

# Municipality of Lakeshore – Report to Council

## Growth and Sustainability

### Planning Services



**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Ryan Donally, Chief Growth Officer  
**Date:** September 12, 2024  
**Subject:** Planning Division File Status Update

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### Recommendation

This report is presented at the October 1, 2024 Council meeting, for information only.

### Strategic Objectives

3b) Modernizing and Enhancing Municipal Functions - Revise business processes to establish and employ a risk management framework, improved workflow management, and financial modelling to inform management of reserves

### Background

This report is to provide a summary of all Planning Act applications received and processed from January 1, 2021, to September 15, 2024.

The following applications are included as part of this review:

- Pre-consultation (PCN)
- Site Plan Control Application (SPC)
- Temporary Patio (SPC-Temp Patio)
- Zoning By-Law Amendment Application (ZBA)
- Part Lot Control Application (PLC)
- Condominium Application (C-A)
- Subdivision Application (S-A)
- Minor Variance Application
- Consent Application

## Planning Application Overview

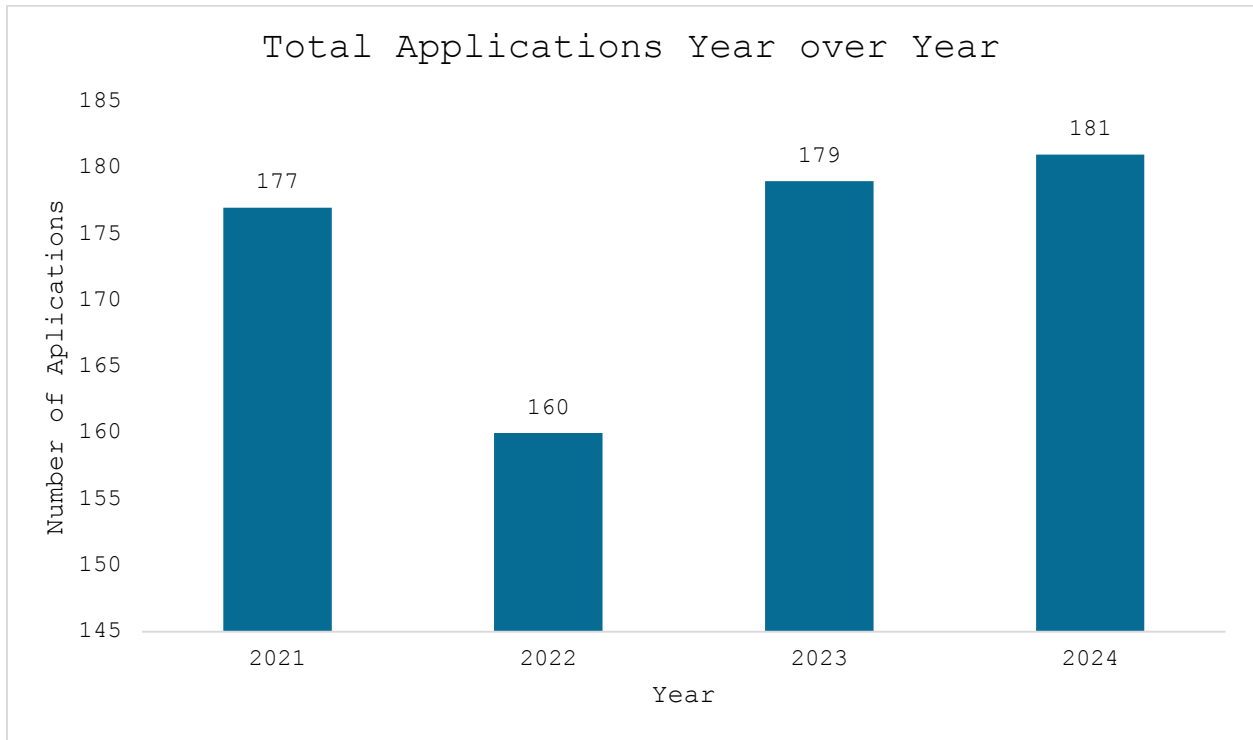


Figure 1: Total applications received to date by year.

Figure 2 illustrates the total number of applications received to date from January 2021 to September 2024. The number of applications received this year already exceeds the total number of applications from the previous three years. If current application trends continue, the total applications for 2024 projects to over 225. Further, additional application may be encouraged through the finalization of the Water and Wastewater Master Plan.

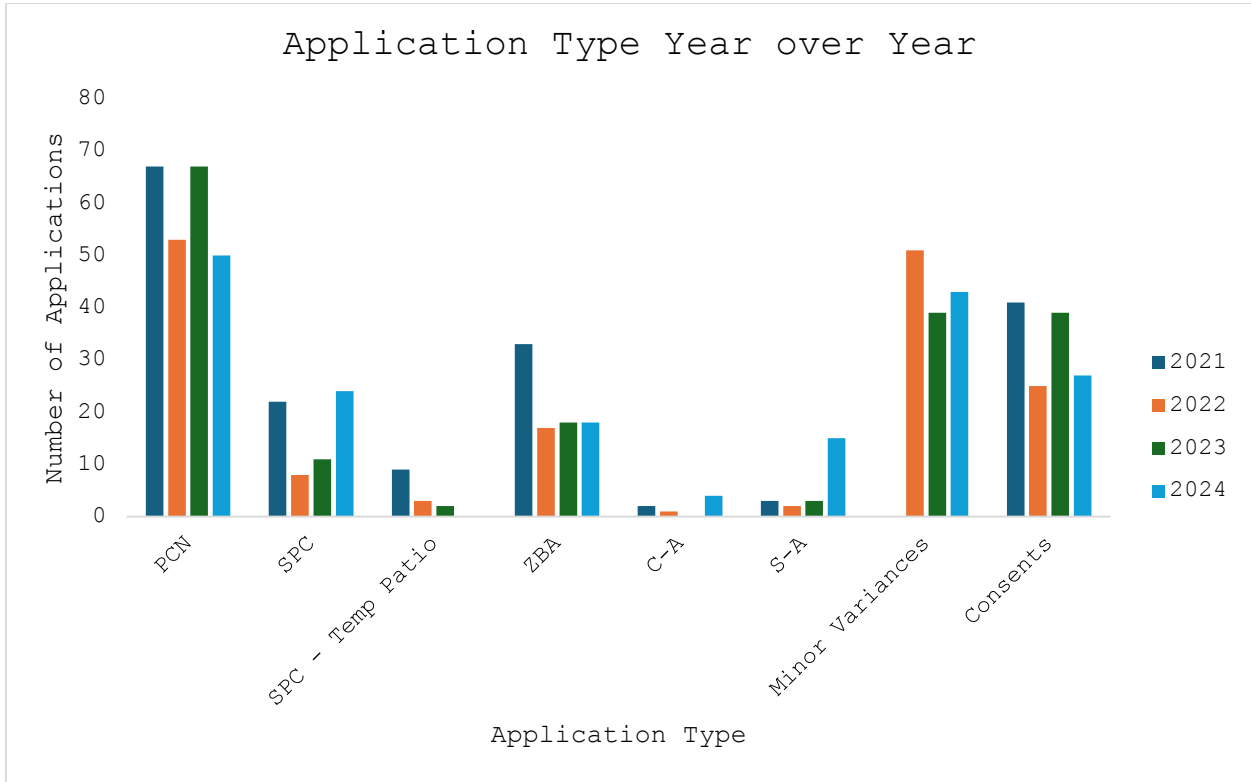


Figure 2: Number of each application type received to date by year.

Figure 2 demonstrates the total number of various types of applications that were received since January 1, 2021 up until September 15, 2024. It is to be noted that some Site Plan applications have been carried over from 2023 into 2024 due to staff turnaround and in an effort to clear the back log.

Of note, there is a significant number of subdivision applications that have been made in 2024. Administration believes that this is caused by the availability (or near availability) of sanitary conveyance capacity being unlocked to the various sites and two, the shifting external macro-economic trends related to interest rates and housing stock.

### Planning Stabilization Team

In Q1, 2024, the CAO formed a “Planning Stabilization Team” with the mandate of improving the planning application process, process mapping, and overall file management for the Community Planning Division. The three-person team consisted of the Division Lead of Planning (acting), a Financial Analyst and an Administrative Assistant. One of the main project deliverables was to bring the entire planning application process online through the Cloud Permit software. The project team completed its work in April of 2024 and the members returned to their home departments. This work generally ran in parallel to the Service Delivery Review project

conducted by Strategy Corp. Implementation of recommendations from that report will continue to be integrated into the development process.

Cloudpermit:

Cloudpermit has made file management and tracking easier as the progress is shared across the department, which further helps with accountability. Moreover, it is easier to request comments from internal departments and has allowed for efficient service delivery to applicants. The transparency and ability to self-upload files has been received positively by the development community.

From a challenge perspective, the learning curve to adapt to a new software is more challenging to the average resident who is looking for a minor planning application. This occasionally leads to planning staff walking the resident through the process over the phone, by email, or at the in-person workstation at Town Hall.

Additional challenges of the program include the requirement of repetitive workflow, occasional interruption of process management, and some limitations of service delivery. Currently, no external agencies utilize Cloudpermit. As a result, during the time of circulations for application review, staff must still use traditional email circulation. This can lead to version control issues of files and disruption of workflows.

In general, the adaptation by both staff and applicants has been relatively smooth. Staff is in regular contact with Cloudpermit to provide feedback for improved service.

Lakeshore's Building Division and Community Planning Division are both "live" with Cloudpermit. The Bylaw Division is in the process of onboarding to Cloudpermit.

## **Development Timelines**

The average timeline for any planning application can vary greatly depending on several internal and external factors. For the purpose of highlighting approximate timelines in this report, we will suggest that the quality of submissions by the application are of average to good quality and the applicant is responsive to required amendments.

### *Pre-consultation (PCN)*

- 2 to 3 weeks from first point of contact until meeting is held
- 2 to 4 weeks from meeting until Preconsultation notes are shared with the applicant.

It is extremely important for the applicant to understand that the Preconsultation is not an application. In multiple instances, applicants believe the application to be made as the Preconsultation meeting is held. The Preconsultation meeting is intended to highlight what work needs to be completed for the file to be deemed a complete application. The timeline from Preconsultation to actual application can vary widely and

is solely in the hands of the applicant to complete the required plans, studies, and the formal application.

Once all of the plans and studies have been completed and included in the application, the application can be deemed complete. The following timelines are based on when an application is deemed complete.

Of importance, a significant amount of time is added to the applications below through the “circulation” and “revision” process. For Site Plans, Zoning Amendments, Subdivisions and Condominiums, there is an average of 3-4 rounds of revisions (or circulations). This number can grow based on the applicant and their consultant’s attention to detail, and willingness to address the issues highlighted. Each circulation takes approximately 5-6 weeks. Traditionally, after the first or second revision, the only remaining outstanding issues to address are based on engineering comments. In most instances, engineering comments are sent to a third-party for engineering review. Lakeshore has an agreement for three-week turnaround from these third-party firms.

The timelines below are approximate.

#### Site Plan Control Application (SPC)

- 6+ months
  - o Does not require Council approval

#### Temporary Patio (SPC-Temp Patio)

- 2 weeks
  - o All reviews are completed internally
  - o Does not require Council approval

#### Zoning By-Law Amendment Application (ZBA)

- 4 + months
  - o Requires Council approval

#### Part Lot Control Application (PLC)

- 2 months
  - o Requires Council and County of Essex approval

#### Condominium Application (C-A)

- 4+ months
  - o Requires Council and County of Essex approval

#### Subdivision Application (S-A)

- 6+ months (usually 1 year +)
  - o Requires Council and County of Essex approval

#### Minor Variance Application and Consent Application

- 3 to 4 months
  - o Requires Committee of Adjustment approval.

As the file is nearing the completed state, and when applicable, Administration and the applicant begin drawing-up and reviewing the various agreements and by-laws required to execute the completed application. Additionally, and when applicable, the Building Division begins review of the submitted drawings to best shorten the timeline for the entire development process.

### **Financial Impacts**

As this is a report for information, there are no direct financial impacts.

### **Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	Planning Division File Status Update.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Sep 20, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Prepared by Ryan Donally

Submitted by Tammie Ryall

Approved by the Corporate Leadership Team