

# Development Permit Application Guide



Photo by New Harvest Media

## This handout provides information on the process and requirements for obtaining a Development Permit.

The City of Dawson Creek's Official Community Plan (OCP) designates "Development Permit Areas" in Dawson Creek for one or more of the following purposes:

- protecting the natural environment;
- protecting development from hazardous conditions;
- establishing objectives for the form and character of commercial, intensive residential, and multifamily development.

For each of the Development Permit Areas, the OCP also provides Development Permit Guidelines which are used in reviewing individual development permit applications.

## When is a Development Permit Required?

A Development Permit is required for land within the designated Development Permit Area prior to:

- constructing, adding to, or altering a building or structure;
- altering land within an area designated for protection of the natural environment or protection of development from hazardous conditions

Refer to the Official Community Plan for Development Permit Areas.

## Application Submission

Complete a Development Permit Application Form and submit the information outlined on the checklist. Check with staff as to what information listed on the checklist is required. All information requested in the checklist must be provided in a timely manner to ensure the application is referred to the appropriate City Departments and can be responded to in a suitable timeframe.

## Prior to Application

Development Permit applications should be well planned before submittal. The following steps are recommended prior to submitting an application:

**1. Official Community Plan – Development Permit Area Guidelines:** Review the City's Development Permit Guidelines. These can be accessed in Part 10 of the Official Community Plan.

**2. Official Community Plan – Land Use Designations:** Check the OCP land use maps for the designation of your property and the types of land uses allowed within the corresponding zone. The OCP also contains policies relating to the specific types of development.

**3. Zoning Bylaw and Maps:** Check the City's Zoning Bylaw and Zoning Maps to find the zoning designation and zoning requirements for your property. The existing zoning may not allow your proposed project. If this is the case, a rezoning application may also be required.

**4. Development Servicing:** All development must provide water, sanitary sewer and other services at the developer's costs. The servicing of roads, lanes and sidewalks adjacent to the land being developed is required for all development and must meet the requirements of the Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw.

Planning staff are available to meet with applicants and consultants, prior to application submittal, to discuss proposed development and provide advice on submission requirements and review procedures.

# Development Permit Review Process

## Process

**1. Assigned:** The application will be assigned to a Planner in the Development Services Department. The application will be reviewed by staff and all requested information must be received prior to processing the application.

**2. Acknowledgement Letter:** A Planner will send a letter to the applicant acknowledging receipt of the application and provide contact information.

**3. Referrals:** The Planner refers the application to appropriate City departments including but not limited to Building, Engineering and Fire Protection Services. The Planner may also refer the application to an external agency including the Provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, the Provincial Ministry of Environment, and Forestry, depending upon the location and significance of the proposed amendment application. Notifications regarding the application are sent to neighbouring residents.

**4. Referral Requirements:** If the Planner receives referral comments which require action, the applicant may be required to provide additional information. If any negative comments or concerns are received from the public, the application will be brought to Council for approval. The applicant will have an opportunity to address any comments or concerns from the public or agencies.

**5. Development Permit Preparation:** Once the plans meet all requirements as outlined, the Planner will recommend the General Manager of Development Services approve the permit. If required, the Planner prepares a report for Council with staff recommendations.

**6. Development Permit Issuance:** Upon approval, the Planner will forward the Development Permit to the applicant for signature. The permit will state the amount of time it is valid for. Development Permit Security will be collected (if applicable) prior to the City signing the permit and sending the final copy to the applicant.

## Fees

The fee for a Development Permit can be found in the Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 3932.



## Concurrent Applications

For rezoning and subdivision applications processed concurrently, the same Development Permit process applies. However, a Development Permit cannot be authorized until the rezoning has been given final approval.

## Timeframe

The time required to process a development permit depends on a number of factors, including:

- If a rezoning, subdivision, and/or development variance permit application is also required,
- Completeness of the application,
- Complexity of issues and the time required to address said issues,
- Ability of applicant to provide information and address requirements in a timely manner.

Simple applications that are complete and correct may take only 4 to 6 weeks. More complex applications will take longer to complete.

## Security

A security (based on a percentage of the estimated construction value) is required prior to Development Permit authorization to ensure the development is completed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Development Permit. When the landscaping and site development is complete, the applicant must request an inspection by the City Planner to obtain a refund.

## Development Cost Charges

Anyone who obtains approval for a Subdivision or Building Permit must pay Development Cost Charges (DCCs) to the City which are paid either at the time of approval of the subdivision or at time of Building Permit issuance. As part of the Development Variance Permit review, the Planner will provide the applicant with an estimate of the City's DCCs that will be required prior to Building Permit issuance.

## Building Permit

Following the approval of a Development Permit, a Building Permit application must be submitted, in accordance with the Development Permit plans. Any request for a change to the approved design of the building or landscaping must be brought to the attention of the Planner and may require submission of an application to amend the Development Permit.

## Legal Costs

Restrictive covenants, statutory rights-of-way or other legal agreements and documents may be required. It is the applicant's responsibility to have these documents prepared for the City's review.

## Signage

Anyone intending to place a sign on the exterior of any building or structure or on any property in the City must make an application and obtain approval from the Building Department for a Sign Permit prior to installation. This requirement applies to both permanent and portable signs. (Applications for Sign Permits are reviewed for compliance with the City's Sign Bylaw.)

## Who is the Development Services Team?

The City's Development Services Team includes representatives from the following departments: Planning, Building, Engineering and Fire Protection Services.



Photo by New Harvest Media

## Talk with your Neighbours

Consultation with neighbours, local residents and others who may be affected by the proposed rezoning is strongly encouraged prior to and throughout the application review process. Obtaining neighbour input early better enables an applicant to address any concerns and/or modify their application before investing a lot of time in the review process.

## Tips on Development Permit Applications

A complete and acceptable application for a Development Permit:

- responds well to the Development Permit Guidelines;
- complies with the regulations of the Zoning Bylaw with accurate calculations on plans;
- is designed to fit the context of the site;
- has coordinated landscape plans, building plans and development servicing plans;
- addresses any high water table, flood plain, watercourse and/or other site constraints;
- includes the rationale and impact assessment of each requested variance (if any variances are requested); and
- provides all information requested in the application form and application checklist.

## Questions?

### Development Permit Applications

- Planning 250-784-3601

### Site Servicing, Street Works or Utility Construction

- Engineering 250-784-3621

### Transportation

- Planning 250-784-3601

### Signage

- Building Department 250-784-3654

### Bylaws

- Bylaw Department 250-784-3657

*The City disclaims any liability arising from the use of this guide, since the information is provided only as a guide for public use and convenience. If any contradiction exists between this document and relevant City Bylaws, Codes, or Policies, the text of the Bylaws, Codes or Policies shall be the legal authority .*

