations, has operated the Development Liaison Advisory Panel to provide increased interaction between the City and the development community. The City also recently worked with the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce on the Red Tape Reduction Task Force. Both processes have strengthened the approval process.

Understanding that there is always room for additional improvement, last year City Council established the Gearing Up for Growth Advisory Panel (the Panel) to review development approvals process and help Greater Sudbury become a more development friendly community. City Council gave the Panel a four-part mandate, as follows:

1. to identify the challenges and areas of concern of the development community in conjunction with the City's existing Development Liaison Advisory Panel;
2. to promote inter-departmental cooperation to make the City of Greater Sudbury a more development friendly community;
3. to identify ways to enhance customer service;
4. to review any other matters that may be identified as a result of discussions of the Advisory Panel.

The Panel's nine members are drawn from outside and inside City Hall and is chaired by Councillor Fern Cormier. The current membership of the Panel is as follows:

- Councillor Fern Cormier, Chair
- Tracy Nutt, Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce Red Tape Task Force
- Celia Teale, Sudbury and District Homebuilders Association
- Rick Cousineau, Northeastern Ontario Construction Association
- Tony Cecutti, General Manager of Infrastructure Services
- Jason Ferrigan, Director of Planning Services
- Guido Mazza, Director of Building Services/ Chief Building Official
- Eric Taylor, Manager of Development Approvals.

Lynne Reynolds, Councillor for Ward 11, played a key role on the Panel. Paul Baskcomb, former General Manager of Growth and Development, served on the Panel. The Panel is grateful for their leadership and assistance.



2/ What we did and heard

We consulted with our partners in the development community. They told us that there is room to improve our processes and shift perspectives.

During these consultations, the Panel received considerable feedback on how well the City's approval processes were working and how they could be improved. As the Panel moved through the discussions, five major feedback themes emerged.

Theme 1: /Process

The development community shared considerable feedback around the City's approval processes. In general, they expressed concerns regarding the dispersed decision making authority; lack of problem-solving; length of turnaround times; apparent inconsistencies in comments; lack of flexibility in certain processes; lack of fast-tracking when needed; and, unclear parkland dedication requirements. They also expressed concerns that professional reports are not always being accepted and that building permit inspection requests by some clients are being made when work is still incomplete. They also spoke to the need for earlier pre-consultation meetings.

Theme 2: /Timing

The development community also expressed concerns about timing. In general, they felt that the time value of money is not taken into account when it comes to time-lines, decision-making, interest and lost opportunities.

Theme 3: /Perspective

The development community also expressed a concern that instead of encouraging development, there is a focus on requirements and assigning costs to the development.

Theme 4: /Customer Service

The development community also expressed concerns that not all staff are equally responsive to inquiries and that sometimes too many staff are involved in and handle the same file.

Theme 5: /Financial

From a financial perspective, the development community expressed concerns that costs assigned to developers are excessive and include things that don't benefit a particular development or will occur at a point well off into the future.



3/ Gearing up for growth

The Panel discussed how the City of Greater Sudbury could respond to the concerns raised. The Panel identified five “moves” that the City could undertake as it continues to improve and strengthen its developing approval process. This section describes these moves. The Panel’s recommendation is presented followed by an explanation from staff on how the recommendation can be realized.

3.1 Making the process easier to understand, navigate and accountable

The City of Greater Sudbury should create a new Integrated Land and Property Management System for its planning and building approval processes that is easier to navigate and improves accountability to both sides of the development process equation.

The City of Greater Sudbury currently uses a variety of standalone databases and software systems to support its building permit and Planning Act applications. Much of the data that the City relies on to help make decisions (e.g. Building Permit plans, Site Plans, OLS Surveys and M-Plans of Subdivision) are stored in hard copy format, standalone drives and databases, and common drives and databases. These systems are not accessible to the public or developers.

An Integrated Land and Property Management System (LPMS) would be a citywide, property centric system that provides a comprehensive history of all development, permitting, licensing, inspections, and by-law related activities for properties and land in the City and also provide a platform for active development applications.

The goal of the LPMS is to significantly improve development regulatory processes through enhanced internal data sharing and by better tracking the processes used by departments and divisions to manage the day-to-day business of development and building permit processes.

The LPMS would deal primarily with the following functional areas:

- land development (site plan and subdivision approvals);
- planning and zoning;
- permitting and inspections;
- by-law enforcement;
- licensing and registrations; and,
- professional and personal licenses.

The scope of the LPMS could be expanded over time to include encroachments, road occupancy, entrances, etc.

The LPMS would replace over 20 existing IT solutions, simplifying the currently complex systems environment, and providing the following key functions:

- front and back office application (permit, license, approval) processing;
- real time mobile tools for field based inspections staff;
- applicant access to online tools to submit, track and interact with applications online; and,
- public access, via the City’s website to tools to query the City’s LPMS database.

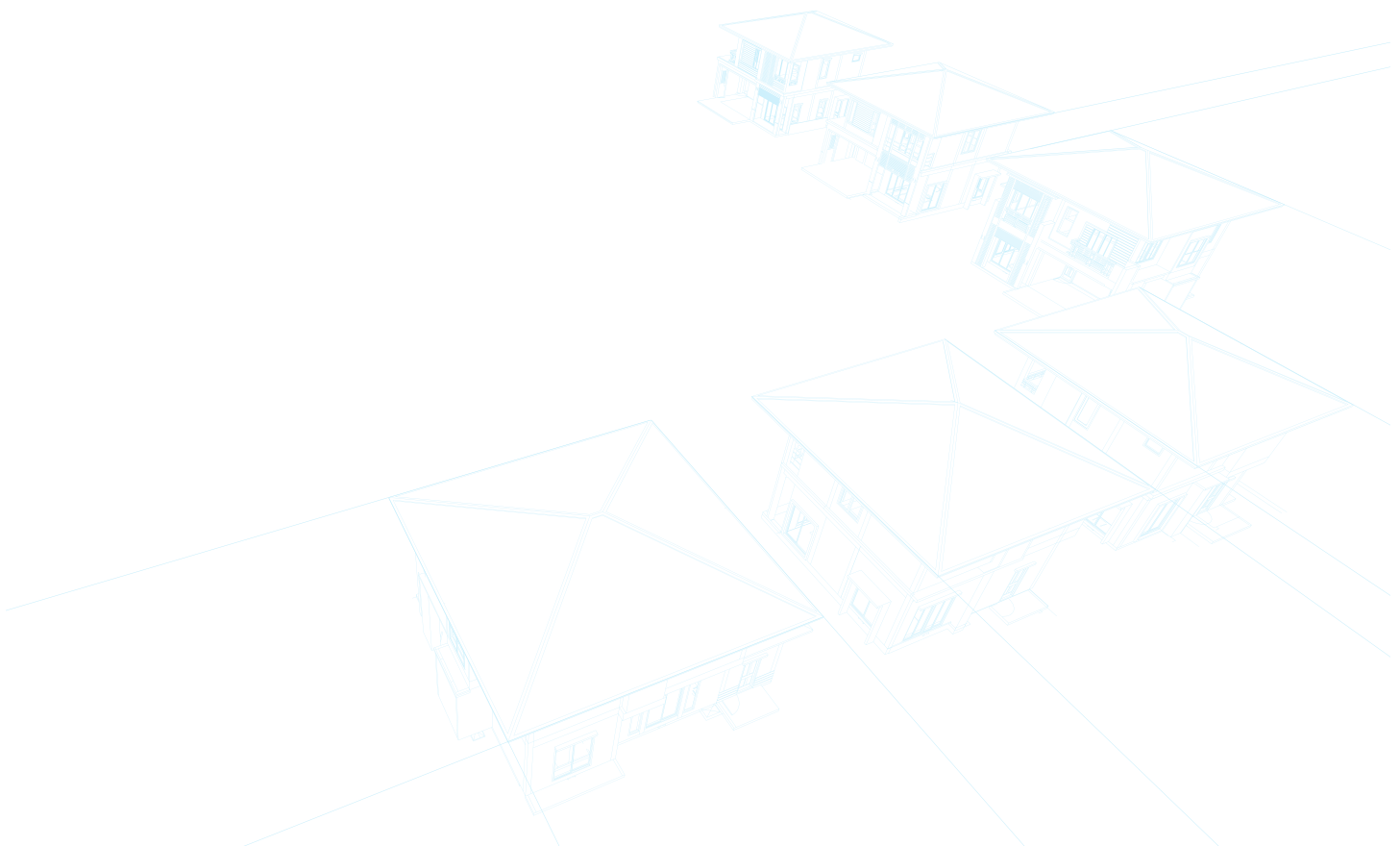
The LPMS would help mitigate risk by eliminating errors that result from poor access to information, improve internal productivity through savings in staff time, streamlining processes, information sharing, and automating tasks. The system would establish stronger financial controls, and improved payment processing



The LPMS would also create many other efficiencies, including:

- field worker efficiencies – between 10 - 20% productivity improvements can be realized by providing mobile office technology to inspectors and other field based staff;
- on-line applications will increase our competitiveness in the market, enabling out-of-town firms/developers to apply and engage the City's development approvals process;
- more efficient inter-departmental communications and data sharing; and,
- more effective tracking and managing timelines for comments on development applications.

The development of a Land Property Management System is seen as a key component in not only rationalizing the development processes involved but also clarifying the various development permitting and licensing procedures by mapping them out for our customers and clients. Further, electronic access by clients to the system process allows for the transparency and accountability the industry desires. Full project estimate and phasing over a four-year period has been established.





3.2 Making the process more certain through pre-consultation

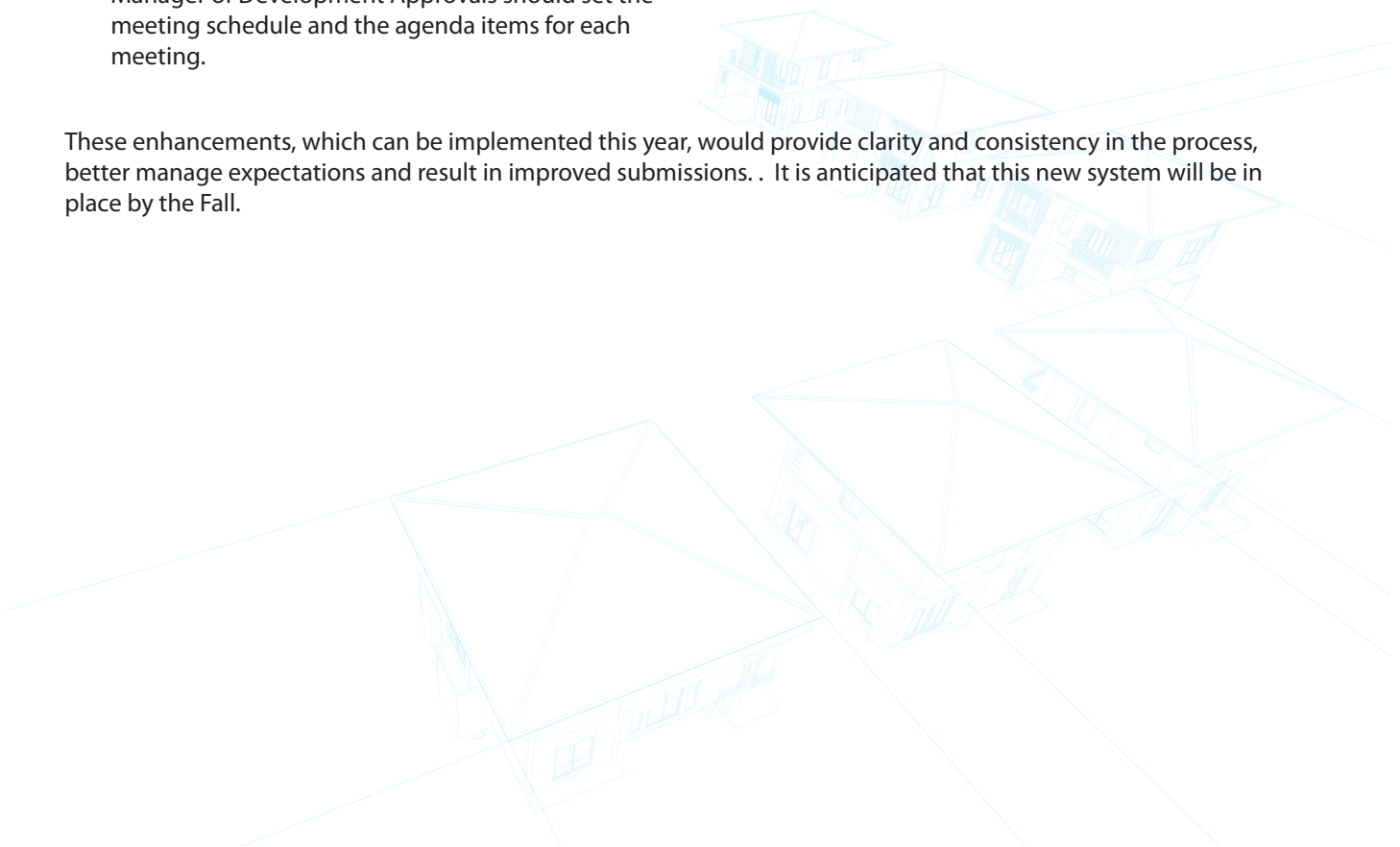
The City of Greater Sudbury should enhance its formal pre-consultation process for applications being made under the Planning Act.

The City of Greater Sudbury encourages pre-consultation on all land use planning applications. The city has the legal ability to require pre-consultation with applicants on a wide range of land use planning applications prior to an application being made. These include Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, Draft Plan of Subdivision, Draft Plan of Condominiums and Site Plans.

In order to enhance and further strengthen the existing pre-consultation process:

1. A review team, "SPART" Sudbury Planning Application Review Team, should be established comprised of key staff from Planning, Building, Development Engineering, Roads and Drainage along with other departments on an as needed basis. "SPART" should meet on a regular schedule to pre-consult with applicants, identify issues and information requirements and resolve issues on submissions. The Manager of Development Approvals should set the meeting schedule and the agenda items for each meeting.
2. Current checklists used for pre-consultation should also be reviewed and updated. Following pre-consultation meetings with SPART, applicants should be provided with the checklist of items that need to be submitted as part of a complete application. This checklist should be signed by the lead city staff and applicant as an agreement of what will form part of an application in order for the application to proceed.

These enhancements, which can be implemented this year, would provide clarity and consistency in the process, better manage expectations and result in improved submissions. . It is anticipated that this new system will be in place by the Fall.



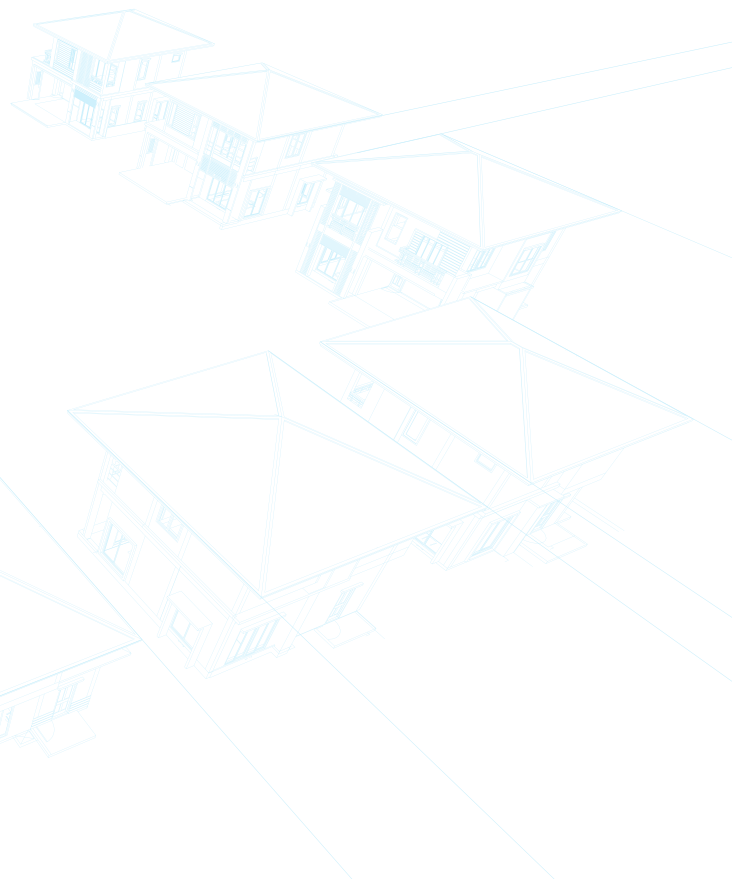


3.3 Making the process more certain through watershed studies

The City of Greater Sudbury should refine its stormwater management policies and procedures for site plans and plans of subdivision/condominium. The Subwatershed Plans for Ramsey Lake, Junction Creek and Whitewater Lake will provide additional guidance for stormwater management in these subwatersheds, once complete.

Historically, the City of Greater Sudbury required developers to provide on-site quantity and quality controls for larger developments and contribute to off-site improvements for smaller developments. This practice was recently changed to require that quality and quantity be addressed on all sites, where feasible. In some urban situations it may not be possible to address quantity and quality on site. In such instances, a contribution to downstream improvements may be appropriate. The City's site plan control procedures were updated to reflect this change. The City launched a full review of its site plan control procedures this year and will initiate a review of its subdivision procedures next year. It is anticipated that these reviews will provide additional stormwater management guidance, including the use of Low Impact Development.

In addition, in February 2016, the Province of Ontario announced \$2.3 million in provincial funding to complete nine subwatershed studies in Greater Sudbury. In March 2016, City Council directed staff to proceed with the nine funded studies, prioritized as follows: Ramsey Lake; Junction Creek (including Junction Creek, Garson, Kelly Lake, Copper Cliff, Meatbird Creek-Lively, Mud Lake, Simon/McCharles Lake); and, Whitewater Lake. These studies are required to be complete by March 2018. It is anticipated that these studies will provide further direction on stormwater management best practices.





3.4 Enhancing the customer experience

The City of Greater Sudbury will focus on our development approval customers, build on our existing successes and provide staff with the tools to better provide the customer services required in an ever changing regulatory environment.

As any business knows, customer service is the greatest key to success. The same must apply to the City in its regulatory function. Doing so can build trust and confidence in the process.

In March of 2012, as part of the response to the Chamber of Commerce's Red Tape Report to Council and Council's Customer Service Strategy, an initiative was launched in concert with the Human Resources Division to develop and deliver Customer Service Training to employees.

Building Services, Planning Services and Compliance & Enforcement worked with consultants from Seneca College to develop with front line staff participation a Customer Service Training Presentation tailored specifically to the work undertaken in these three regulatory environments. Further, based on this consultant's assessment, recommendations for how further training should be approached and executed were provided. Additional training content, follow-up actions and activities external to the environment were also provided. As a result a customer/citizen focus competency was created within the City's new Talent Development Program which would assist staff in personally developing tools that would serve them in continuously improving customer service.

Feedback from staff participants indicates that although the training hours are a good general overview of customer service principles, there is a need to take the training to the next level by identifying tools and resources that may be required in each area. As such staff have decided to re-visit Customer Service Training currently in place to ensure that staff feel and are provided the necessary opportunities for personal development to provide good customer service.

A Community Engagement Task Force has been assembled with employees from different departments to look at how we engage the citizens. As part of the Task Force, the CGS is in the midst of determining the top three (3) priorities in regards to customer service and will be putting in action plans to develop these areas.

Building and Planning Services staff will work with Human Resources within the Task Force to focus on our customers specifically involved in the various development processes and re-visit the Seneca Course "Customer Service Training Learning Assessment" Report to build on what has been successful and renew our focus on providing staff the tools to better provide the customer services required in an ever changing regulatory environment. This includes implementing regular focus groups with the residential and industrial/commercial/institutional sectors, as well as regular customer feedback surveys.

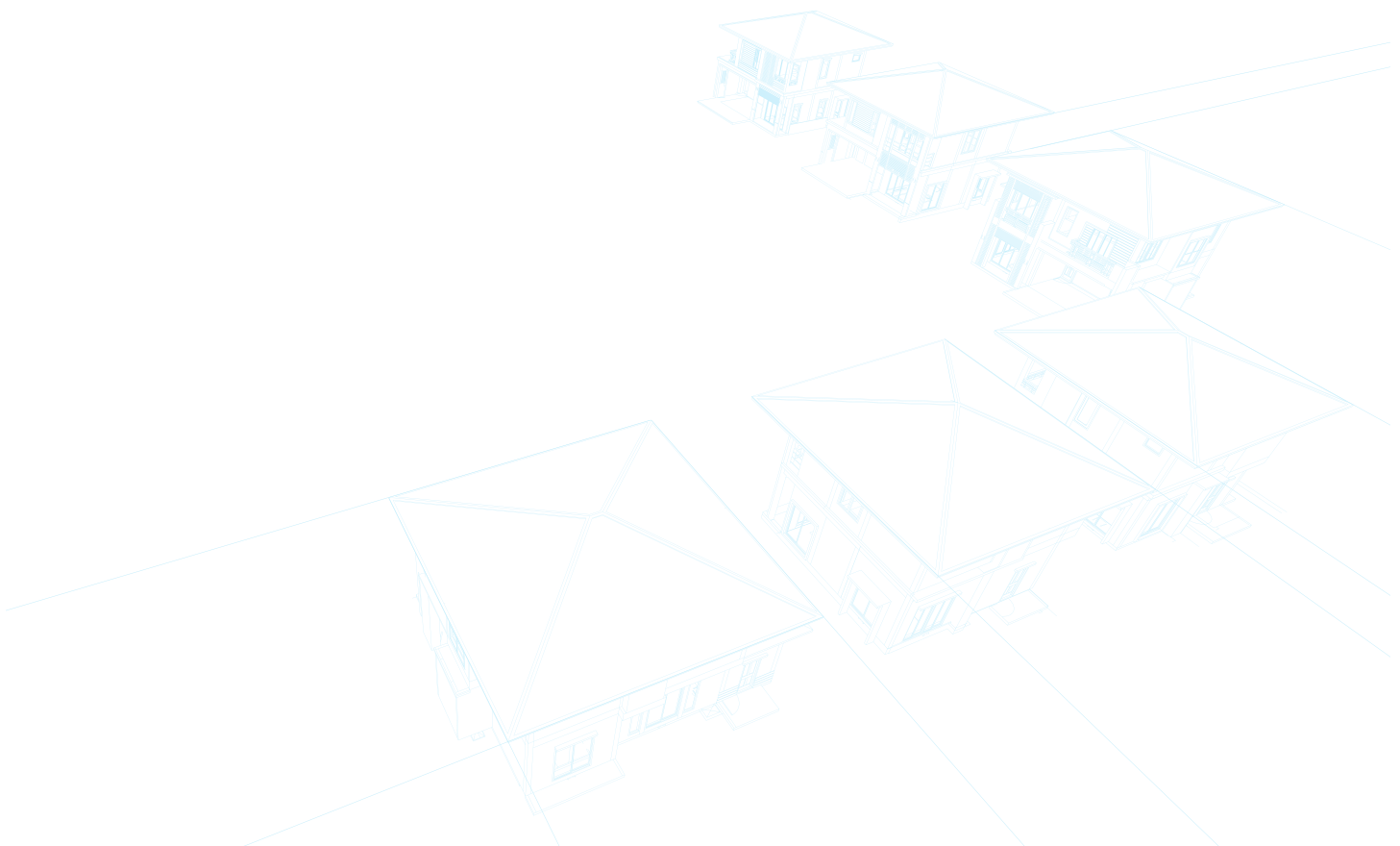


3.5 Creating a more flexible approach to cost sharing

The City of Greater Sudbury should update its existing Cost Sharing Policy to provide a more flexible and balanced approach to cost sharing for required off-site improvements.

In 2011, City Council approved a Policy on Development Cost Sharing after a two year long process. This policy was approved in response to feedback from the development community around the need to create a standardized approach for apportioning the cost for development related costs that are not captured by the Development Charges By-law.

In 2015, City Council requested a review of the Policy on Development Cost Sharing. City staff are currently working with the development community (through a subcommittee of the Development Liaison Advisory Panel) on the review. This review will gauge the applicability and effectiveness of the Policy on Development Cost Sharing through internal and external focus groups in addition to a review of common practices in other Ontario municipalities. It is intended that this review will improve the clarity and application of the Policy in order to provide more certainty to the City and development community. It is currently anticipated that staff will present the results of the review to City Council before the end of the second quarter in 2016.

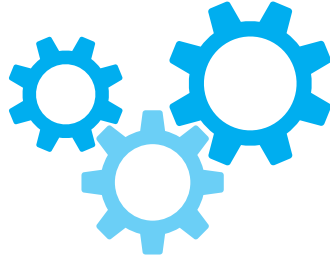




4/ Our Advice to City Council

The Panel appreciates the opportunity to provide advice on how we can make the city more development friendly. Our best advice to Council is as follows:

- **The City of Greater Sudbury should create a new Integrated Land and Property Management System** for its planning and building approval processes that is easier to navigate and improves accountability to both sides of the development process equation.
- **The City of Greater Sudbury should enhance its formal pre-consultation process** for applications being made under the Planning Act.
- **The City of Greater Sudbury should continue to refine its approach to stormwater management and develop Subwatershed Plans for Ramsey Lake, Junction Creek and Whitewater Lake** to improve certainty for environmental protection, planning and investment in the subwatersheds.
- **The City of Greater Sudbury will focus on our development approval customers**, build on our existing successes and provide staff with the tools to better provide the customer services required in an ever changing regulatory environment.
- **The City of Greater Sudbury should update its existing Cost Sharing Policy** to provide a more flexible and balanced approach to cost sharing for required off-site improvements.



Gearing up for Growth!

Advisory Panel Report

April 2016