

Completed DAPR Improvements 2018-2022

Operational Efficiencies: One of the key goals of the DAPR program is to reduce processing times and eliminate unnecessary process steps by streamlining the process and clarifying regulations. Recent highlights of additional achievements in this area are as follows:

1. **File Management Updates** – Since 2019 the average time between development application submission and the issuance of the first review letter has reduced by 40%, with the current average time being 13 weeks in 2022.
2. **Development Application Review Team (DART)** – A cross-departmental group of key internal reviewers meets weekly to discuss applications, share feedback and develop solutions.
3. **Development Variance Assessment Criteria** – A policy framework to provide standardized criteria to evaluate requests for variances and to reduce steps and streamline the process for applicants and speed up review timelines.
4. **Housing Choices Streamlining** – Pre-zoning for duplex, triplex and fourplex and delegated authority to staff to approve DPs for duplex, triplex and fourplex to streamline approvals for small scale infill housing.
5. **Housing Choices Standard (Stock) Plans** – Standard plans for triplex and fourplexes that are designed to work on approximately 80% of RT-1 pre-zoned lots. Expedited approvals with a step by step guide on the website to save time and streamlined review process while lowering costs for the applicant.
6. **Frontage Works Program** – Alternative options for small scale infill projects to satisfy their frontage upgrade requirements with easier administration and saving money.
7. **Updated Templates** – New templates for reports to Council, Acknowledgement letters, Requirements Letters and Preliminary Layout Approval Letters to make key information easier to find to improve clarity, increase consistency and allow for faster processing.
8. **Board of Variance process** – Reverse engineered resulting in a 10% reduction to processing times, creating a single point of contact for applicants, and increased streamlining of efforts between the City Clerk's Office and P&D.
9. **Zoning Bylaw updates** – To minimize frequent variances and establishment of new Variance Assessment Criteria, reducing steps and streamlining the process for applicants by reducing regulatory requirements. In addition to work to consolidate and streamlined 9 industrial zones down to 3, and 12 commercial zones down to 7.
10. **Building Permit file close-out procedures** – Saving up to 10 business days of time spent on administrative tasks through digitizing the recordkeeping process and reducing the time required to issue a permit.

11. **Integrated Development Finance** – DCC, CAC, and density bonus are either fixed charges back on a rate schedule or have a set formula for easy calculation. No time spent negotiating.
12. **Surety Bonds Pilot** – Increase flexibility in the form and mechanisms used to secure for off-site works associated with a subdivision and building permit damage deposits.
13. **Letters of Assurance** – Allow for increased flexibility for securities for key projects backed by public agencies.
14. **Delegation to Staff** – Delegation of authority to approve 3rd reading extensions, minor development Permit amendments and Development Permits for triplex, fourplex and multiplex applications.
15. **Staged Building Permits** – BPs can now be issued in three stages excavation, foundation, and full, to enable applicants to advance construction.
16. **Eliminating Building Permit Damage Deposit** – Through a review it was identified that collecting damage deposits for large permits was redundant, and ineffective for small ones.
17. **Servicing Requirements Memo** – Revised the servicing requirements memo to incorporate all technical and servicing areas making key information easier to find, improving clarity, increasing consistency and allowing for improved communication of expectations and requirements with applicants.
18. **New Pre-Application Process** – Streamlined the pre-app process to focus only on siting and massing so applicants can refine their site plan prior to submitting a full application.
19. **Enquiry Meetings** – New early enquiry meeting stage for potential applicants to meet with senior staff and discuss a potential project early at the conceptualization stage. Ability to book a half hour time slot during Friday morning “office hours”.

Automation: A critical element to realizing the goals of DAPR is to increase the use of automation, customize workflows and upgrade software to AMANDA 7 (A7). Highlights in this area include:

1. **Amanda 7 launch** – Laying the foundation for ongoing improvements and modernization throughout the development and building permit processes.
2. **Project Numbers and Development Application Milestones** – A new project number (PROJ) system was created within the development services review process to link together all the individual components, application types and permits associated with a development project. Up to 10 different milestones have been created to measure the different stages within the development planning review process from pre-application to 4th reading/DP issuance.
3. **Electronic File Management** – File processing is being administered and managed electronically. Processes, correspondence, referrals, and plans submissions/review are all occurring electronically along with document management.

4. **Digital Plan Review** – ePlan program for electronic plan submissions using Bluebeam to review digital plans, saving time, paper, and improving communication with applicants.
5. **Digital Referrals** – Increased consistency in the review and referral process among planning file managers and internal city groups resulting in reduced review times. Improved tracking of requirements for all city groups, including number of review iterations, identifying when something is resolved and what remains outstanding. Increased transparency across departments which will help to quickly identify potential areas of conflicting requirements and what is shared with applicants; and improved record keeping to provide a more complete history of an application as well as mitigate impacts of changes in file managers.
6. **Automated financial calculations** – (i.e., Application Fees, Development Cost Charges, CACs and Density Bonus), built into Amanda resulting in savings to staff time, a simplified process with fewer steps and improved recordkeeping.
7. **Modernized Building Inspections** – With online inspection booking and mobile digital inspection hardware for all Building Inspectors.
8. **Automatic Digital Building Inspection Reports** – Ability to send digital inspection reports direct to applicants from the field without having to print paper reports or return to City Hall.

Customer Service: As work is underway to modernize and streamline the review and application process, which are key contributors to enhanced customer service, it is important that we also refresh and adapt our approaches to facilitate positive customer experience. Some notable achievements include:

1. **How-To Develop Guide** – For Housing Choices projects, improving process clarity and navigation for applicants.
2. **Update all P&D webpages** – Using plain language improving communication to applicants to simplify and clarify process requirements and the services offered.
3. **Development Facilitator** – Created the Development Project Facilitator role to support applicants as they navigate the approvals process.
4. **Complete Submission Requirements** – Provide checklists and criteria for what is considered a complete application package. Delay assigning a file manager and sending out referral until application package is complete and all required information can be reviewed concurrently.
5. **Development Information Portal** – A dynamic, real-time information portal with a list and a mapping tool of all current and recent development applications.
6. **New Development Information email address** – To create a centralized mailbox to receive enquiries and requests related to active and potential development, process and regulations and other departmental services providing the public with direct access to front counter staff.
7. **Development Information Signs** – Signs located on active development sites with project information and contact details to better inform the public.

8. **Development Permit Guidelines checklist for Housing Choices** – Resulting in improving clarity of expectations on building design requirements and how to achieve them for applicants.
9. **Knowledge hub** – For staff by leveraging the internal intranet site to create a library of processes, procedures, guidelines and bylaw documents.