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Planning & Development Approval – Process Review

The Corporation of the Township of Oro-Medonte

November 2020

Version: Final

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Context

Background

In response to the Government of Ontario's Provincial Modernization Grant, the Corporation of the Township of Oro-Medonte ("Oro-Medonte" or "Township") received funding to review and modernize its Planning & Development (P&D) Approval process. Blackline Consulting ("Blackline" or "we") were contracted to complete the work.

According to Statistics Canada, between 2011 and 2016, there was a 5% increase in Oro-Medonte's population. The number of private dwellings increased from 7,475 in 2011 to 9,013 in 2016, representing a 21% increase over the same five-year period. The Provincial forecasts estimate an additional growth of 24% in population over the next 10 years. This is likely to maintain or increase the level of development activity the Township is currently experiencing, to accommodate population growth. These forecasts are pre-COVID-19 and may be subject to change. That said, the Township's development activity has been steady despite COVID-19.

Scope

The scope of this review includes four main aspects:



Examine and conduct a thorough assessment of the Township's current P&D process including its service delivery model, and use of technology.



Perform a comparator analysis to understand other practices the Township should consider adopting.



Identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure progress as part of the Townships annual reporting.



Recommend potential changes to the Township's P&D process.

Objective

The objective of this review is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Township's P&D process.

Context

We use a process framework as a basis for our review

We then met with representatives of the Township, to refine and tailor the process so that it more closely aligns to the Township's activities (see right).

- ▶ We applied several lenses to analyzing the process that formed the basis of our opportunities, such as:
 - Use of technology/systems
 - Level of automation
 - LEAN principles
 - Activity owner
 - Effort for every activity
 - Application type
- ▶ Due to COVID-19, the Township made adjustments to their previous process activities. Our assessment takes these changes into consideration.

Process	1.0 Pre-Application Consultation	2.0 Application Submission	3.0 Application Review	4.0 Approval
Sub-Process	1.1 Receive Customer Inquiries	2.1 Receive Application and Docs. (plans, studies, forms)	3.1 Circulate Application for Review (Tech./Policy)	4.1 Prepare Decision Docs.
	1.2 Provide Pre-Application Package to Customer	2.2 Receive Application Payment	3.2 Review Application for Compliance	4.2 Amend File and Docs.
	1.3 Schedule Initial Meeting	2.3 Check for Completeness and Prepare File	3.3 Collate Comments and Complete Report	4.3 Refund Deposits (if applicable)
	1.4 Receive Pre-Application Docs. and Conduct Meeting	2.4 Receive Missing/Additional Docs. (if applicable)	3.4 Receive Re-submission (if applicable)	4.4 Fulfill Consent Conditions (if applicable)
	1.5 Provide Application Package to Customer	2.5 Notify Customer Application Status	3.5 Hold Public Meeting (Council/Committee)	
		2.6 Prepare Notice Document		



/ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary: Forecast Application Volume

The average annual growth rate (2015-2019) of application volume is three percent

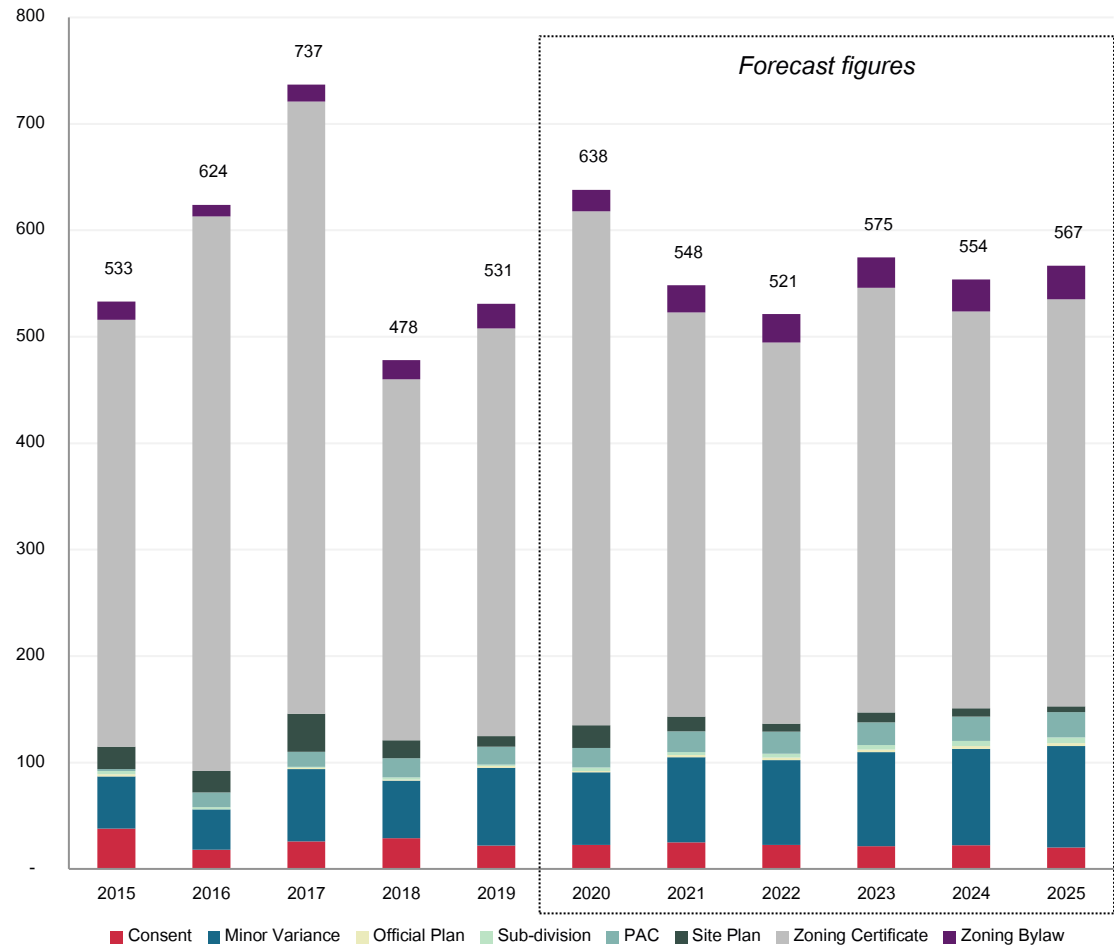
While the number of applications per year fluctuates, the composition is fairly consistent.

Using the historical data, a linear forecast* suggests the volume will be above 2019 volume levels

- ▶ The forecast suggests the average annual growth rate between 2020 and 2025 will be one percent. By 2025 the total application volume will reach 567.

However, given COVID-19, there is uncertainty about the future. Volume could be much higher or lower. As such, in addition to this linear forecast, we also include a forecast that takes into account an upper and lower level volume at a 95% confidence level – see Appendix E for more details.

Application Volume (2015-2025)



*The rolling five-year linear forecast predicts the volume per application type and therefore it is a different slope than the three percent historic average.

Executive Summary: Process Overview

While the Township has a system, Baker, the majority of activities are manual

On average, less than 25% of all process activities are supported by a system (e.g. ArcGIS, Baker, Bluebeam).* There are several opportunities in this report that will improve the Township's level of automation.

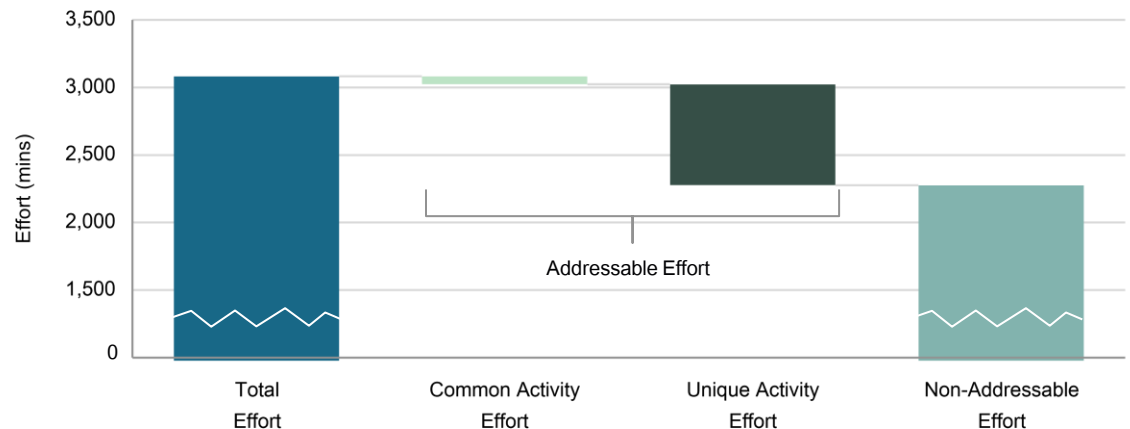
The opportunities will impact 26% of P&D total effort – 'Addressable Effort'**

Opportunities that impact addressable effort will help reduce the current amount of effort it takes to deliver those activities. From an activity perspective, it will impact 60% of activities. This includes activities that are common across all applications, regardless of type as well as unique activities. Examples of non-addressable activities include:

- Conducting technical reviews
- Manager assigning planner to application
- Creating presentation for Council/Committee
- Writing reports and making recommendations

	Planning and Development Approval Process				
<i>Per application, on average</i>	Total	Pre-Application	Application Submission	Application Review	Approval
Number of process activities	89	18	22	28	21
Total phase effort (mins)	3,083	290	250	1,488	1,055
Total process activities supported by technology	20	3	4	5	8
Supported by technology (%)	23%	17%	18%	18%	38%

Opportunity Impact on P&D Effort






*Does not include productivity tools (e.g. MS Office)

**This equates to 0.86 of a Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

Executive Summary: Key Observations

The Planning department relies heavily on staff to perform activities. COVID-19 is accelerating the department's need for adopting technology and increasing automation. Below are key observations from our process review

The majority of the process activities are manual	There are little self-service capabilities for customers	The Township uses few tools for collaboration
 <p>With less than 25% of process activities using technology, there is a high reliance on individuals – both customers and staff.</p>	 <p>The Township's website provides little self-service capabilities and information is not easily accessible for first time customers.</p>	 <p>Collaboration between customers, Planning, and other Township departments is manual with little use of technology.</p>
<p>This requires more staff effort and may cause delays in the process timeline.</p>	<p>This increases staff work volume to answer customer queries or may discourage potential customers because it is too difficult.</p>	<p>This causes inefficiencies in sharing documentation or coordinating activities.</p>

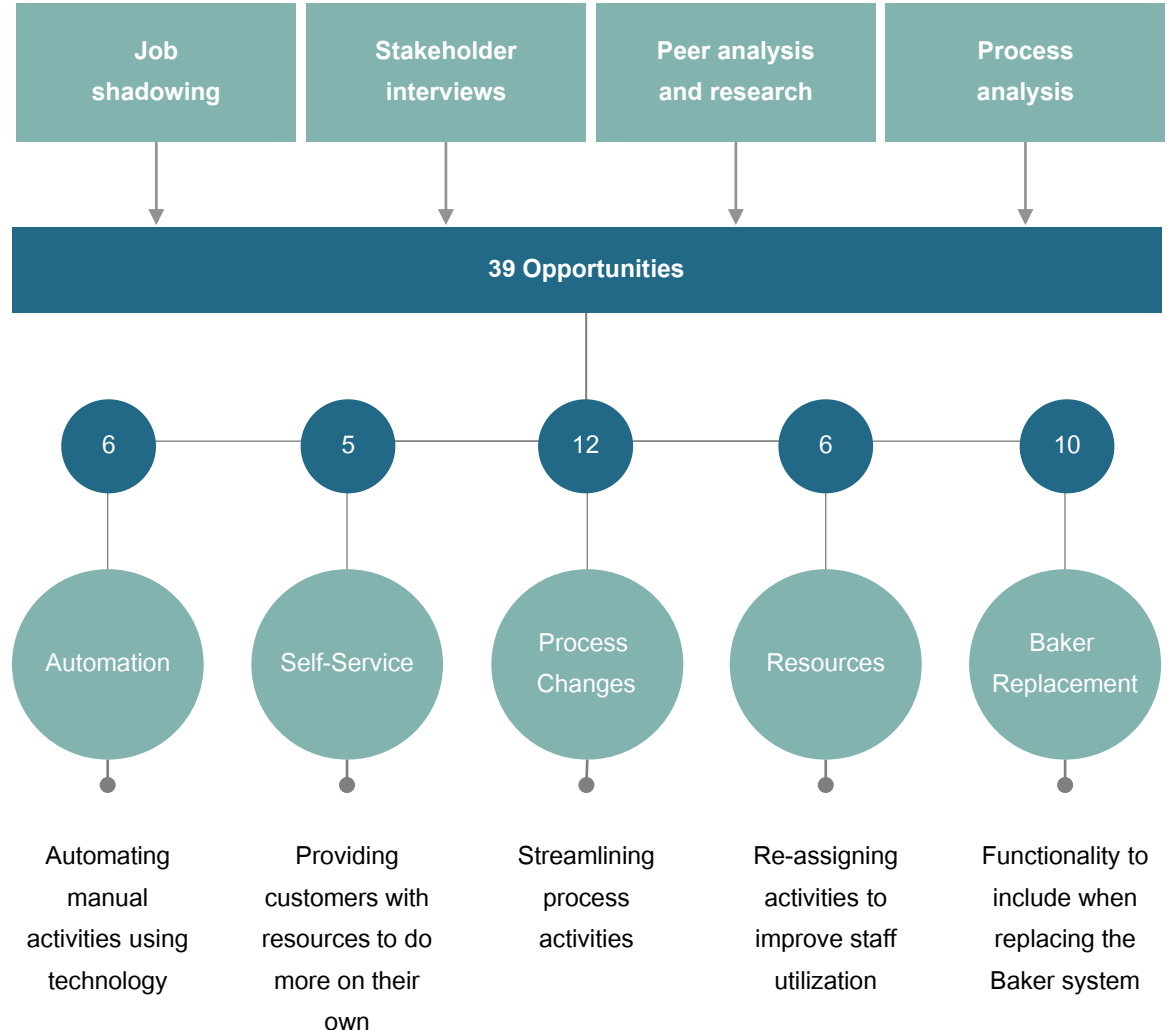
Executive Summary: Recommendations

The opportunities in this report are from several sources

- ▶ **Job shadowing** – sitting with staff to observe how they conduct their day-to-day activities.
- ▶ **Stakeholder interviews** – consultation with management, staff and select developers.
- ▶ **Peers** – conducting a peer analysis.
- ▶ **Research** – using publicly available information on other P&D practices.
- ▶ **Process analysis** – review of existing process, documentation and data.

In addition, we have drawn in from our previous experiences and knowledge conducting service reviews where applicable.

There is a total of 39 opportunities for the Township to consider implementing. The Opportunity section includes more details of each



Executive Summary: Benefits of Recommendations

The are several benefits to implementing the recommendations

The benefits fit into two categories:

- ▶ **Service Improvement:** the primary benefit is improving the quality of the service that customers receive. For example, self-service capabilities, easier access to information, notification of application status.
- ▶ **Efficiency Improvement:** the primary benefit is a result in more efficient operations and process activities. For example, eliminating manual activities, reducing re-work such as double entry of information (paper to system).






Each of the 39 opportunities fall into one of the two benefit categories

While some opportunity will deliver both a service and efficiency improvement, to avoid double-counting we categorize the opportunities using the main benefit.

- ▶ For instance, electronic file sharing with external and internal stakeholder improves the service, but the main benefit and larger impact is on efficiency.

For a full list of the opportunities and description of the benefits, see the Recommendations section of this Report

The table below provides a breakdown of the opportunities by benefit category

	Service Improvement	Efficiency Improvement	Total
 Automation	1	5	6
 Self-service	3	2	5
 Process Changes	6	6	12
 Resources	–	6	6
 Baker Replacement	1	9	10
Total	11	28	39*

* We recommend that the Township consider the above in conjunction with the recommendations from the Service Level Review as we believe there will be synergies. In addition, the Township will need to consider the resource requirements and priorities.

Executive Summary: Implementation Plan (1 of 3)

Below we provide the Township with a list of opportunities that we recommend they implement over the next 18 months

Recommendation	<12 months	12-18 months
A1 Implement a web/mobile enabled solution to share documents securely with internal and external stakeholders.		
A2 Expand the Township's online payment capabilities to accept different payment options (e.g. online credit card payments).		
A3 Select and implement a digital signature solution (e.g. DocuSign).		
A4 Implement more robust tools (e.g. laptop and present using a projector) for in-person meetings to reduce the need for printing.		
A5 Provide equipment (e.g. tablets to enter info and take photos) for conducting work on-site and reduce the need to visit the office.		
S1 Provide better online information for customers. The information should include: process steps including those by third-parties (e.g. Conservation Authority, MTO, etc.), timelines, fees, checklist of submission, "how-to"/FAQs and tutorials.		
S2 Update or replace the Township's existing website forms so that they are fillable and include mandatory fields, error checking and online submission.		
S3 Implement an online scheduling tool (e.g. MS Bookings) that is accessible to internal and external stakeholders to streamline the meeting booking process.		
P1 Set guidelines to determine the difference between general inquiries and a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) questions.		

Executive Summary: Implementation Plan (2 of 3)

Recommendation	<12 months	12-18 months
P2 Block timeslots on a set frequency (e.g. once a week, Thursdays 2-4pm) that customers can book an appointment to ask general questions or a consultation.		
P3 Eliminate storing applications and documents in multiple formats/locations. Revise records management practices as required.		
P4 Streamline the payments process to be more customer-friendly by eliminating the back and forth between the customer, Finance and Planning.		
P5 Create a standard list of Subject Matter Expertise (SME) involvement per application type (and potentially other criteria).		
P6 Establish minimum PAC submission requirements and a standard agenda. Distribute the information to all attendees in advance of the PAC meeting.		
P7 Provide the customer with status updates at every major process milestone.		
P8 Assign Planners "ownership of files" and include a list responsibilities.		
P9 For more complex applications, establish guidelines for customers to submit a letter from a Registered Planner acknowledging the application is complete to the best of their knowledge.		
P10 Create a risk-based framework to delegate approval authority for certain applications (or circumstances). The framework should consider a number of factors (e.g. occupancy size, complexity, risk level).		
R1 Decentralize the initial check for 'application completeness' process to all Planners.		
R2 Assign the responsibility for the entire notice document process (create, review and mail) to the DS Assistant to reduce the time in-transit.		

Executive Summary: Implementation Plan (3 of 3)

Recommendation	<12 months	12-18 months
R3 Reallocate responsibility of ordering CSR green sign to DS Assistant.		
R4 Reallocate responsibility of checking entrance permit requirement to DS Assistant.		
R5 Reallocate responsibility of checking connection fee to DS Assistant.		
R6 Pilot the adoption of a rotation model, where staff specialize for a certain period on specific applications.		
<i>We recommend that the Township begin working on the following two initiatives as they will require longer time to implement.</i>		
<i>Initiate - the Baker Replacement program by conducting project planning and assigning resources.</i>		
<i>Initiate - Create a conservation authority Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) renegotiation strategy by engaging and collaborating with neighbouring municipalities (within the scope of the MoU).</i>		

This proposed implementation plan takes into consideration urgency, dependencies and estimated effort as per Blackline's recommendation. We recommend that the Township consider the above in conjunction with the recommendations from the Service Level Review as we believe there will be synergies regarding service improvements, specifically the use of technology and improvements to customer service. In addition, the Township will need to consider the resource requirements and priorities.

Once the priorities are set, we recommend that the Township further validate the supporting assumptions, develop more detailed implementation plans and create capital projects to implement those opportunities deemed appropriate. The Township should consider (where appropriate) resourcing options e.g. backfill resources and/or use external third-party expertise.

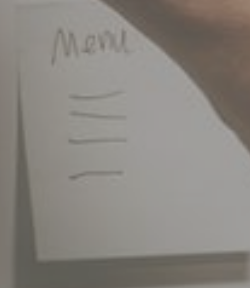
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Description

/ CURRENT STATE

Current State: Historic Application Volume

The average annual growth rate (2015-2019) of application volume is three percent

While the number of applications per year fluctuates, the composition is fairly consistent.

- ▶ Appendix E includes a linear forecast* that suggests the volume will be above 2019 volume levels for the next five years.

The majority of applications Planning processed are zoning certificates and minor variance as the chart depicts

In fact, they make up 86% of the total over the five-year period.

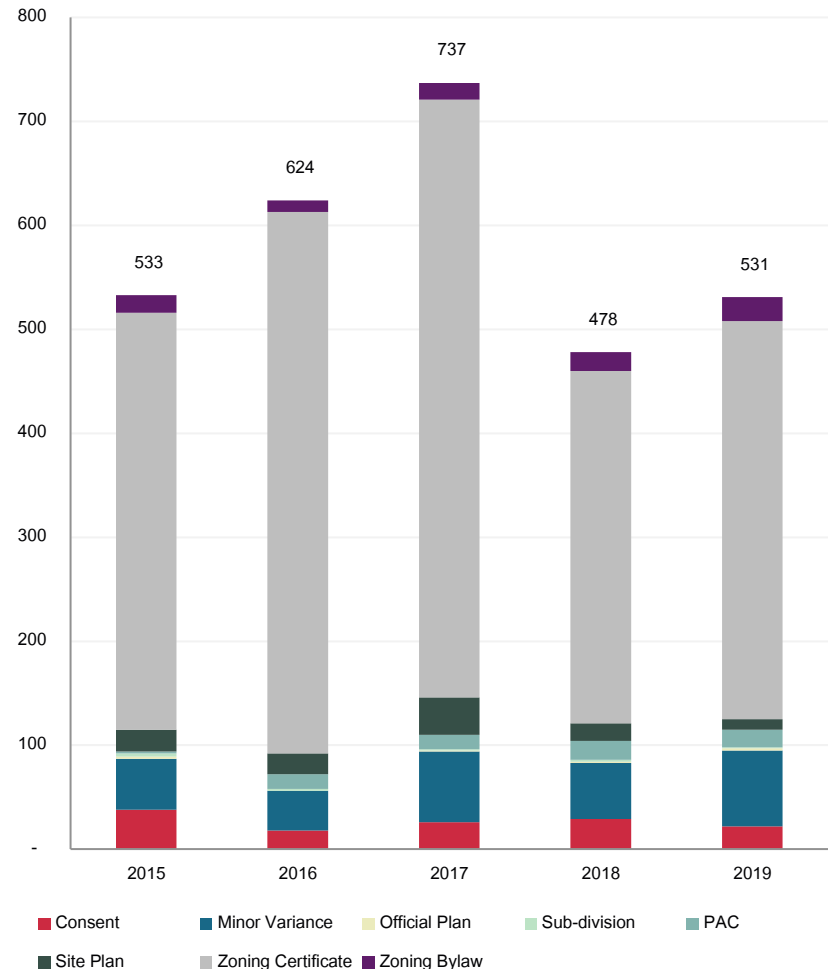
- ▶ Both zoning certificates and minor variance applications have less process activities and take less effort (staff time to process the application), relative to other application types.

In 2019, the Planning department received 5,000 calls**

These are calls the Township's front desk customer service, answer and transfer to the Planning department.

- ▶ The degree of self-service capabilities is likely a contributing factor to the inquiries volume.

Application Volume (2015-2019)



*The rolling five-year linear forecast predicts the volume per application type

**Figures do not include calls, walk-ins and emails directly to Planning

Current State: Process Overview

The P&D Approval's process has four phases that align to common practices

The majority of activities and effort are in the Application Review phase. This is consistent regardless of the application type.

The PAC is not a mandatory phase for all applications, but the Township requires it for larger, complex projects such as plans of sub-division.

Phase	Pre-App Consultation	Application Submission	Application Review	Application Approval
Sub-Process	5	6	5	4
Activities	18	22	28	21
Effort (mins)*	290	250	1,488	1,055
Planning's control of activities	72%	82%	64%	90%

The majority of process activities (on average, 77% of all activities across all phases) are within Planning's control. Meaning they can influence the time and effort of the activity. This is an important characteristic as some process changes, while desirable, may be difficult to implement because the control is with another stakeholder e.g. customers, or third parties – such as conservation authority.

*Does not include SME, customer or third-party efforts. It is indicative effort of the Planning staff.

**For larger, complex commercial applications. Residential and less complex Site Plans take 7+ weeks on average.

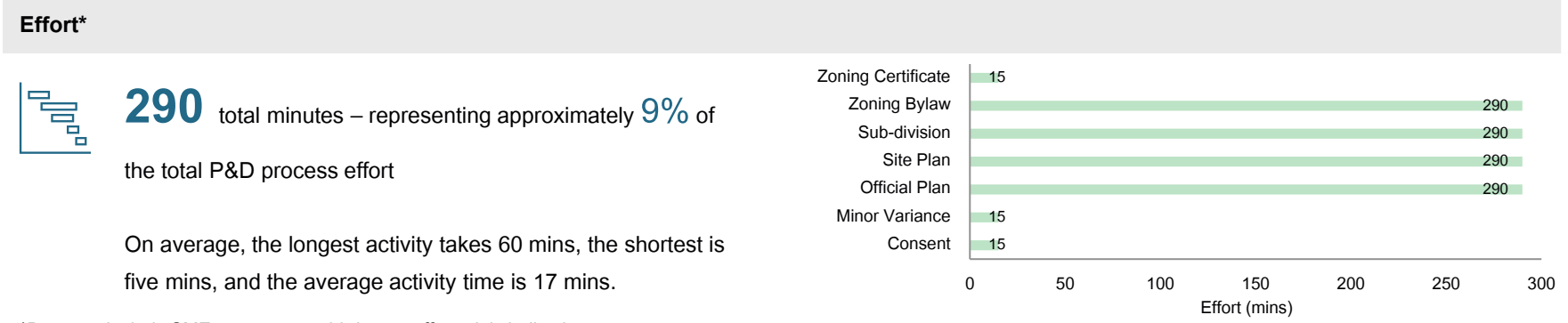
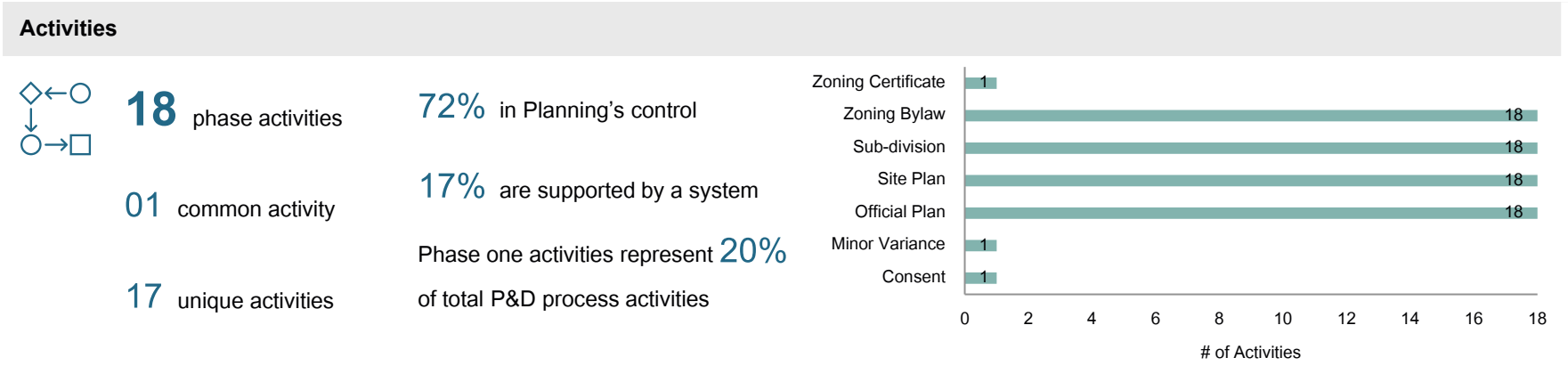
There are 11 activities that all application types have in common

While the phase and sub-process activities remain constant, the number of activities and effort varies depending on the application type, to accommodate application nuances.

	Official Plan	Zoning Bylaw	Site Plan	Minor Variance	Consent	Sub-division	Zoning Certificate
Total Activities	58	63	63	46	52	59	21
Unique Activities	47	52	52	35	41	48	10
Common Activities	11						
Effort (mins)*	1,865	1,925	1,925	2,392	2,527	1,940	142
Average Duration	1+ year	3+ months	1+ year**	7+ weeks	7+ weeks	1+ year	1+ week(s)

Phase One: Pre-Application Consultation

Phase	Description			
	<p>The Township requires formal Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) meetings for any application in <i>The Planning Act</i> (official plan amendment, zoning bylaw amendment and plans of sub-division). They are optional for other applications (e.g. larger, complex applications such as commercial site plans). The objective is to identify the requirements and materials to assist the customer in their submission. Customers may also make general inquiries regarding any planning and development matters (e.g. what applications are needed).</p>			
Phase 1 Pre-App. Consult	Phase 2 App. Submission	Phase 3 App. Review	Phase 4 App. Approval	



*Does not include SME, customer or third-party efforts. It is indicative effort of the Planning staff

Phase One: Pre-Application Consultation

Sub-Process	Observations (1 of 2)
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ The volume of PACs relative is relatively low. In 2019 there were 17.
Receive Customer Inquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ There is little information on the Township's website regarding the process. Some information is on the forms, along with technical instructions, and may therefore not be as easy to understand to some customers.▶ Customers have the option of contacting the Township via walk-in, call or email to make general inquiries at any time. This may cause interruptions for staff and impact the progress of other applications.▶ A PAC is optional for some applications and there are no clear distinctions as to when a customer should engage Planning with general inquiries or schedule a meeting.
Provide PAC Package to Customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ The forms on the Township's website are non-fillable PDFs. This requires staff to manually transcribe the information, creating rework. The number of incomplete applications has increased with COVID-19 as staff cannot conduct an initial on-site check of the application package. In addition, there are no mandatory fields or submissions on any of the forms, increasing the likelihood for errors and omissions. Neither are there controls in place for the applications given that they are non-fillable PDF forms.
Schedule Initial Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Scheduling is manual using emailing/walking-up to staff. This is more time consuming when external stakeholders are involved.


Phase One: Pre-Application Consultation

Sub-Process	Observations (2 of 2)
Receive PAC and Conduct Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Planning store information in multiple areas and formats: physical version, scan and store on the shared local drive, and creating an entry for an application on Baker. This creates re-work for staff and is inefficient use of storage.▶ The Township's payment process requires back and forth between the Finance and Planning department, is manual (using Word/Excel) and uses paper. The Planning desk does not have the payment device and therefore customers must walk to the Finance department to pay. That said, the Township is now providing online payment (via PayPal) as a temporary solution due to COVID-19.▶ The Planning Manager assigns files to Planners. The Manager considers workload and complexity of file when assigning files. However, there is often a backlog of unassigned applications due to the work volume and this creates a delay in starting application processing.▶ In many cases, Planners require input from SMEs. However, the Township does not have a standard list of SME involvement. This can lead to inconsistencies and potentially ineffective delivery of P&D services.▶ The Township prints most of the collateral for PAC meetings. This means there is rework after the meetings to enter the information into systems (e.g. Baker) as well as document the changes.▶ PACs do not have minimum submission requirements or deadlines to help guide customers. PAC meetings do not have a standard meeting agenda, documentation or notification to attendees. This leads to ineffective meetings and in some cases inefficient use of staff time.
Provide Application Package to Customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Following the PAC, the Planner drafts a letter (using a Word template) summarizing the discussion and provides an application checklist to the customer. In some cases, the Planner will also circulate the letters to the SMEs to verify their comments. In the absence of real-time collaboration, this adds effort to send the document for review, receive comments and make changes.

Phase Two: Application Submission

Phase	Description
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">Phase 1 Pre-App. Consult</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Phase 2 App. Submission</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Phase 3 App. Review</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Phase 4 App. Approval</div> </div>	<p>The Application Submission phase is when the customer has decided to pursue an application and officially submit the package to the Township. For the Township, the objective of this phase is to ensure that the application package is submitted in a complete manner and includes all the required collateral (e.g. drawings, technical studies) to conduct a review.</p>

Activities



22 phase activities


07 common activity

15 unique activities

82% of activities are within Planning's control


18% are supported by a system

Phase two activities represent **25%** of total P&D process activities



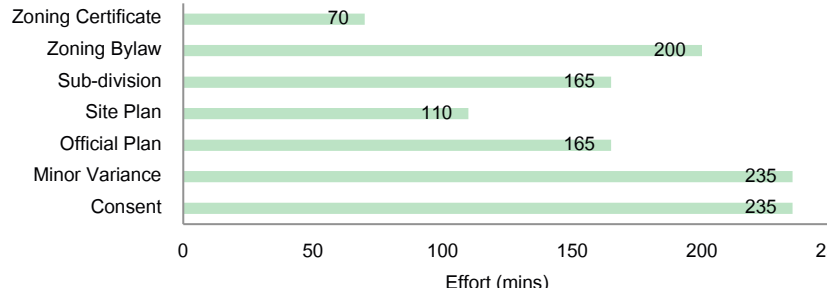
Category	# of Activities
Zoning Certificate	11
Zoning Bylaw	18
Sub-division	15
Site Plan	14
Official Plan	15
Minor Variance	20
Consent	20

Effort*



250 total minutes – representing approximately **8%** of the total P&D process effort

On average, the longest activity takes 30 mins, the shortest is five mins, and the average activity time is 12 mins.



Category	Effort (mins)
Zoning Certificate	70
Zoning Bylaw	200
Sub-division	165
Site Plan	110
Official Plan	165
Minor Variance	235
Consent	235

*Does not include SME, customer or third-party efforts. It is indicative effort of the Planning staff


Phase Two: Application Submission

Sub-Process	Observations
Receive Application and Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ As mentioned previously, there are typically gaps in the application package that customers submit – this gap has widened with COVID-19 due to less consultation. This delays the process for customers as they must gather and submit additional information/documents.▶ The Planner circulates the application package to all applicable SMEs via email or courier. There is no shared drive (with access control) for SMEs. This creates additional work and time delays.▶ The Baker system does not have any workflow notification functionality. Staff must follow up with other staff members and keep track of current activities. This can cause delays and can be time consuming.
Check for Completeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ For certain application types, a dedicated Planner conducts an initial check for application completeness. When work volume is high, this can cause bottlenecks and delays in the process.▶ Once the Township receives an application, the DS Assistant records it in an Excel spreadsheet for the Manager to assign to a Planner. Based on staff workload and complexity of application, the Manager will assign it to a Planner. There is no Planner specialization model based on application type.
Receive Missing/ Additional Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ The customer must submit any missing or additional documents either in-person or electronically. The Township does not have a customer portal or other means to share/upload collateral. This may cause delays if staff are waiting for documents to begin distributing (to SMEs) and reviewing.
Notify Customer of Application Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ In most cases (except for zoning bylaw amendment applications), the Township is not able to provide customers with an easy way to check the status of their application. This can impact customer service and lead to an increase of customer inquiries.
Prepare Notice Document	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Planners creates the notice document using Word templates and then gives it to the DS Assistant to distribute and mail. The Baker system does not have functionality to automate this activity making it time intensive.

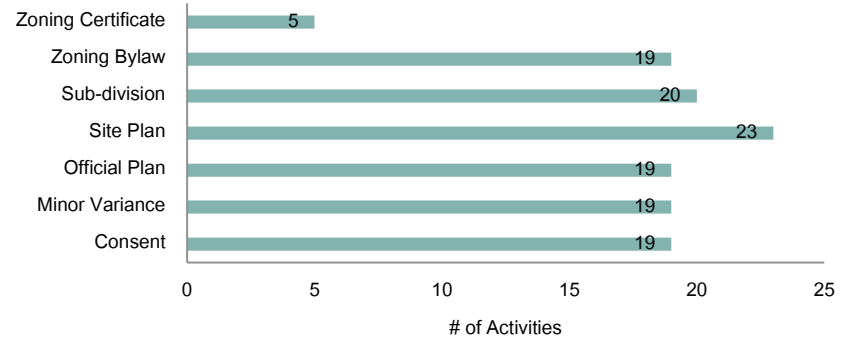
Phase Three: Application Review

Phase				Description
Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	The objective of this phase is to review and analyze a customer's application from multiple perspectives (e.g. engineering, environmental, policy, operations, etc.), and to create a recommendation for Council/ Committee to consider as they make their decision (approve or not).
Pre-App. Consult	App. Submission	App. Review	App. Approval	


Activities


28 phase activities
00 common activity
28 unique activities

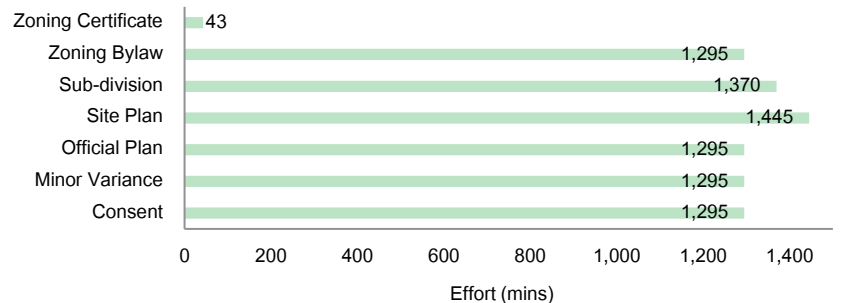
64% of activities are within Planning's control
14% are supported by a system
 Phase three activities represent **31%** of total P&D process activities



Effort*


1,488 total minutes – representing approximately **48%** of the total P&D process effort

On average, the longest activity takes 420 mins, the shortest is two mins, and the average activity time is 53 mins.



*Does not include SME, customer or third-party efforts. It is indicative effort of the Planning staff


Phase Three: Application Review

Sub-Process	Observations
Circulate Application for Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Planner circulates the application package to all applicable SMEs via email or courier. There is no shared drive (with access control) for SMEs. This creates additional work and time delays. ▶ If an application requires a Conservation Authority (CA) technical review, staff send the application to the applicable CA. While there is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Township and the CA it does not include any service levels for completing the work. The Planning department indicates that it can take between one to five months. This creates delays, uncertainty and can impact customer service. ▶ For zoning certificates only, customers must visit the CA directly and make a payment. For all other applications, the Planning department (via cheque) pays the CA on behalf of the customer. From a customer service perspective, this can create confusion (two different payment models).
Review Application for Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Planner conducts a policy review to ensure an application is compliant, capturing their analysis in a recommendations report. The Planners do not share the report with any SMEs prior to submitting it to Council/Committee meeting. This potentially causes delays or errors (e.g. does not reflect SME input). ▶ The process for on-site photos is manual, using a mobile phone/digital camera. Once staff return, they connect the device, import the images, save them locally, and re-name them. This is a time consuming process and adds effort to the process. ▶ The Planning department will use either their internal engineer or a third-party to perform the engineering reviews. The Township has a retainer with them. This helps reduce delays and provides the Township with expertise/additional capabilities.
Collate Comments and Complete Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ All SME send their comments/technical reviews to Planning separately. This step is time intensive and creates a higher risk of human error. ▶ The Planner then creates a recommendation report using standard Word templates, streamlining and standardizing the process.
Hold Public Meeting (Council/Committee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Township's Council/Committee approve most applications. There is little delegation of authority to management and staff. This can cause delays in decision-making.

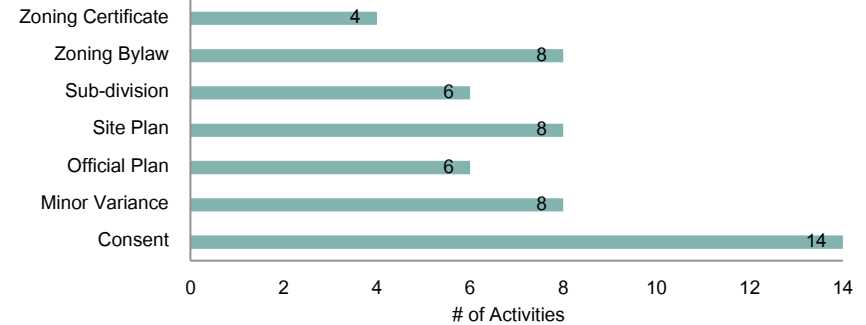
Phase Four: Application Approval

Phase				Description
Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	The Application Approval phase is preparing and carrying out the formalities involved in officially approving an application. This involves a number of activities such as obtaining signatures and signing-off on agreements, it also involves activities that require amending documents, policies and bylaws, official records, and GIS maps.
Pre-App. Consult	App. Submission	App. Review	App. Approval	


Activities


21 phase activities
02 common activity
19 unique activities

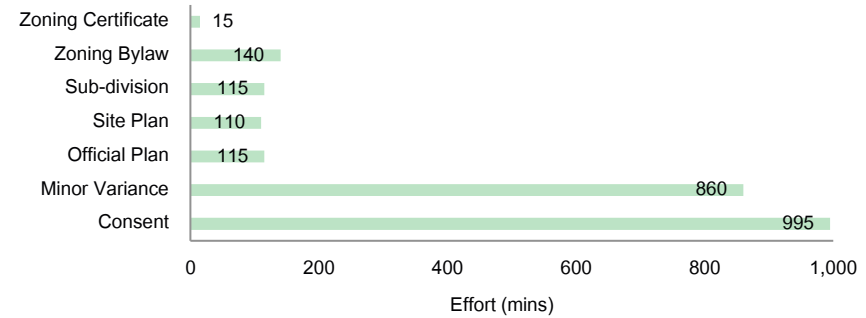
90% of activities are within Planning's control
38% are supported by a system
 Phase four activities represent **24%** of total P&D process activities



Effort*


1,055 total minutes – representing approximately **34%** of the total P&D process effort

On average, the longest activity takes 60 mins, the shortest is five mins, and the average activity time is 50 mins.



*Does not include SME, customer, third-party, LAPT related efforts. It is indicative effort of the Planning staff

Phase Four: Application Approval

Sub-Process	Observations
Prepare Decision Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Planning distributes the document to stakeholders notifying them of the decision. Stakeholders have up to 20-days to appeal the decision.▶ The Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) will review any appeals. Planning creates a package (including all the necessary documentation) for the hearing. This is a time consuming task; anecdotally, this may take up to two days. The distribution of the package is both physically (via courier) and digitally. This process is outside of the Township's control.
Refund Deposits (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ In some cases, customers receive a refund. Planning creates an invoice requesting a refund, Finance processes the request and provides a receipt to Planning, who send a copy to the customer. This process requires effort from Finance and Planning and is manual.
Fulfill Consent Conditions (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ For consent applications only, customers have up to one year to complete the conditions outlined in the approval. A Planner follows-up with the customer to identify if they intend to fulfil the conditions. From a customer service perspective, this is good practices and should continue as the one-year mark approaches.

/ OPPORTUNITIES

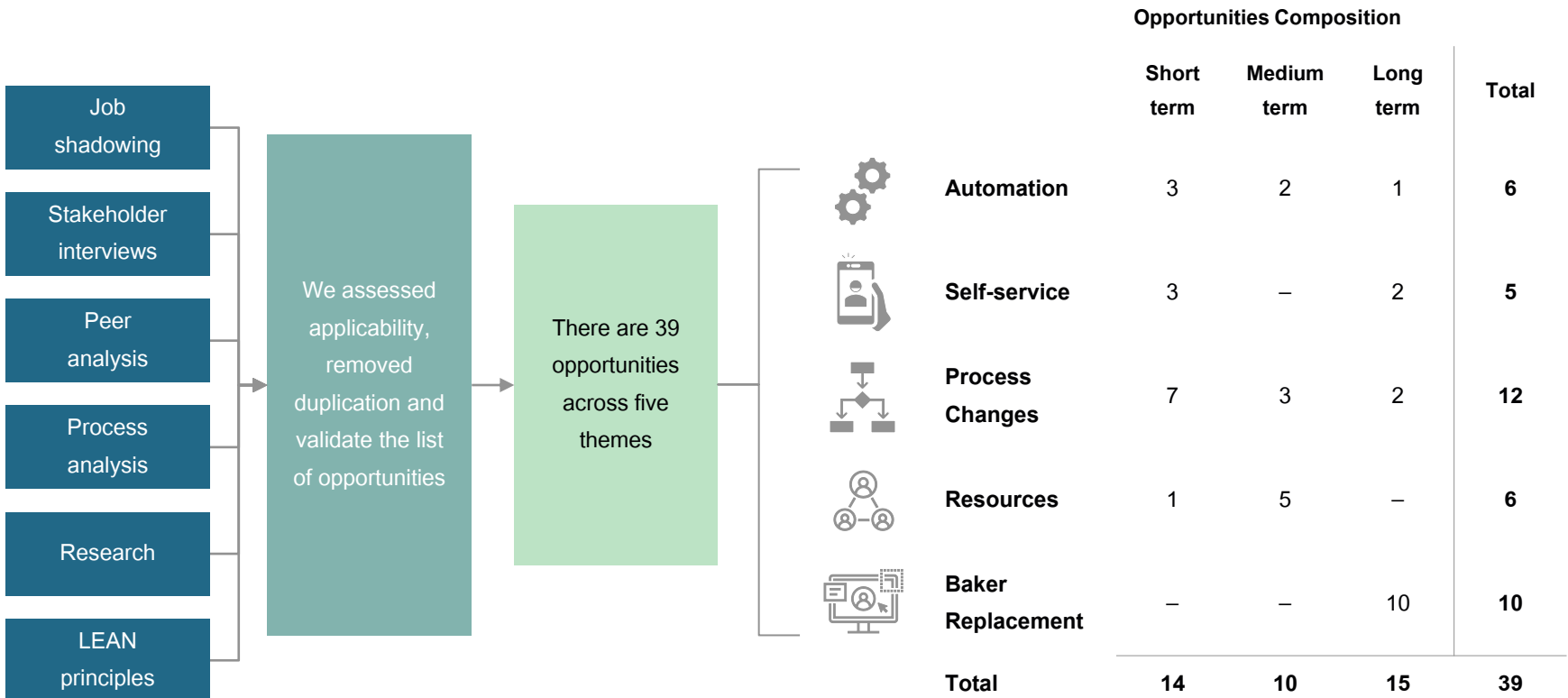


Opportunities: Overview

Based on a number of inputs and our process analysis, we identified a total of 39 opportunities for the Township to consider implementing

Each opportunity in this section includes benefits, as well as suggested time of implementation: short, medium and long-term. Short term being within the next 12 months, medium term between 12 and 18 months and long term between 18 and 36 months.

Note: some opportunities may overlap with the Baker Replacement functionalities. The intent is to provide the Township with opportunities that can provide immediate benefits rather than waiting for 18 to 36 months.



Opportunities: Automation

The following are opportunities the Township should consider implementing over the next three years

#	Recommendation	Benefits	Timing
A1	Implement a web/mobile enabled solution to share documents securely with internal and external stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Eliminate the need for sending the application package to individuals via email ▶ Ability to collaborate on documents 	Short term
A2	Expand the Township's online payment capabilities to accept different payment options (e.g. online credit card payments).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer better customer service ▶ Eliminate several activities from the payments process 	Short term
A3	Select and implement a digital signature solution (e.g. DocuSign).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer better customer service ▶ Streamline the process and eliminate several activities (e.g. print > sign > scan > send) 	Short term
A4	Implement more robust tools (e.g. laptop and present using a projector) for in-person meetings to reduce the need for printing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ability to edit and mark-up documents in real-time ▶ Environmentally friendly solution to replace printing 	Medium term
A5	Provide equipment (e.g. tablets to enter info and take photos) for conducting work on-site and reduce the need to visit the office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Enable remote working capabilities ▶ Eliminate several activities from the photo uploading process 	Medium term
A6	Use drones to conduct site visits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Enable remote working capabilities ▶ Provide a top-down perspective of a property 	Long term

Opportunities: Self-Service

The following are opportunities the Township should consider implementing over the next three years

#	Recommendation	Benefits	Timing
S1	Provide better online information for customers. The information should include: process steps including those by third-parties (e.g. Conservation Authority, MTO, etc.), timelines, fees, checklist of submission, "how-to"/FAQs and tutorials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer better customer service ▶ Make the process more user-friendly ▶ Eliminate some inquiries from the public ▶ Reduce staff disruptions when working 	Short term
S2	Update or replace the Township's existing website forms so that they are fillable and include mandatory fields, error checking and online submission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Eliminate re-work through elimination of transcription ▶ Streamline the process and eliminate several activities (e.g. print > fill > scan > send) 	Short term
S3	Implement an online scheduling tool (e.g. MS Bookings) that is accessible to internal and external stakeholders to streamline the meeting booking process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer better customer service ▶ Streamline the process by reducing the need to email/walk to staff to discuss scheduling 	Short term
S4	Provide economic development related details that relate to Planning and Development on the Township's website (e.g. growth vision of the Township, development-ready land).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer more information regarding available development ready land to the public ▶ Eliminate some inquiries from the public 	Long term
S5	Introduce new capabilities to the Township's public maps (GIS tool) to allow for a list of on-going application and the ability to view status of application. In addition, provide capabilities to show development-ready land available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer better customer service through greater transparency regarding application progress ▶ Eliminate some inquiries from the public 	Long term

Opportunities: Process Changes (1 of 2)

The following are opportunities the Township should consider implementing over the next three years

#	Recommendation	Benefits	Timing
P1	Set guidelines to determine the difference between general inquiries and a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Eliminate some inquiries from the public ▶ Reduce staff disruptions when working ▶ More structured approach to answering general inquiries 	Short term
P2	Block timeslots on a set frequency (e.g. once a week, Thursdays 2-4pm) that customers can book an appointment to ask general questions or a consultation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer better customer service through scheduled, dedicated time for inquiries ▶ Eliminate some inquiries from the public ▶ Reduce staff disruptions when working 	Short term
P3	Eliminate storing applications and documents in multiple formats/locations. Revise records management practices as required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Eliminate re-work through elimination of multiple storing means ▶ Streamline the process and eliminate activities 	Short term
P4	Streamline the payments process to be more customer-friendly by eliminating the back and forth between the customer, Finance and Planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer better customer service ▶ Eliminate several payments process activities 	Short term
P5	Create a standard list of Subject Matter Expertise (SME) involvement per application type (and potentially other criteria).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Standardize the process by making it consistent and reducing time identifying SMEs 	Short term
P6	Revise elements of the PAC process to incorporate the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establish minimum submission requirements with deadlines for customers - create agendas for PAC meetings that include more details (e.g. questions) - distribute agenda and documents to participants ahead of PAC meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ More efficient use of staff and SME time ▶ Ability for staff and SMEs to prepare in advance of PAC meetings 	Short term

Opportunities: Process Changes (2 of 2)

The following are opportunities the Township should consider implementing over the next three years

#	Recommendation	Benefits	Timing
P7	Provide the customer with status updates at every major process milestone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer better customer service (transparency) ▶ Eliminate some inquiries from the public 	Short term
P8	Assign Planners "ownership of files" and include a list responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Greater consistency and accountability on applications 	Medium term
P9	For more complex applications, establish guidelines for customers to submit a letter from a Registered Planner acknowledging the application is complete to the best of their knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increased likelihood of complete applications ▶ Reduce delays due to incomplete applications 	Medium term
P10	Create a risk-based framework to delegate approval authority for certain applications (or circumstances). The framework should consider a number of factors (e.g. occupancy size, complexity, risk level).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Streamline the process by reducing delays between application review completion and Council/Committee approval 	Medium term
P11	Work with other municipalities to collectively renegotiate the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Conservation Authority (CA), focusing on specific changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - defining a service level e.g. maximum timeline for processing an application - revising the payment process - eliminating the need for the customer to visit the CA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Better customer service through transparency on process and timelines, as well as one-stop shop for completing applications ▶ Reduce delays in process due to conservation authority technical reviews 	Long term
P12	Consider a "one-stop shop" for development projects where staff work closely with customer on the entire lifecycle of the development process – from application to build – including aspects of planning, engineering and building.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer better customer service for a more transparent development project lifecycle ▶ Eliminate future inquiries from the public 	Long term

Opportunities: Resources

The following are opportunities the Township should consider implementing over the next three years

#*	Recommendation	Benefits	Timing
R1	Decentralize the initial check for 'application completeness' process to all Planners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Avoid bottlenecks ▶ Promote greater consistency and accountability of application 	Short term
R2	Assign the responsibility for the entire notice document process (create, review and mail) to the DS Assistant to reduce the time in-transit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Streamline the process by reducing the number of resources involved and time in-transit 	Medium term
R3	Reallocate responsibility of ordering CSR green sign to DS Assistant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Streamline the process by reducing the number of resources involved and time in-transit ▶ Promote staff professional development and long-term staff succession planning 	Medium term
R4	Reallocate responsibility of checking entrance permit requirement to DS Assistant.		Medium term
R5	Reallocate responsibility of checking connection fee to DS Assistant.		Medium term
R6	Pilot the adoption of a rotation model, where staff specialize for a certain period on specific applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Achieve efficiencies through specialization ▶ Provide planners the ability to broader exposure through rotation program 	Medium term

*These recommendations may require additional training – on the job, as well as course.

Opportunities: Baker Replacement (1 of 2)

The following are opportunities the Township should consider implementing over the next three years

#	Recommendation	Benefits	Timing
B1	A portal for customers to submit/upload applications and supporting documents, check application status, make payments and add/view comments/questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Streamline the process and eliminate staff involvement in receiving application ▶ Offer better customer service through 24/7 self-service 	Long term
B2	Ability to store (or attach) relevant application documents and link it to an application file.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Eliminate re-work through elimination of multiple storing means ▶ Streamline the process and eliminate staff involvement in receiving application 	Long term
B3	Ability to allow Planners to share application files and documents securely with other internal and external stakeholders OR integrate with other web/mobile enabled solutions that share documents (see automation).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Eliminate the need for sending the application package to individuals via email ▶ Ability to collaborate on documents 	Long term
B4	Ability to have an overview of applications through a dashboard, that views applications unassigned and currently in progress, for management's internal use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Perspective on current workload to estimate timelines ▶ More efficient resource management 	Long term
B5	Ability to create standard letters using "mail merge" functionality replacing any Word templates – such functionality will auto-generate and populate letters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Eliminate staff effort and streamline the process for creating standard letters 	Long term
B6	Ability to set mandatory submission information and documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Avoid delays due to re-submissions and missed documents past submission 	Long term

Opportunities: Baker Replacement (2 of 2)

The following are opportunities the Township should consider implementing over the next three years

#	Recommendation	Benefits	Timing
B7	Ability for workflow capability to track activities and send notifications to internal staff (reminders to complete an activity) or customers regarding application progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Eliminate staff effort in notifying stakeholders to complete an activity 	Long term
B8	Ability to automatically match the submission document (e.g. drawings) against the requirements of an application to eliminate the manual check. In the long term, consider Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) to auto-identify drawing submission types.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Eliminate staff effort and streamline the process in cross-checking submitted documents against requirements 	Long term
B9	Ability to automatically pre-populate a list of SMEs based on the application type and documents submitted by the customer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Eliminate staff effort and streamline the process in identifying SMEs ▶ Create greater consistency in list of SMEs 	Long term
B10	Ability to access the system on all devices (including mobile and tablets) with capabilities for uploading photos, accessing files, making comments in real-time and caching to update when connectivity is established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Enable remote working capabilities ▶ Eliminate several activities from the photo uploading process ▶ Enable real-time editing and marking up documents when remote 	Long term



/ PEER ANALYSIS

Peer Analysis: Overview

We launched a peer study in October 2020 and invited peers to respond to a questionnaire

The survey questions are on the right.

The objective was to understand how the Township's peers are responding to similar issues and matters the Township faces.

The survey achieved a participation rate of 60% as the table below summarizes.

Municipality	Status
Midland	Participated
New Tecumseth	Participated
Orangeville	Participated
Orillia	Participated
Collingwood	Did not participate
King Township	Did not participate
Springwater	Did not participate

The consecutive two pages summarize the key findings.

Q1. Is the Planning and Development Approvals process formal, defined and documented? If documented, please provide a copy with your response or provide a link to find on your website.

Q2. What kind of details and information regarding the process is made available to the public/online (e.g. process steps, timelines)? If information is available on the website, please provide a link to find on your website.

Q3. What self-service capabilities do you offer to the public as it relates to planning and development services (e.g. online submissions, payment, application status tracking)?

Q4. Does your staff create recommendation reports as part of the decision-making process for Council/development services committee? If so, how much detail is included? Please provide a sample where possible.

Q5. Are there any delegated authorities that Council/Planning Committee has appointed/set to your Planning and Development department regarding application approvals? Please provide details and position to whom they are delegated.

Q6. What changes have you made to your process because of COVID-19? Are there any changes that you will continue to keep?

Q7. Please provide a breakdown of your Planning and Development department staff roles and FTE count.

Peer Analysis: Oro-Medonte

The Township's land size is several factors larger than its peer group

This can contribute to work volume, however minimal as the amount of field work for Planning staff is fairly low.

- ▶ When comparing land size to FTE ratio, the Township ranks highest amongst the peer group.

As per the table on the right, the Township is slightly below the median and average when comparing Planning FTEs

- ▶ From an expense perspective, the Township is the median, both from a percentage of total operating expense, as well as per capita. This is an indicator of the cost efficiency of the Township's Planning services.
- ▶ A major contributing factor to the effectiveness of the Department is the use of technology and customer self-service capabilities.

Metrics	OM*	Min	Max	Median	Average
General Information					
Households	11,530	7,375	14,275	11,153	10,519
Population	21,035	16,894	34,242	30,225	26,705
Land Size (km ²)	587.08	15.61	587.08	35.34	188.16
Population Density	35.83	35.54	1936.26	301.46	559.69
Planning FTEs	7.00	1.70	13.00	7.25	7.31
P&D Expenses (\$k)	\$1,071	\$236	\$2,936	\$1,355	\$1,579
Total Operating Expenses (\$k)	\$21,369	\$21,369	\$62,972	\$42,437	\$41,914
Ratios					
Land Size (km ²)/FTE	85	2	85	21	26
P&D Expenses as a % of Total Operating Expenses**	5.01%	0.37%	5.85%	5.01%	3.96%
P&D Expense/Capita	\$50.91	\$7.57	\$105.79	\$50.91	\$60.99

Peer Analysis: Insights

The following are insights from peer responses:



Peers provide greater details regarding the process online on their websites

Some of the peers provide digital pamphlets for each application type that provides details regarding the process. The details include information such as key process steps, average timelines and durations, fees and charges, stakeholders involved, submission checklist, as well as any key factors to consider (e.g. external parties involved). Such information is accessible on their websites and is at the forefront, making the search easy for the customer. In addition, some use graphics to make illustrations easier to read and interpret.



Peers delegate authority to management and staff to approve a wider variety of applications

While Oro-Medonte delegates the approval authority of some applications to its management and staff, the Township's peers delegate a greater variety of applications compared to Oro-Medonte. Notably, the peers delegate applications including site plan approval applications, minor variance agreements, consent agreements, and deeming applications complete for official plan, zoning bylaw and plans of sub-division/condominium, municipal sub-division agreements, and part-lot control exemption, model home, and assumptions bylaw.



The Township's peers provide greater self-service capabilities to customers

Similar to Oro-Medonte, many of the peers provide digital capabilities such as online application submissions. However, while Oro-Medonte offers PDF forms online, they are non-fillable. Contrary, the Township's peers offer online fillable PDF forms, therefore reducing the re-work involved with transcribing information. In addition, peers – similar to Oro-Medonte – offer videoconferencing capabilities for consultations. Some of the peers have plans to expand their self-service capabilities to include digital payments and tracking application status (via GIS mapping), to allow for seamless digital service delivery and greater self-service. Furthermore, GIS mapping can be utilized to make development/service ready land readily accessible to the public.



The P&D Approvals process is not widely documented and defined

Similar to Oro-Medonte, the Township's peers do not have their internal P&D Approval's process defined, documented and formalized. That said, some of the peers have plans to formalize their process in the future.



/ APPENDIX

Appendix A

Peer Study – Summary of Peer Characteristics (1/2)

Characteristic	Peers							
	Oro-Medonte*	Collingwood	King Township	Midland	New Tecumseh	Orangeville	Orillia	Spring Water
Households	11530	7375	8736	7375	13191	11153	14275	7796
Population	21035	23789	24512	16894	34242	30225	31128	19059
Land Size (km ²)	587.08	33.78	333.25	35.34	274.21	15.61	28.58	536.23
Pop. Density	35.83	704.23	73.55	478.04	124.88	1936.26	1089.15	35.54
P&D FTEs	7.00	8.00	10.25	1.70	7.25	4.00	13.00	6.50
P&D Expenses (\$k)	\$1,071	\$2,517	\$2,284	\$658	\$2,936	\$1,355	\$236	\$675
Total Operating Expenses (\$k)	\$21,369	\$49,451	\$39,200	\$27,785	\$50,185	\$42,437	\$62,972	\$18,285
Land Size (km ²)/FTE	84	4	33	21	38	4	2	82
P&D Expense as a % of Total Operating Expenses**	5.0%	5.1%	5.8%	2.4%	5.8%	3.2%	0.4%	3.7%
P&D Expense/Capita	\$50.91	\$105.79	\$93.16	\$38.96	\$85.74	\$44.82	\$7.57	\$35.40

Source: FIR 2019, *2018

**Applications/Planner – (all Planners, excluding Management and Admin.)

**Operating Expense is after adjustments and excludes amortization

Appendix A

Peer Study – Summary of Peer Characteristics (2/2)

Characteristic	Peers							
	Oro-Medonte*	Collingwood	King Township	Midland	New Tecumseh	Orangeville	Orillia	Spring Water
Total Planning FTEs	7.00			3.00	8.00	3.50	5.00	
Director/GM	1.00			1.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	Not Available –
Manager	1.00	Not Available – Did not participate in peer study		1.00	2.00	1.00	0.00	Did not participate in peer study
Sr. Planner	1.00			1.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	
Planner	3.00			0.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	
Admin/Assistant	1.00			0.00	1.00	0.50	1.00	
FIR Planning FTEs	7.00	8.00	10.25	1.70	7.25	4.00	13.00	6.50

Source:

FTE data is from a peer questionnaire (October 2020)

FIR FTEs data is from FIR 2019, *FIR 2018

Note: For FIR data, seasonal staff = .25 of an FTE, part-time = .5

Appendix B

Key Performance Indicators (1/2)

We have identified several Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that the Township may consider adopting

KPIs give management the ability to track and measure performance of the services it delivers to gain better insight on improvement opportunities and decision-making.

Phase	KPI	Rationale
General	Duration of application by type	▶ Planning can use the data to establish service expectations
	Customer satisfaction survey	▶ Insights into areas of improvements, strengths and weaknesses
	Percentage of process activities supported by automation	▶ Indication of process efficiency
	Number of customer inquiries by channel (e.g. walk-in, email, phone)	▶ Insights into customer behaviour (preferred channel) and work volume
	Effort to complete an application	▶ The efficiency of the Planning department to deliver services
	Total cost for Planning per Capita	▶ Measure the cost effectiveness of Planning services
Pre Application Consultation	Conversion of PAC (optional) to applications	▶ Measure the effectiveness of PAC
Application Submission	Percentage of incomplete application at initial submission	▶ Measure the impact of Township's self-service capabilities
	Number of re-submissions per application	▶ Ability to gain insights into reasons for re-submissions
	Percentage of applications that require Conservation Authority (CA) involvement	▶ To better manage service expectations (customers) ▶ Use as an input into renegotiations with CA
Application Review	Duration of CA review	
	Duration of internal technical reviews	▶ To better manage service expectations (customers)

Appendix B

Key Performance Indicators (2/2)

Phase	KPI	Rationale
Application Approval	Number of days between report completion and Council/Committee meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Insights to idle time for decision can help inform criteria for delegating authority
	Percentage of applications approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Measure the effectiveness of Planning services and support the Township provides to customers
	Percentage of applications involving LPAT/appealed decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Insights into reasons for appealed decision to identify mitigation strategies and build into the process where applicable▶ Indication of the Department's work volume regarding LPAT

Appendix C

System Selection and Implementation

Replacing a business system can take around a year to implement

There are many factors that can influence the timeline below we outline a few that we find contribute the most to the overall timeline:

- ▶ **Solution type (ERP suite versus stand-alone):** an ERP solution that provides functionality to many departments will require greater coordination and may delay the speed at which it can implement a replacement for the planning's departmental needs.
- ▶ **Resources:** Staff have day jobs, selecting and implementing a new system is not necessary a core competency. The Township may need to backfill resources and/or use external third-party expertise to manage the process and key aspects such as helping to define requirements, manage the procurement/selection phases and provide project management services for the implementation.
- ▶ **Customization:** the degree of customization of the software can also impact the overall timeline as the vendor will need to define the changes, make the changes and test it before it is ready for implementing.
- ▶ **Approach to data migration:** there are two options a) to migrate historical data to the new system. This can be time intensive and may cause data quality issues. Or b) to start fresh without any data migration and archive the previous systems data.

To the right we provide an overview of the common phases an organization will take to select and implement a new system.

System Selection and Implementation Approach	
Phase	Duration
Requirements	6-8 weeks
Procure	6-8 weeks
Select	8-12 weeks
Discover	8 weeks
Design	12 weeks
Implement	12-24 weeks

LEAN Principles

LEAN is an approach to process improvement that focuses on three areas: waste, flow and automation

- ▶ Automation identifies tasks that computers could perform, typically these are information processing tasks that do not require judgement and they are governed by a set of clearly defined business rules.
- ▶ Flow is the smooth movement of a work product through a process. Times when work cannot flow, by design or process failures, will indicate opportunities to improve the process from the customer's perspective.
- ▶ Waste are activities that do not add value in the eyes of the customer. The chart below highlights the common types of waste that occur in a process.



Defects

Time spent doing something incorrectly, inspecting for errors or fixing error



Overproduction

Doing more than what is needed by the customer or doing it sooner than needed



Waiting

Waiting for the next process or work activity to occur



Unused Talent

Underutilizing staff talents, skills and knowledge



Transportation

Waste from unnecessary movement of the work product in a system



Inventory

Excess inventory cost through purchasing, storage, spoilage and wastage



Motion

Unnecessary movement of employees in the system

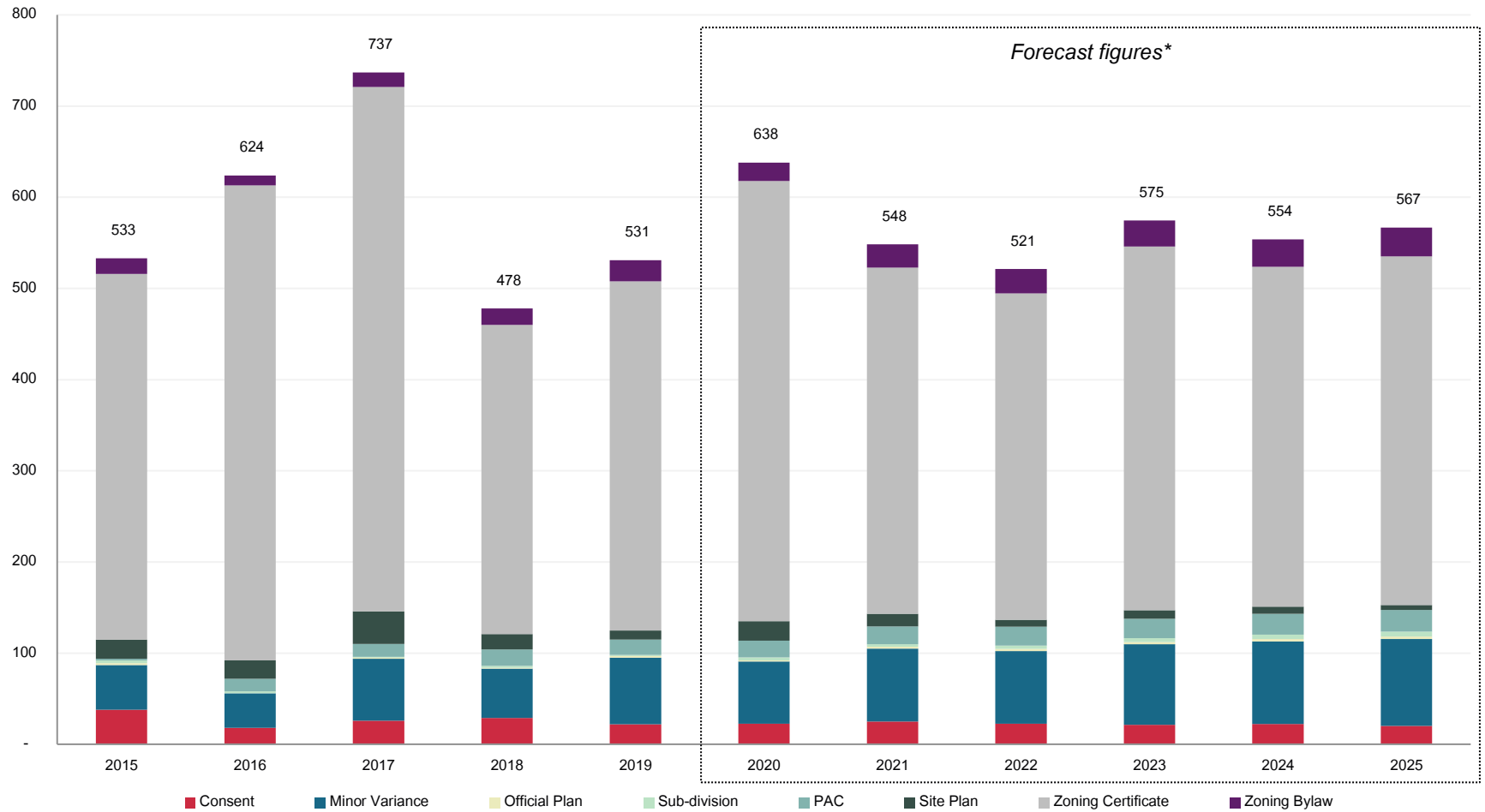


Excess Processing

Doing work that is not valued or helps in the process

Application Volume Forecast (1/2)

Application Volume (2015-2025)



*The rolling five-year linear forecast predicts the volume per application type and is therefore a different slope than the three percent historic average.

Appendix E

Application Volume Forecast (2/2)

Using historical data, we are able to provide the Township with a forecast of future total application volume

This forecast has a 95% confidence level.

