



# Development Permit Development Review Process Guide (For major applications over 200 m<sup>2</sup>)

## ***What is the purpose of development review?***

The purpose of the Development Review Process is to ensure the public interest is best served in the planning and design of new development and redevelopment in accordance with the provisions of Part 26 of the Local Government Act. The City's Official Community Plan establishes six Development Permit Areas. A fully engaged process as outlined in this document has been shown to serve the private interest as well, resulting in more successful projects than would be accomplished without a public review process.<sup>1</sup>

## ***What is generally involved?***

Development review is an iterative process of preliminary design, review, revision, review, revision, and ultimately a final design. Good planning and design is a multi-dimensional process that is best served by professional preparation and review. Therefore, it is not simply a matter of fully completing an application and achieving a high score on the required checklists. A high score or apparent substantial compliance may miss or diverge from critical elements of design.

## ***How long will the process take?***

Expect the process to last between two and five months from the date of a complete application<sup>2</sup> to final approval. The length of time will depend on the level of the proposal's complexity, degree of Development Permit Area guideline compliance, consultant response times, and city staff workloads.

## ***What are the specific process steps and how long do they take? (Please also refer to a visual flow chart on the fourth page)***

1. Set up a ***pre-application meeting*** with staff. Be prepared with preliminary, dimensioned drawings of your proposal, including both building and site plan.
2. ***Application intake and completion review.*** This step involves a review of application completeness. Expect up to one week. The application package must include the following completed documents:
  1. Development Permit Application
  2. Development Permit Application Checklist
  3. Development Permit Objectives & Guidelines Checklist (unique checklist for every Development Permit Area)
  4. Plan drawings and supporting documentation and reports

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<sup>1</sup> See "The Development Review Process: A Means to a Noble and Greater End." By James van Hemert, MA, MCIP, AICP, in the January 2005 issue of *Zoning Practice*, published by the American Planning Association.) Available on the City of Duncan website: [www.duncan.ca](http://www.duncan.ca)

<sup>2</sup> An application is considered complete when all required application materials have been reviewed and deemed to be complete by City staff as attested by a signature and date on the application form.

3. **Initial review.** Staff “red flags” any major substantive issues and determines which community groups and agencies and city departments should receive a referral. Expect one to two weeks.
4. **Referral period.** Expect three weeks.
5. The **first full review letter** is provided to the applicant within one to two weeks of the end of the referral period.
6. A **written response and redesign from the applicant** should be provided within one to two weeks and should specifically indicate in writing how each point in the first review letter is being addressed. Design changes should be clearly indicated on the applicable plan drawings. At this point a professional estimate of all landscaping and related costs, both on and off site (when applicable), must be provided.
7. If necessary, the City will provide a **second review and written response** within one to two weeks.
8. A **meeting is scheduled to resolve any outstanding issues.** This may involve another week of time, depending on scheduling availability.
9. When **staff determines that no significant outstanding issues remain**, the proposal is placed on the soonest available Committee of the Whole agenda. The Committee meets once monthly, generally on the first Tuesday. Depending on the date, this may require a wait of one three weeks.
10. A staff report in the form of a “Request for Decision” is prepared and submitted to the **Committee of the Whole**. This report will include a recommendation, proposed conditions of approval (if necessary), a summary of the proposal, and several other standard topics related to relevant bylaws, benefits, disadvantages, of options. Applicants are encouraged to attend this meeting. A formal presentation is not required of the applicant; however, in some cases it may be advisable.
11. If not tabled, the application moves forward to **Council** for its consideration. Generally this meeting occurs two weeks later.
12. If approved, a **Development Permit is generally issued** within the following week, provided all conditions are met.

### ***Tips for design success and efficient review time***

1. Thoroughly review Development Permit Area objectives, policies and guidelines of the Official Community Plan.
2. Engage a professional design team.
3. Prepare a complete, professional application.
4. The initial design should be "tentative" and flexible, open to change. It should not be the final concept.
5. Respond to review comments quickly and in a professional manner in written form.
6. In the preparation of plan revisions specifically identify changes made in all plan drawings.
7. Meet with staff prior to submittal to discuss application requirements, process and critical design elements.
8. Be aware that this is a process of discovery and it is not possible to identify all issues at the beginning of the process. Expect new information to inform changes to the plan.
9. Identify one primary contact person who tracks the process and anticipates the next steps.

***Actions which may delay or complicate the process***

1. Beginning the process with a "final" pre-conceived idea of the project.
2. Lobbying Council members separately during the review process.
3. Prepare incomplete and difficult to read applications.
4. Slow response time to staff comments.
5. Missing deadlines.

# Flow Chart

