



PLANNING JUSTIFICATION REPORT TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE:

This document provides a guideline for the preparation of a Planning Justification Report for development applications submitted to the City of Richmond Hill Development Planning Division.

A Planning Justification Report provides an overview of the purpose and effect of an application, and establishes a professional planning rationale for the proposed development.

All reports shall follow the guidelines prescribed in this document unless report requirements are further scoped during the pre-submission meeting. Failure to adhere to the guidelines may result in a report being considered incomplete and returned to the applicant.

Unless an exemption is granted by the Commissioner of Planning and Building Services, a Planning Justification Report is required for the following applications:

- Official Plan Amendment
- Zoning By-law Amendment
- Draft Plan of Subdivision
- Draft Plan of Condominium (for condo conversion applications only)

The report must be signed by a Registered Professional Planner (RPP).

REQUIRED CONTENT:

The Planning Justification Report shall include:

1. Introduction

Every report must include an introduction which outlines:

- Who was retained to write the report
- Overview of the purpose of the report
- Whether a pre-consultation meeting occurred with the City and the date of the meeting
- Planning history including previous planning approvals associated with the site (previous variances, site plan agreements, site-specific by-laws, OLT decisions, etc.)
- Required approvals needed for the proposed development

2. Site and Area Context

The site and area context is intended to provide an overview of where the subject lands are located and the characteristics of the site and surrounding area. This section of the report shall contain the following:

- Description of the location, existing condition, and the existing land uses of the subject lands
- Include the legal description
- Description of the surrounding land uses

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- Identification of the constraints affecting the subject lands such as access restrictions, hazards, natural heritage features, cultural heritage resources, etc.
- Identification of any lands on the site regulated by a Conservation Authority
- Identification of other development proposals affecting the surrounding area
- Maps and/or reference to appendices that help provide a context for the site and surrounding land uses, such as surveys, aerial photos, historic and current site photos, maps, etc.

3. Description of the Proposal

The section is intended to provide detailed information to describe the proposed development and the purpose of the application(s). This section of the report shall contain the following:

- Description of the proposed use(s) and proposed building(s), including items such as the building design and orientation, landscaping, streetscaping, access locations, pedestrian and vehicular circulation;
- Include major development statistics (i.e., height, density, parking, FSI, number of units and breakdown of unit types, gross floor area)
- Description of the development application(s) being applied for
- Include any drawings and/or tables that may assist to understand the proposal

4. Planning Policy Framework and Rationale

This section is a fundamental component of the report, as it is the basis for establishing why a proposal should be considered and approved. This section is intended to provide a professional land use planning rationale and opinion as to why the proposal is appropriate and desirable, and how it addresses the principles of “good planning”. This section of the report shall contain the following:

- A Planning Analysis that demonstrates how the proposal meets the intent of the relevant policy framework and how the proposal represents good planning with applicable land use planning policies including:
 - Relevant policies from Provincial legislation including:
 - Planning Act, Provincial Planning Statement, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan
 - Relevant Regional Official Plan designations and policies
 - Relevant existing and proposed Official Plan, Secondary Plan, Teritary Plan designations and policies
 - Existing and proposed Zoning By-law analysis
 - If applicable, Council adopted guidelines and/or studies
- An Affordable Housing Analysis that includes information on affordability, tenure type, number of units by bedroom type, proposed prices / rents, phasing strategy, and planning rationale. This analysis will only be required for development applications proposing mid-rise and high-rise developments.

5. Supporting Documents

Provide an overview of the supporting studies submitted for the application (i.e. traffic studies, urban design briefs) and any key findings which support the rationale for approving the application(s).

6. Summary and Conclusion

This section of the Report will provide a summary and concluding remarks outlining:

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- The purpose and effect of the application(s), including why the requested amendment or approvals(s) are necessary
- A summary of the key relevant plans and policies and how they are being addressed
- A summary of the key merits of the application, and
- Final recommendations

7. 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 the 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