INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Planning Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	November 19, 2019
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Building Community Capacity in the Planning Process - Development Applications Policy Evaluation Framework ("Planning 101") (PED19177) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Anita Fabac (905) 546-2424 Ext. 1258 Joanne Hickey-Evans (905) 546-2424 Ext. 1282 Christine Newbold (905) 546-2424 Ext. 1279
SUBMITTED BY: **SIGNATURE:**	Steve Robichaud Director, Planning and Chief Planner Planning and Economic Development Department

The planning process can appear to the general public as confusing and intimidating because of technical terms, legislative requirements, complex technical requirements and terminology. This can be a barrier to effective community participation in the planning process. Planning staff have developed a "Planning 101" package to assist in educating the community and neighbourhood associations on the planning process separate from seeking community feedback of a policy/plan change or a development proposal.

The goal of "Planning 101" is to build capacity in community groups and neighbourhood associations to better understand and engage in the planning process or will be used by staff when attending community and neighbourhood meetings as part of the Division's on-going public engagement and participation activities.

Two "Planning 101" modules have been developed to date. The first module provides an overview of the Ontario planning framework in terms of provincial policy and plans. The second module provides an overview of the *Planning Act* in terms of the administrative and statutory provisions around how development applications are received and processed.

Planning staff have developed a new "Planning 101" module that provides an overview of the City's planning documents and how they are used in the planning process. This

presentation will be made available to groups interested in learning more about how specific development applications are evaluated and assessed based on the specific locational context in terms of applicable policies, regulations and guidelines.

As a result of varying policy frameworks (Secondary Plans and Neighbourhood Plans) and the vision for these areas that were established through the preparation of the Secondary Plans or Neighbourhood Plans with the broader community, not all areas within the City are the same. These Plans contain different policy frameworks with different visions and permissions. Because development applications are assessed against the policy framework applicable to the subject lands, a development proposal that complies with the applicable policies and is supported by staff in one geographic area of the City may not be supportable in a different area of the City.

Consequently, questions have been raised as to how Planning staff arrives at their recommendations for a development application and why there are different recommendations across the City for what appears to be similar development applications on similar properties.

To address this matter, Planning staff will be presenting on November 19, 2019 to provide an overview as to how City staff arrive at recommendations to either support or deny an application. The presentation will review the planning hierarchy including the policy frameworks of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, Secondary Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Zoning By-laws and how these are applied in the evaluation of a development application.

The presentation will also review how sites are to be evaluated based on their own merits and different neighbourhood contexts, and keeping in mind Official Plan and Zoning By-law permissions, compatibility, building and site design, technical comment, public feedback, professional opinions and good planning.

In addition to the presentation, staff are proposing to revise the standard Planning Committee report to assist the reader in understanding the development proposal and streamline the report writing process. A number of streamlining measures were identified as part of the Division's Continuous Improvement strategies and Open for Business objectives, one of which was opportunities to streamline the report process. In keeping with these measures, the presentation will also describe proposed changes to the organization of Planning reports. The changes include a "fact sheet" to highlight the details of the report's recommendations, details of the development, and the existing policy framework and permissions applicable to the lands. The proposed report changes will also include a chart to summarize both technical comments from internal staff and agencies and public feedback received through the processing of the development application. These changes will result in a simplified and streamlined report to better aid

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.
OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.
OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

the public and Council in understanding the details of the development, the analysis, and the recommendations.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.
OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.
OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.