

CITY OF THOROLD POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

Planning and Development Services		
POLICY NO: 510-12 APPROVED: AUG 7, 2018	PLANNING JUSTIFICATION REPORT/BRIEF POLICY	Page 1 of 6

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Corporation of the City of Thorold understands that a Planning Justification Report/Brief is a vital component in a complete planning application submission to understand the intention of a proposed development. This Planning Justification Report/Brief Policy will serve as a guideline for the preparation of all Planning Justification Reports/Briefs submitted to the City of Thorold.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to applicants preparing a Planning Justification Report/Brief for their proposed development in the City of Thorold. The Planning Act, 1990, c.P.13 (the "Planning Act") states that the City may require information and material to support a planning application submitted to the City if the City's Official Plan contains applicable provisions. The Planning Act regulations also include a listing of information to be provided with specific applications.

The City's Official Plan, Policy E3.1, outlines pre-consultation and complete application requirements. A Planning Justification Report/Brief is one amongst a list of many supporting documents that may be required as part of a complete application package. This policy will provide an explanation of the Planning Justification Report/Brief requirements and the necessary structure that is to be followed. This outline will be available to applicants to refer to and review throughout the preparation of the Planning Justification Report/Brief.

The policy will ensure that all Planning Justification Reports /Briefs that are submitted to the City of Thorold abide by the requirements as set out in this Policy. Failure to adhere to this Policy may result in a Planning Justification Report/Brief being considered unsatisfactory and the submitted application being deemed incomplete.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide an outline which applicants must refer to while preparing Planning Justification Reports/Briefs for the City of Thorold.
2. To provide clear instructions, a structure format, and a list of necessary information to include for complete and acceptable Planning Justification Reports/Briefs.

POLICY CRITERIA:

1.0 WHAT IS A PLANNING JUSTIFICATION REPORT/BRIEF?

A Planning Justification Report is a detailed document that has the following goals:

- Provide a background context to the proposed development;
- Provide an overview of the purpose and effect of the application(s); and,
- Establish a professional planning rationale for the application(s) by demonstrating how a proposal conforms to applicable planning policy documents and good planning principles.

When Do I Submit A Planning Justification Report?

- Official Plan Amendment applications
- Zoning By-Law Amendment applications (including application for temporary use)
- Draft Plan of Subdivision applications
- Draft Plan of Condominium (vacant land/common element) applications
- Plan of Condominium applications (conversion of existing rental housing to condominium)

For less complex proposals, a Planning Justification Brief may be requested instead of a Planning Justification Report.

The requirement for a Planning Justification Brief, instead of a Planning Justification Report will be determined on a case by case basis at the formal Pre-Consultation meeting.

Planning Justification Brief

A Planning Justification Brief may be in the form of a cover letter or a short report.

The purpose of a Planning Justification Brief is to give a summary and outline the merits of the proposal based on good planning principles.

The requirement for a Planning Justification Brief will be determined on a case by case basis, through the consultation with a City Planner.

When May A Planning Brief Be Required?

- Site Plan Control applications
- Draft Plan of Subdivision/Condominium revisions
- Consent applications (a full Planning Justification Report may be required, to be determined at the Pre-Consultation meeting)
- Minor Variance applications (a full Planning Justification Report may be required, to be determined in consultation with a Planner)

2.0 PLANNING JUSTIFICATION REPORT REQUIREMENTS

- All reports must indicate the author of the report.
- All reports must be signed by a **Registered Professional Planner (RPP)**. All reports are expected to have the following general sections:
 - o Introduction
 - o Site Context
 - o Description of Proposal
 - o Policy and Planning Analysis
 - o Summary/Conclusion
 - o Appendices/Maps/Plans

Note: Reports are expected to vary widely in content and detail according to the nature and complexity of application(s).

2.1 PLANNING JUSTIFICATION REPORT CONTENT

A. Introduction

The introduction is to provide a brief outline of what is in the report. This includes:

- o Author of report and date retained;
- o Type of application(s) submitted or required;
- o When the Pre-Consultation meeting(s) took place with the City, Region, and Conservation Authority; and,
- o Statement of the purpose of the report.

B. Site context

The site context is to provide the location along with any characteristics of the landscape surrounding the proposed site. This includes:

- o Description of location and existing condition of subject lands;

- Description of surrounding land uses (if industrial or commercial, specify the types of adjacent businesses; if agricultural, specify the use and provide details if livestock is present on the subject or adjacent land) and important features such as roads and environmental features;
- Identification of constraints affecting the site (i.e. water features, hazard lands, access restrictions, etc.);
- Identification of other development proposals, if known, affecting surrounding land uses; and,
- Maps or reference to appendices which help to provide a context for the site and the surrounding lands (i.e. surveys, aerial photographs, map areas, etc.).

C. Description of the proposal

The description of the proposal is to provide sufficient information to understand the purpose and effect of the application(s). This includes:

- Proposed uses;
- Proposed buildings;
- History of site (if known); and,
- List of supporting technical studies that have been submitted in support of the application(s), as many of these may relate to applicable planning policies (i.e. Traffic Studies, Noise Assessments, etc.) and a brief description of each study.

D. Policy and Planning Analysis

The planning and policy analysis is the basis for establishing why a proposal should be considered and approved.

POLICY ANALYSIS

- Quotations from specific Provincial, Regional, and City policies relative to the proposal;
- Detailed analysis of the identified relevant policies and demonstrate the following (based on application type):
 - Official Plan Amendment:
 - Whether the portions of the Official Plan that would be affected by the proposal are inconsistent with a policy statement issued under subsection 1 of Section 3 of the Planning Act or fails to conform or conflicts with a provincial plan.

- Zoning By-Law Amendment:
 - Whether the existing part of parts of the by-law that would be affected by the Amendment that is the subject of the application are inconsistent with a policy statement issued under Subsection 1 of Section 3 of the Planning Act, or fails to conform with or conflicts with a provincial plan or fails to conform with the City’s Official Plan.
 - Whether the Amendment that is subject of the Application is consistent with policy statements issued under Subsection 1 of Section 3 of the Planning Act, conforms with or does not conflict with provincial plans and conforms with the City of Thorold Official Plan.
 - Plan of Subdivision:
 - How the Plan is consistent with policy statements issued under Subsection 3 of Section 1 of the *Planning Act* and an explanation of how the plan conforms or does not conflict with the provincial plan(s).
 - Address the following applicable documents:
 1. PROVINCIAL POLICY AND LEGISLATION
 - Provincial Policy Statement
 - Growth Plan for the Greater Horseshoe
 - Greenbelt Plan (if applicable)
 - Any other applicable policy statement issued under Subsection 1 of Section 3 of the *Planning Act*
 2. REGIONAL AND MUNICIPAL POLICY
 - Regional Official Plan
 - Thorold Official Plan
 - Secondary Plans
 - Neighbourhood Plans
 - Council Adopted Guidelines and Studies

ADDITIONAL POLICY ANALYSIS FOR SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS:

Application Type	Direction
Residential Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of proposed densities and unit counts compared to requirements in applicable policy documents

Converting Rental Tenure to Condominium Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site context and proposal description - Detailed analysis addressing criteria for the conversion as set out in Official Plan
Zoning By-law Amendments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss the appropriateness of any requested zoning, including the basis for any requested modifications which are specific to the proposal. - Provided a detailed concept plan of any modifications to the parent Zoning By-law provisions showing all applicable zoning regulations (i.e. lot frontage, setbacks, coverage, encroachments, building height, parking, etc.).

Note: In some cases policy documents or Zoning By-laws affecting the subject lands may have been adopted or approved by Council, but are under appeal. In these cases, the documents are not in effect, but are relevant to the proposal. All Planning Justification Reports should address the policies in these documents as a part of the Policy Analysis and identify if changes would be needed if the document or By-law were in effect.

PLANNING ANALYSIS

- The planning analysis is intended to provide a rationale and opinion as to why the proposal is appropriate in terms of how the proposal addresses “good planning principles”.
- For example, this may include a discussion of how the proposal provides beneficial social, economic, or environmental outcomes; how the proposal

contributes to creating complete, vibrant communities; and/or how potential negative impacts have been avoided or mitigated.

E. Strategy for Public Consultation

Planning Act regulations require the applicant to provide to the City a proposed strategy for consulting with the public with respect to the application(s).

The public consultation strategy must include the following:

- Target audience of the consultation (i.e. who will be informed of the consultation and how).
- If consultation occurred before application(s) was made, include a record of consultation efforts and discussions, if applicable.
- List of stakeholders and how they would be impacted as a result of the application(s) and how (i.e. public, BIAs, agencies, neighbourhood associations).
- Tools to be used to consult/engage the public (i.e. letters, web pages, open houses). Note if an open house is held the public must be notified a minimum of ten (10) days prior. Consideration must be given to access and equity.
- Timing of consultation (i.e. provide details when material will be provided, if a meeting/event is proposed the consultation strategy must include a date, time, location).
- Method to receive and document comments. Public input must be documented and provided to the City. A record of public comments and recorded views of named persons referenced shall be submitted to the City.
- Proposed participants in consultation and their role (i.e. agent, applicant, consultants, etc.).
- Requested City resources. Indicate if any City resources are required for consultation to occur.

F. Summary/Conclusion

The conclusion should include and provide the following:

- Purpose and effect of application (i.e. including why the requested amendments are necessary);
- Whether the application(s) is consistent with any applicable documents (i.e. Part D: Policy and Planning Analysis);
- Summary of key relevant plans and policies and how they are being addressed;

- Summary of key merits of the application; and,
- Final recommendations

G. Appendices, Figures, Maps and Plans

The following visual aids and/or appendices are commonly included in Planning Justification Reports and should be included where applicable:

- Maps, including aerial photographs, land parcel mapping or legal surveys
- Street level pictures of land subject to proposed development
- Official Plan maps of land use designations or other designations
- Zoning mapping
- Concept Plan or Preliminary Site Plan
- Official Plan Amendment Sketch/Copy of draft Official Plan Amendment
- Zoning By-law Amendment Sketch/Copy of draft Zoning By-Law modifications
- Draft Plan of Subdivision

3.0 PLANNING BRIEF CONTENT AND REQUIREMENTS

Must be signed by a **Registered Professional Planner (RPP)**. It does not need to include a detailed policy analysis or detailed Appendices/Maps/Plans but must include:

- A short description of the proposal and site context;
- A summary addressing how the proposal meets the general intent of Provincial, Regional, and City of Thorold's policies, including any policies specific to the subject lands; and,
- A summary of how the proposal is consistent with good planning principles.

Should you require additional information, please contact the Planning and Development Department at the City of Thorold (905-227-6613).