

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Planning and Economic Development
April 11, 2019

Report of the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner

2018 Development Activity Summary

1. Recommendation

This report be circulated to the Province for consideration as information related to the Housing Supply Action Plan and to the local municipalities.

2. Summary

Council has delegated approval authority to the Chief Planner and Director of Community Planning and Development Services to issue approvals for development applications subject to such approvals being reported to Council semi-annually. Planning and engineering development applications are set out in Attachment 1.

Key Points:

- In 2018, development activity was higher than the previous four years, with the Region responding to 1,194 development applications
- 12,775 residential units received conditional approval in 2018, which is the highest over the past four years
- In 2018, 5,731 residential units were cleared for registration, which is a slight decrease over the previous two years
- Over the past five years, the number of residential units that received conditional approval (50,841) has exceeded the number of residential units cleared for registration (30,692), which suggests a healthy supply of residential units are ready to be cleared for registration

3. Background

The authority to approve certain development applications is delegated to staff in Planning and Economic Development subject to such approvals being reported to Council semi-annually

This report outlines 2018 development review and approval activities and a comparison of the previous five years. It includes a summary of the following approvals:

- Local Official Plan Amendments (OPA) with no Regional issues – delegated
- Local OPAs that are exempt from Regional approval – delegated
- Issuance of conditions of approval for plans of subdivision and condominium
- Clearance of Regional conditions for plans of subdivision and condominium to permit registration
- Regional site plan and engineering approvals – delegated

Issuance of conditions of approval and clearance of Regional conditions for plans of subdivision and condominium are not delegated to staff for approval. The Region is a commenting agency to the local municipalities for draft plans of subdivision and condominium, consent to sever, zoning by-law amendment and minor variance applications.

4. Analysis

Development activity remained strong in 2018 with the Region responding to 1,194 development applications

In 2018, Regional staff responded to 1,194 development applications, as follows:

- 62 Official Plan Amendment (OPA) application approvals
- 103 plans of subdivision and condominium applications – responses and issuance of conditions of approval
- 69 plans of subdivision and condominium applications – clearance of residential units for registration
- 125 site plan application responses and approvals
- 63 engineering application responses and approvals
- 440 pre-submission consultation applications
- 175 consent to sever applications
- 84 zoning by-law amendment applications
- 73 minor variance applications

As shown in Table 1, the number of development applications responded to and approved has steadily increased reaching its highest 2018, as compared with the previous four years. The increased number of subdivision, condominium and site plan applications and engineering plans being reviewed and receiving approval is a key indicator of strong development activity.

Table 1
Number of Regional Applications Responded to and Approved Per Year by Type from 2014 to 2019

| Application Type (Responded to/Approved) | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Official Plan Amendment | 28 | 32 | 35 | 40 | 62 |
| Subdivision/Condominium – Responded to/Conditional Approval | 89 | 91 | 101 | 67 | 103 |
| Subdivision/Condominium – Clearance for Registration | 43 | 49 | 70 | 60 | 69 |
| Site Plan | 95 | 66 | 44 | 70 | 125 |
| Engineering | 48 | 60 | 67 | 46 | 63 |
| Total | 303 | 298 | 317 | 283 | 422 |

A breakdown of development applications by municipality and application type is provided in Attachment 1.

YorkTrax has improved staff’s ability to track responses provided on all development applications

With launch of the YorkTrax development tracking system in November 2017, Regional staff are able to track responses provided to municipalities on all applications. Tracking now includes pre-submission consultations, consent to sever, zoning by-law amendments and minor variances. Future development activity reports will provide trends and analysis on these applications as more data is collected.

Development Activity is anticipated to remain strong in 2019

Key stages in the planning approval process identified in Table 2 are an indication of development trends. Regional policy implementation, development approvals and construction are three general stages that provide an outlook for development. Overall,

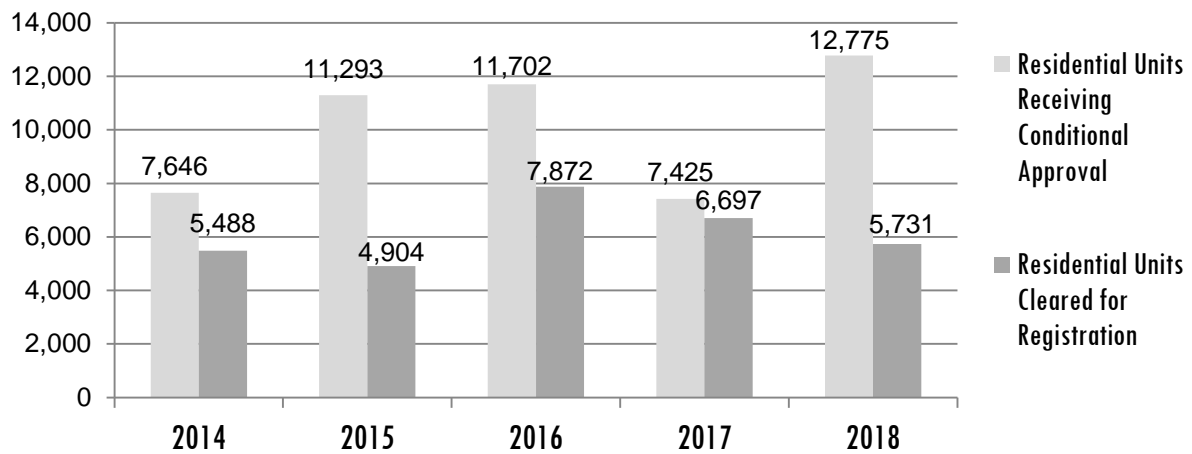
development continues to remain strong and growth is anticipated to remain strong in 2019 as a high number of subdivision and condominium applications received conditional approval in 2018.

Table 2
Development Trends by Planning Stage

| Planning Stage | Application Type | Development Trends |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Regional Policy | Official Plan Amendment | While the number of OPA applications does indicate development activity, they are not indicative of development trends. OPAs are required for applications that do not conform with existing Official Plan policies. Just under half of the OPAs reviewed in 2018 relate to changes to building height, density, built form and urban design. |
| Development Approvals | Draft Plan of Subdivision and Condominium – Commented/ Conditional Approval | Since 2014, the annual number of applications for which the Region provided comments and conditional approval for subdivision and condominium applications has gradually increased from 89 to 103 in 2018. This increase together with a consistent range of residential units receiving conditional approval over the five year period (7,425 to 12,775 units as shown on Figure 1 below) demonstrates that development activity continues to remain strong. |
| Construction | Site Plan, Engineering and Clearance of Subdivision and Condominium Conditions for Registration | <p>The number of site plan and engineering approvals combined reached its highest in 2018 (188) as compared with the previous four years and is tied to the approvals required for applications to proceed to clearance for registration. Subdivision and condominium clearances also reached its highest in 2018 as compared with the previous four years, with 69 applications.</p> <p>The number of applications proceeding to construction is generally tied to the number of applications receiving conditional approval. Given the number of applications receiving conditional approval reached a high of 103 in 2018, the Region will continue to experience strong growth as these applications proceed to construction.</p> |

Figure 1

Residential Units Receiving Conditional Approval and Clearance for Registration from 2014 to 2018



A number of draft approved subdivisions are ready to move forward to registration

As shown on Figure 1, the number of residential applications commented on and units receiving conditional approval (50,841) exceeded the number of residential units cleared for registration (30,692) over the past five years. This suggests a healthy supply of residential units ready to be cleared for registration. Development applications awaiting servicing infrastructure will be subject to a servicing capacity report that will be considered by council in September 2019.

Regional staff participate on advisory committees and working groups for the planning of new development areas

Planning and Economic Development staff actively participate in a number of Regional and Local Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) and Project Working Groups. This includes urban expansion areas, new Secondary Plans and Key Development Areas. Input to these committees and working groups is important to ensure Regional interests are identified early in the planning process. The quick facts section for each municipality in Attachment 1 provides a list of committees and working groups in which staff were engaged in 2018.

5. Financial

Revenue from planning and engineering application fees increased

Fees are collected in accordance with Regional Bylaw No. 2010-15, as amended, for land use planning approvals and the plan review function. As shown in Table 3 below, Regional planning and engineering application fees collected in 2018 increased. Revenue from

combined planning and engineering application fees have been trending upwards over the past five years. The increased fee revenue in 2018 is a result of the increased number of applications received and complexity of applications.

Table 3
Fee Revenue for Development Planning and Engineering from 2014 to 2018

| Section | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Development Planning | \$371,915 | \$310,611 | \$730,910 | \$607,623 | \$787,090 |
| Development Engineering | \$978,272 | \$1,306,330 | \$2,039,194 | \$3,425,846 | \$3,712,141 |
| Total | \$1,350,187 | \$1,616,941 | \$2,770,104 | \$4,033,469 | \$4,499,231 |

Development Charges revenue of \$431,906,331 represents a 15% increase from 2017

Development Charges are collected through approval of development to pay for development related infrastructure and services. In 2018, \$431,906,331 in development charges were collected. This is an increase of 15% over 2017 (\$376,736,640). The increase is partially attributed to units registered prior to the residential development charges rate increase in June 2018. Table 4 below outlines Development Charges collected from 2014 to 2018.

Table 4
Development Charges Collected from 2014 to 2018

| 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| \$264,197,066 | \$258,274,065 | \$338,547,685 | \$376,736,640 | \$431,906,331 |

6. Local Impact

Regional staff work closely with local municipal staff in a timely manner on development applications and approvals ensuring Regional and local policy objectives are met and approvals are met within the timelines prescribed by the Planning Act.

7. Conclusion

This report provides a summary of development applications responded to and approved by Regional staff in 2018 and highlights trends over the past five years. Overall, development activity reached its highest in 2018, as compared with the previous four years, with the Region responding to 1,194 development applications. Development applications reviewed by staff were predominately residential related. Trends indicate that development and growth in the Region continues to remain strong.

The number of residential development applications commented on and residential units that received conditional approval (50,841) continued to exceed the number of residential units cleared for registration (30,692). This difference suggests a healthy supply of residential units are ready to proceed to clearance for registration.

Regional staff will continue to work closely with local municipal partners to achieve Regional and local policy objectives. In addition, Regional staff ensures approvals are met within the timelines prescribed by the Planning Act.

For more information on this report, please contact Justin Wong, Planner at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71577. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by: **Paul Freeman, MCIP, RPP**
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Commissioner of Corporate Services

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Chief Administrative Officer

March 29, 2019
Attachments (1)
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