

TITLE: PRINCIPAL PLANNER – DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING

DIVISION: DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE OF JOB:

Reporting to the Manager of Planning – Development Review, the Principal Planner will ensure compliance with the Ontario Planning Act. The Principal Planner will supervise, mentor and provide support to a team of professional staff with a core emphasis on the review of planning applications and also act in the role of Manager – Development Review in their absence. The planner will administer complex and advanced planning activities, including serving as project lead for complex development applications. The role is responsible for the delivery of planning, development review and related projects in accordance with Provincial Policy including The Planning Act, Provincial Planning Statement (PPS, 2024), Ontario Heritage Act, and other relevant legislation.

The Principal Planner provides senior level and advanced professional assistance to staff, external agencies, members of Council, landowners and consultants for the development industry, and the public in areas of development review expertise. This position will support the management of Planners (Intermediate, I and II), in recruitment, training and development, performance management, disciplinary action, and other human resource matters.

REPORTS TO: MANAGER OF PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:

Administration:

- Develops work programs, participating in the review and development of Departmental policies and procedures.
- Leads, supervises, administers, and coordinates development review activities in accordance with the strategic direction, goals and objectives, and policies of the organization under the direction of the Manager.
- Prepares and reviews recommendations from staff of current trends in the planning, legislation, practice and techniques, evaluate their impact on the Municipality and oversee the implementation of improvements, as required.
- Ensures municipal planning review processes are followed and customer service standards are being met when staff respond to residents, elected officials, developers, community groups, etc.

Human Resources, Management and Leadership:

- In the absence of the Manager, Planning - Development Review, the Principal Planner will perform duties on their behalf ensuring compliance with the Planning Act.
- Recruitment, training and development, performance management, disciplinary action, and other human resource matters relating to junior development review staff.
- Takes a leading role in implementing the overall strategy of the Development Division.
- Presents and provides overviews of planning files and projects to Council and other committees as required.

Financial Management:

- Assist with the drafting and monitoring of the Planning - Development Review annual budget.
- Determines, collects, and administers appropriate letters of credit, performance guarantees/securities and payments for the orderly development of lands within the Town during the negotiation and implementation of development agreements.
- Assists the Manager in practicing sound, practical management of financial resources for the Department, including the effective oversight and implementation of financial policies and procedures, monitoring, and reporting of expenditures.
- Works in collaboration, as part of the section's management team, in the preparation of sectional inputs into the development of annual capital and operating budgets and forecasts.

Technical Operations:

- Responsible for assisting the Manager in processing, reviewing and approving complex development applications under the Planning Act including Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, Committee of Adjustment, Subdivision Review, Site Plan Control, processing and monitoring of development and permit applications submitted pursuant to the Planning Act, and the assignment of relevant work to Planning Department staff and any supervision and guidance required therein.
- Support the Manager with the drafting of consent Agreements, Site Plan Agreements, Pre-servicing Agreements, Subdivision Agreements etc.
- Conduct site visits as required.
- Liaises with external legal counsel during agreement preparation and implementation and handling of confidential legal, financial and proprietary information.
- Responds to and provides direction to Development Review staff regarding public inquiries relating to development applications and general planning information.
- Prepares and attends the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT), other quasi-judicial tribunals, and Court Hearings as a witness on behalf of the Corporation if required.

Advice and Information:

- Maintains excellent public relations with the public and development community.
- Provides advice to and exchanges information with applicants, consultants, agencies, community groups and the public on planning and development review matters.
- Reviews and presents recommendations and planning opinions on complex development applications to the Manager, Director, Advisory Committees, Committee of Adjustment, Development Review Team, and Council.
- Provides support, training, mentorship and oversight to Development Review Planners in the Department on matters related to the services and functions of Development Review.
- Represents the Department/Municipality at a senior level by participating in discussions and negotiations with developers, consultants, agencies and the public; attending Committee and Council meetings to provide professional planning advice; and participating in inter and intra- departmental committees as well as external committees.
- Assigns, reviews, oversees and approves Committee of Adjustment files.
- Reviews and provides recommendations and planning opinions to the Manager of Planning – Long Range Planning on existing and proposed policy and legislative documents, including Provincial policies/regulations and local Official Plans.

Related Activities:

- Performs such other related duties as may be assigned by the Manager.
- Attends meetings of Cobourg Municipal Council, Town Committees including the Committee of Adjustment, and with external agencies as required.

SUPERVISION:

- Direct: 0
- Indirect: 2 (Development Review)

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE REQUIRED:

- University degree in Planning or similar discipline with a focus on land use, development and community planning required.
- Professional designation of Registered Professional Planner (RPP) is required.
- Working knowledge and experience with budgeting.
- Municipal planning experience is considered an asset. Heritage planning experience is considered an asset.
- Detailed knowledge and experience in land use planning, policy formulation & analysis, demographics, growth management, urban & landscape design, sustainability, cultural heritage, planning law, project & strategic management, and development industry best practices.
- Thorough knowledge of the Municipal Act, Planning Act, Provincial Plans & Policies.
- Knowledge of the Ontario Building Code Act and Ontario Building Code would be an asset.
- Knowledge and computer skills with Geographic Information Systems would be an asset.
- High level of critical and logical thinking to identify underlying principles, reasons, or facts.
- Maintains current knowledge of the OHSA.
- A minimum of four (4) years' professional and technical experience processing complex development applications.
- Mentorship/supervisory/management experience in municipal land use and development would be considered an asset.

TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS REQUIRED:

- Proven written/oral communication and conflict resolution skills with a strong customer service orientation to deal effectively and diplomatically with the public, staff, committees, stakeholders, and public officials.
- Possess leadership skills, is a team player and builds effective relationships with municipal Council, staff, stakeholders and the public.
- Ability to work effectively in partnership with all levels of internal and external stakeholders and in a fast-paced, complex and ever-changing environment.
- Excellent computer skills with Microsoft Office applications.
- Demonstrated commitment to personal and professional development by remaining current with new legislation, regulations, technology and organizational theory and practices relating to the Municipality.
- Ability to negotiate, influence, handle and resolve conflict.
- Works with a very high level of independence, prioritizing own work, identifying new initiatives/opportunities, improving divisional effectiveness.
- Ability to supervise, delegate, and assign files suitable to the time, skills and potential of direct reports.
- Extremely well organized with the ability to effectively manage multiple initiatives and projects at one time.
- Ability to solve complex abstract problems requiring independent judgment, strategic thinking and innovative solutions.
- Class G driver's license and access to a vehicle for work.

WORKING CONDITIONS:



Position Description

Principal Planner

- Hours of work shall be 35 hours a week and may be scheduled between 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday. Attendance at meetings after normal working hours is required. This position is eligible for hybrid work arrangements in accordance with the Town of Cobourg's approved Hybrid Work Policy and subject to approval by the Director of Development.
- Physical activities normally do not produce fatigue. Sitting, standing, regular movement with choice.
- Significant visual demands involving writing and reading reports, reviewing plans, and use of computer.
- Ability to work evenings on short notice or as required.
- Frequent and ongoing exposure to political pressures, daily interruptions and employee relations issues.
- Often working under pressure with heavy workload and deadlines.
- Requirement to deal with difficult employee relations issues and other emotional situations.
- Carry an appropriate communications device to respond to corporate emergencies and departmental situations in a timely manner.
- Required to interact with developers, consultants and members of the public in emotionally charged situations.

Chris Challenger

Feb 3rd 2026

Director Signature

Date

[Handwritten Signature]

Feb 9/2026

CAO Approval Signature

Date

Original: November 2023

Revised: September 2025