

Mayor's Task Force on Development

FRAMEWORK AND FOCAL POINTS

(As Identified on March 19, 2012 and Revised March 26, 2012)

Additional changes expected pending April 19, 2012 Feedback from the Task Force.

MANDATE AND ACTIONS

"The *Mayor's Task Force on Development* will focus on the issues and challenges presented throughout the development process within the City of Kingston, recognizing the requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement and provincial legislation under the Planning Act, Heritage Act and Building Code Act and other relevant regulations. They will take a critical look at the current policies and practices of the departments that affect the way businesses, residents and developers move through the system."

"The *Task Force* shall:

- Identify the main issues and concerns to be addressed throughout its term.
- Review the planning and development policies and processes within the City of Kingston from the point of initial application through to occupancy.
- Identify Best Practices in planning and development policies and processes by reviewing five comparable Ontario municipalities; to include the role and appropriateness of outside agencies.
- Prepare a comprehensive report with recommendations to Council on policy and process changes Kingston needs to make to adopt Best Practices.
- Identify best methods for outside agencies to facilitate timely responses and enhance customer service (CRCA, Health Unit, provincial and federal agencies, etc)."

AN OPEN FOR BUSINESS CULTURE

The Task Force is committed to establish conditions to enable an open for business culture that supports responsible, high quality development resulting in a resilient community that people want to live in and enjoy a high quality of life.

Safeguarding the public's interest is a key component to this, as is the protection of Kingston's heritage and natural resources, but without constraining a positive and energizing climate for business development. Ultimately, the Task Force is committed to enhancing the quality of life for community members through responsible and simplified economic policies and practices.

In short, an open for business culture means that the City of Kingston will create streamlined, efficient and coordinated development processes and government services that facilitate responsible economic growth while protecting the public interest. It does not mean saying "Yes" to everything that a proponent may request, nor does it mean saying "No" without appropriate rationale and explanations. A solutions-oriented culture will be a key to success.

OVERARCHING GUIDELINES AND PARAMETERS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

In order to guide their process, the Task Force has identified a number of key areas on which to focus their work and recommendations going forward. At the heart of these focal points, the Task Force has agreed that the following guidelines and parameters are integral to the City's development review process:

1. **Time is Money:** Inefficiencies in the process and any resulting delays represent additional costs (time and money), both to the applicant and to the departments/agencies involved in the process.
2. **Customer Service Focus:** The development review process must be open and transparent with a focus on excellent customer service and efficiency, from both a time and cost savings perspective.

3. ***A System that is Easy to Access and Navigate:*** Applicants and other stakeholders must have easy access to up-to-date and clearly articulated policies/guidelines, consistent rules/interpretations, and organized processes.
4. ***Guided by the Official Plan:*** The City's Official Plan, Zoning By-laws and guidelines must be up-to-date, consistent and aligned to all legislation, standards and regulations. The Official Plan must guide all development going forward.
5. ***Compliant with Legislation:*** All policies and processes need to be reviewed against current legislation to ensure compliance. This includes the following Provincial legislation:
 - The Provincial Policy Statement;
 - Ontario Planning Act;
 - Condominium Act;
 - Municipal Act;
 - Ontario Heritage Act;
 - Building Code Act;
 - Ontario Building Code;
 - Clean Water Act; and,
 - Source Protection Plan.

In addition there are various Provincial Guidelines, Federal legislation, such as the Fisheries Act and Navigable Waters Protection Act, and municipal legislation, such as the Official Plan, Zoning By-laws, Tree By-law, Site Alteration By-law, Delegation of Authority By-law, Site Plan Control By-law, etc.

THE TASK FORCE'S IDENTIFIED FOCAL POINTS

Within these broader guidelines, the Task Force has identified the following focal points for the development review process. Identification of these key areas will help to focus the research and best practice review to be undertaken by the consultant on behalf of the Task Force and assist in shaping the framework for the Final Report recommendations to Council.

The following are the initial identified focal points. The Task Force may revise this list and/or expand on the specific areas of review outlined under each focal point based on further consultations with or submissions from stakeholders in the development review process:

- Optimized Efficiency and Coordination;
- Accessible Information and Resources for Applicants;
- Streamlined Approach for Heritage Act Approvals;
- Solutions-Oriented Culture;
- Informed Roles and Responsibilities for Stakeholders;
- Collaborative Synergy with External Agencies;
- Committed, Well-trained and Experienced Staff;
- A Welcoming and Functional Development Hub;
- Computerized Tracking and Evaluation System; and,
- Ongoing and Inclusive Performance Measurement.

Optimized Efficiency and Coordination

The Task Force sets as a top focal point the need for the City of Kingston to facilitate a consistent, streamlined and timely development review process for applicants. From the point of initial application through to occupancy, the process must seamlessly coordinate the review of development applications through city departments (e.g. Planning & Development, Fire & Rescue, and Building & Licensing) and agencies external to the City (e.g. Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Health Unit, Provincial Ministries).

As part of the Task Force's review, all key steps in the development review process – from pre-application to post planning approval - need to be examined in the light of other municipal and provincial benchmarking in order to present recommendations that ensure a more responsive, timely and coordinated review process.

Specific areas of review and focus identified by the Task Force for this focal point include:

- Developing a planning application checklist to assist in achieving shorter timelines and complete applicant submissions;
- Ensuring completion of the pre-building permit checklist as early as possible;
- Establishing a pre-occupancy process meeting for building permits;
- Developing strategies for more consistent building inspections;
- Encouraging site visits by Planning Committee members;
- Ensuring timely conditional permit approvals and Pre-Servicing Agreements;
- Developing strategies and recommendations for better coordination between City departments and all internal stakeholders.

Accessible Information and Resources for Applicants

Another key focal point for the Task Force is ensuring that City staff communicates effectively and on a timely basis with applicants. As part of this, the tools and resources that applicants utilize throughout the development review process should be up to date, user friendly and accessible.

In addition to ongoing liaison with and support for applicants, the Task Force has identified the following focus areas:

- Providing clear online information about the development review process;
- Providing clear guidelines that set out the requirements for complete applications;
- Ensuring that accessible and easy-to-understand resources, forms, guidelines and applications are available both online and in hard copy.

Streamlined Approach for Heritage Act Approvals

Historically, the approach to heritage development in Kingston has been confusing. Kingston has a quality and quantity of heritage buildings and cultural resources that rivals any municipality in Canada. In order to protect significant heritage resources and encourage development that will enhance the quality of place, tourism benefits and civic pride, the approvals process for designated properties and heritage districts needs to be streamlined, have clearer requirements for applicants, become less onerous for applicants and make the best use of available local expertise in the preservation and adaptive re-use of heritage buildings.

The Task Force has identified the need to create a streamlined and responsive approach to heritage development in Kingston.

Areas of focus include:

- Establishing clearer policies and guidelines (e.g. checklist) for heritage applicants to help inform the process;
- Increasing information about and promotion of the heritage approvals process to applicants, relevant stakeholders, and community members;
- Increasing staff resources to support Heritage Act applications;
- Delegating additional approval authority to staff for routine and standardized applications to avoid unnecessary expense and delays;
- Establishing a heritage resource centre or hub that focuses on heritage preservation and development.

Solutions-Oriented Culture

Central to enhancing the development review process at the City of Kingston is the need for all relevant stakeholders to create a solutions-oriented culture. The Task Force has identified the need to create a culture of collaboration, creativity and flexibility in all City departments and related stakeholder agencies involved in the development review process.

Going forward, recommendations and strategies coming out of the Task Force process need to include:

- Promoting a working culture that encourages City staff to bring added value and a customer service excellence approach to the process;
- Promoting a culture of collaboration, creativity and flexibility to find solutions;
- Identifying strategies to ensure a more collaborative approach between staff and applicants (i.e. “not us versus them”);
- Ensuring a clear understanding and articulation of staff roles so that expectations are defined and transparent;
- Establishing protocols that enable front-line staff to make decisions and take ownership of their work with professional pride.

Informed Roles and Responsibilities for Stakeholders

All internal and external stakeholders need to understand their collective roles and responsibilities related to the broader development review process and how their actions (or inactions) may impact the overall timeliness and efficiency of the process. The Task Force identified the need to develop recommendations and strategies that will educate and inform all stakeholders in the process about their distinct roles and responsibilities in making it work. The effective integration of all the players into the process is a key to Kingston's success moving forward.

Specific actions to advance this focal point could be:

- Arranging joint educational sessions with the City and development community to enhance an understanding of each other's roles, processes, challenges, etc.;
- Continuing the bi-annual liaison meetings between the City, the Kingston Home Builders Association and the Kingston Construction Association, etc.;
- Developing education and outreach strategies for all stakeholders in the development review process to ensure that there is a clear shared vision for the process including expectations regarding response timelines, the need for consistency, the importance of pre-consultation meetings, etc.

Collaborative Synergy with External Agencies

The development review process regularly involves other external agencies in the approval process (e.g. Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Health Unit, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Culture, etc.). The Task Force has identified the need to increase collaboration and synergy with these external review agencies to ensure more timely and integrated responses to development applications.

Areas to examine related to this focal point include:

- Developing strategies to achieve compliance with response deadlines by external agencies;
- Investigating opportunities for the City to be delegated approval authority from external stakeholders;
- Working with the external agencies to ensure a mutual understanding of the development review process, roles in the process, timing expectations and applicant needs;
- Developing strategies to foster stronger relationships and ongoing collaboration with external review agencies.

Committed, Well-trained and Experienced Staff

At the heart of this focal point is the Task Force's commitment to ensuring that the City hires and supports the best, most experienced and qualified staff – from front-line to management positions - members to manage the development review process. Ensuring that the City Departments are fully resourced (staff, equipment, technology, accommodations) will contribute to achieving an efficient and functional process.

Specific actions to advance this focal point could be:

- Developing a 3-5 year staff resource plan and budget that provides sufficient human resources to all aspects of the City's development review process (e.g. urban design expertise);
- Providing sufficient budget allocation to accommodate ongoing training and staff development (including out-of-country) so that skills training and professional development is current and continual;
- Developing a program of regular evaluation of staff levels, workloads, and portfolios to ensure that all Departments are appropriately resourced;
- Investigating the possible secondment of City staff from other departments to the development review process, as appropriate.

A Welcoming and Functional Development Hub

Currently, the City's public customer service counter and its offices at John Counter Boulevard related to the development review process lack the necessary space, privacy and presence to foster customer service excellence. Applicants line up in cramped space and receive customer service support in a less than adequate physical environment (i.e. little or no privacy, inadequate meeting rooms, etc.).

The Task Force has identified as a focal point the need to create a physical development hub that is welcoming and functional and supports excellent customer service while creating a great impression for applicants and all stakeholders.

Areas to examine related to this focal point include:

- Creating a positive "one-stop" customer service experience while projecting the City of Kingston's brand and commitment to economic development;
- Providing a more welcoming and spacious reception and service counter space for applicants and front-line staff;

- Creating additional appropriately sized meeting rooms for increased privacy and problem solving among staff and various stakeholders;
- Improving staff's physical office environment for greater privacy, efficiency and productivity.

Computerized Tracking and Evaluation System

In order to create a transparent and coordinated process, the Task Force has identified information management and technology as an area for improvement and enhancement.

A technology review will need to be undertaken to support the development review process, with an eye to purpose, efficiency, coordination, and measurement. Key areas of focus include:

- Developing an easy to use and accessible tracking system that monitors where an applicant is at in the development review process, including external stakeholder approval processes;
- Developing technology that monitors the broader development review process and provides metrics and indicators to support ongoing evaluation by tracking overall timelines and identifying where there were delays in the process, and thereby highlighting areas for process enhancements.

The end result related to this priority is user friendly technology that staff and applicants can use to solve issues in the development review process as well streamline approvals and modernize service delivery and performance measurement.

Ongoing and Inclusive Performance Measurement

The need for a performance measurement process for the development review process has also been identified by the Task Force. An optimized performance measurement system will ultimately result in a streamlined process that can be regularly and consistently measured and adjusted for greater impact over time.

Key aspects include:

- Establishing clear metrics and indicators of success that can inform evaluation processes;
- Developing strategies and approaches that result in continual systems improvement;
- Obtaining regular feedback from all key stakeholders to ensure inclusive and diverse input and perspectives;
- Sending mandatory customer service surveys to applicants following the completion of their development review processes;
- Circulating annual surveys for internal staff to share ideas and generate solutions related to evaluation and continual improvement strategies for the process;
- Compiling and summarizing the results of evaluation and performance measurement processes that can be shared with stakeholders, applicants, the business community and broader community members.

As Kingston more effectively measures and benchmarks its development review process and results, it will be able to communicate and promote its efficiency and value to potential investors, business and community economic development proponents, and the media.

This will result in the creation of a true "open for business" culture as community members, stakeholders and investors begin to understand Kingston's increased commitment to creating a thriving local economy.

Mayor's Task Force on Development

INITIAL FRAMEWORK AND FOCAL POINTS

(As Identified on March 19, 2012 and Revised March 26, 2012)

***Change "priority" areas at the bottom of each page.

MANDATE AND ACTIONS

"The *Mayor's Task Force on Development* will focus on the issues and challenges presented throughout the development process within the City of Kingston, recognizing the requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement and provincial legislation under the Planning Act, Heritage Act and Building Code Act and other relevant regulations. They will take a critical look at the current policies and practices of the departments that affect the way businesses, residents and developers move through the system."

"The *Task Force* shall:

- Identify the main issues and concerns to be addressed throughout its term.
- Review the planning and development policies and processes within the City of Kingston from the point of initial application through to occupancy.
- Identify Best Practices in planning and development policies and processes by reviewing five comparable Ontario municipalities; to include the role and appropriateness of outside agencies.
- Prepare a comprehensive report with recommendations to Council on policy and process changes Kingston needs to make to adopt Best Practices.
- Identify best methods for outside agencies to facilitate timely responses and enhance customer service (CRCA, Health Unit, provincial and federal agencies, etc)."

ANTHE OPEN FOR BUSINESS CULTURE APPROACH

~~The Task Force is committed to establish conditions to enable an open for business culture that supports responsible, high quality development resulting in a resilient community that people want to live in and enjoy a high quality of life.~~

~~Safeguarding the public's interest is a key component to this, as is the protection of Kingston's heritage and natural resources, but without constraining a positive and energizing climate for business development. Ultimately, the Task Force is committed to enhancing the quality of life for community members through responsible and simplified economic policies and practices.~~

~~In short, an open for business culture means that the City of Kingston will create streamlined, efficient and coordinated development processes and government services that facilitate responsible economic growth while protecting the public interest. It does not mean saying “Yes” to everything that a proponent may request, nor does it mean saying “No” without appropriate rationale and explanations. A solutions oriented culture will be a key to success.~~

The Task Force is committed to establishing conditions that will result in responsible, high quality new development, protection of Kingston’s natural resources, and heritage development and preservation of a high standard, with a view to enhancing the quality of life for community members and visitors.

The “open for business” model, in the view of the Task Force, is an appropriate one for the City of Kingston at this time in its development. It offers responsible and simplified economic policies and practices. The “open for business” approach is based on creating streamlined, efficient and coordinated development processes and government services that facilitate responsible economic growth while protecting the public interest.

It does not mean saying “Yes” to everything a proponent may request, nor does it mean saying “No” without appropriate rationale and explanation. The “open for business” model can ensure protection of Kingston’s heritage and natural resources, while allowing for a positive and energizing climate for business development.

OVERARCHING GUIDELINES AND PARAMETERS FOR THE TASK FORCE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

~~In order to guide their process, the Task Force has identified a number of key areas on which to focus their work and recommendations going forward. At the heart of these focal points, The Task Force has agreed that~~ **It considers** the following guidelines and parameters are integral to the City’s development review process:

1. ~~**Time is Money.**~~ **Efficiency and Timeliness:** Inefficiencies in the process and any resulting delays represent additional costs ~~in~~(time and money), both to the applicant and to the departments/agencies involved in the process.

2. **Quality Customer Service Focus:** The development review process must be open, and transparent, and clearly and respectfully communicated. It must be seen to be fair. with a focus on excellent customer service and efficiency, from both a time and cost savings perspective.
3. **~~A System that is Easily Access and Navigate~~: Accessibility and Easy Navigation:** Applicants and other stakeholders must have easy access to up-to-date and clearly articulated policies/guidelines, consistent rules/interpretations, and organized processes.
4. **~~Guided by the~~The Official Plan:**All development must fall within the framework of the City's Official Plan. The City's Official Plan, Zoning By-laws and guidelines must be up-to-date, consistent and aligned to with all provincial policies, legislation, standards and regulations.. The Official Plan must guide all development going forward,
5. **~~Compliant with~~Relevant Federal and Provincial Statutes, Regulations and Policies:** All policies and processes need to be reviewed against current relevant federal and provincial statutes, regulations and policies to ensure compliance. This includes including the following Provincial legislation:
 - The Provincial Policy Statement;
 - Ontario Planning Act;
 - Condominium Act;
 - Municipal Act;
 - Ontario Heritage Act;
 - Building Code Act;
 - Ontario Building Code;
 - Clean Water Act; and,
 - Source Protection Plan.

In addition there are various Provincial Guidelines, Federal legislation statutes, such as the Fisheries Act and Navigable Waters Protection Act, and municipal legislation by-laws, such as the Official Plan, Zoning By-laws, Tree By-law, Site Alteration By-law, Delegation of Authority By-law, Site Plan Control By-law, etc.

THE TASK FORCE'S INITIALLY IDENTIFIED FOCAL POINTS

Within these broader guidelines, the Task Force has initially identified the following focal points for the development review process. Identification of these key areas will help to focus the research and best practice review to be undertaken by the consultant on behalf of the Task Force and assist in shaping the framework for the Final Report recommendations to Council.

The following are the initially identified focal points. The Task Force may revise this list and/or expand on the specific areas of review outlined under each focal point based on further consultations with or submissions from stakeholders in the development review process:

- Optimized Efficiency and Coordination;
- Accessible Information and Resources for Applicants;
- Streamlined Approach for Heritage Act Approvals Development Reviews;
- Solutions-Oriented Culture; Collaboration, Creativity and Flexibility
- Informed Roles and Responsibilities for Stakeholders;
- Collaborative Synergy with External Agencies;
- Committed, Well-trained and Experienced Staff;
- A Welcoming, Well-designed and Functional Development Hub;
- Up-to-date Computerized Tracking and Process Evaluation System; and,
- Ongoing and Inclusive Process Performance Measurement.

Optimized Efficiency and Coordination

The Task Force sets as a top focal point the design and implementation of need for the City of Kingston to facilitate a consistent, streamlined and timely development review process for applicants. From the point of initial application contact through to occupancy,

Persons wishing to develop in the City of Kingston must should experience a seamlessly coordinated the review of their proposals and applications of development applications through city departments (e.g. Planning & Development, Fire & Rescue, and Building & Licensing) and agencies external to the City (e.g. Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Health Unit, Provincial Ministries, KEDCO).

As part of the Task Force's review, all key steps in the development review process – from pre-application to occupancy approval - need to will be examined in the light of other municipal and provincial benchmarking in order to present recommendations that meet or exceed the responsiveness, timeliness and efficiency rates of the development review processes in comparable municipalities in south-eastern Ontario. ensure a more responsive, timely and coordinated review process.

Specific areas of review and focus identified by the Task Force for this focal point include:

- Developing a planning application checklist for applicants and staff to assist in achieving shorter timelines and to facilitate complete applicant submissions;
- Ensuring completion of the pre-building permit checklist as early as possible;
- Establishing a consolidated pre-occupancy process meeting for building occupancy permits;
- Developing strategies for more consistent building inspections interpretations and decisions amongst building inspectors;
- Encouraging Making pre-decision site visits by Planning Committee members part of the process;
- Ensuring timely issuance of conditional permits approvals and Pre-Servicing Agreements;
- Developing strategies and recommendations for better information flow and coordination between City departments and all internal stakeholders.

Accessible Information and Resources for Applicants

Another key focal point for the Task Force is ensuring that individual City staff members communicates effectively and on a timely basis with applicants and other staff. As part of this, Further, the tools and resources that applicants utilize use throughout the development review process should be up-to-date, user - friendly and accessible.

In addition to ongoing liaison staff contact with and support for applicants, the Task Force has identified the following focus areas:

- Providing clear online information about the development review process;
- Providing clear guidelines that set out the requirements for complete applications;
- Ensuring that accessible and easy-to-understand resources, forms, guidelines and applications are available both online and in hard copy.

Streamlined Approach for Heritage Act Approvals Development Review

Historically, the approach to heritage development in Kingston has been confusing. Kingston has a quality and quantity of heritage buildings and cultural resources that rivals any municipality in Canada. Its built heritage is one of the City's most valuable economic assets. The current heritage development review process in Kingston is lacking in timeliness and efficiency. In order to protect significant heritage resources and encourage development that will enhance the quality of place, tourism benefits and civic pride, the approvals review process for designated properties and heritage districts needs to be streamlined, have clearer requirements for applicants, become less onerous for applicants and

make the best use of available local expertise in the preservation and adaptive re-use of heritage buildings.

The Task Force has identified the need to create a streamlined and responsive approach to heritage development in Kingston.

Areas of focus include:

- Establishing clearer policies, and guidelines (e.g. checklist) for heritage applicants, ~~to help inform the process and staff;~~
- **Preparing and distributing information about the value of good quality heritage preservation and restoration, and the heritage development review process.**
- Increasing staff resources to support **the review of** heritage development applications;
- Delegating additional approval authority to staff for routine and standardized applications to ~~avoid unnecessary expense and delays~~ **improve efficiency and timeliness;**
- Establishing, a heritage **and urban design** resource centre **to assist and educate staff, applicants and the general public in the value of incorporating a high quality of urban design into development projects, be they new or heritage and how to achieve this..** In the case of heritage development projects, the centre would **offer resources focused on historical sources and preservation techniques.** ~~or hub that focuses on heritage preservation and development.~~

Solutions-Oriented Culture Collaboration, Creativity and Flexibility

Central to enhancing the development review process at the City of Kingston is the need for all relevant stakeholders to ~~create a solutions-oriented culture.~~ The Task Force has identified the need to ~~create a culture of collaboration, creativity and flexibility,~~ **participate in the development and maintenance of a collaborative, creative and flexible working style.** This style should be evident in all City departments and related stakeholder agencies involved in the **new development and heritage development** review processes.

Going forward, recommendations and strategies coming out of the Task Force process need to include:

- Promoting a working culture that encourages City staff to bring added value and a customer service excellence approach to the process;
- Promoting ~~a culture of~~ collaboration, creativity and flexibility to find solutions;
- Identifying strategies to ensure a ~~more collaborative~~ **rather than an adversarial approach** **working relationship** between staff and applicants (~~i.e. “not us versus them”~~);

- Ensuring a clear understanding and articulation of staff roles so that expectations are defined and transparent;
- Setting clear, well-defined and transparent expectations.
- Establishing protocols that enable front-line professional staff to make decisions and take ownership of their work with professional pride.

Informed Roles and Responsibilities for Stakeholders

All internal and external stakeholders need to understand their collective roles and responsibilities related in relation to the broader city development review process and how their actions (or inactions) may impact the overall timeliness and efficiency of the process. The Task Force identified the need to develop recommendations and strategies that will educate and inform all stakeholders in the process about their distinct roles and responsibilities in making it work. The effective integration of all the players into the process is a key one of the keys to Kingston's success as we move forward. moving forward.

Specific actions to advance this focal point could be:

- Arranging joint educational sessions with the City and the development community communities to enhance an understanding of each other's roles, processes, challenges, etc.;
- Continuing the bi-annual liaison meetings between the City, the Kingston Home Builders Association and the Kingston Construction Association, etc.;
- Developing education and outreach strategies for all stakeholders in the development review process to ensure that there is a clear shared vision for the process including expectations regarding response timelines, the need for consistency, the importance of pre-consultation meetings, etc.

Collaborative Synergy with External Agencies

The development review process regularly involves other external agencies in the approval process (e.g. Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Health Unit, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Culture, etc.). The Task Force has identified the need to increase collaboration and synergy with these external review agencies to ensure more timely and integrated responses to development applications.

Areas to examine related to this focal point include:

- Developing strategies to achieve compliance with response deadlines by external agencies;
- Investigating opportunities for the City to be delegated approval authority from external stakeholders;
- Working with the external agencies to ensure a mutual understanding of the development review process, roles in the process, timing expectations and applicant needs;

- Developing strategies to foster stronger relationships and ongoing collaboration with external review agencies.

Committed, Well-trained and Experienced Staff

At the heart of this focal point is the Task Force's commitment to ensuring that the City hires and supports the best, most experienced and qualified staff – from front-line to management positions - members to ~~manage~~ **carry out** the development review process. Ensuring that the City Departments are fully resourced (staff, equipment, technology, accommodations) will contribute to achieving an efficient and functional process.

Specific actions to advance this focal point could be:

- Developing a 3-5 year staff resource plan and budget that provides sufficient human resources to all aspects of the City's development review process (e.g. urban design expertise);
- Providing sufficient budget allocation to accommodate ongoing training and staff development (including out-of-country) so that skills training and professional development is current and continual;
- Developing a program of regular evaluation of staff levels, workloads, and portfolios to ensure that all Departments are appropriately resourced;
- ~~Investigating the possible secondment of City staff from other departments to the development review process, as appropriate.~~

A Welcoming and Functional Development Hub

Currently, the City's public customer service counter and its offices at John Counter Boulevard related to the development review process lack the necessary space, privacy and presence to foster customer service excellence. Applicants line up in cramped space and receive customer service support in a less than adequate physical environment (i.e. little or no privacy, inadequate meeting rooms, etc.).

The Task Force has identified as a focal point the need to create a physical development hub that is welcoming and functional and supports excellent customer service while creating a ~~great~~ **positive** impression for applicants and all stakeholders.

Areas to examine related to this focal point include:

- Creating a positive ~~“one-stop”~~ customer service experience while projecting the City of Kingston's brand and commitment to economic development;
- Providing a ~~more~~ welcoming, **well-designed**, and spacious reception and service counter space for applicants and front-line staff;
- Creating additional appropriately sized meeting rooms for increased privacy and problem solving among staff and various stakeholders;

- Improving staff's physical office environment for greater privacy, efficiency, **comfort** and productivity.

Computerized Tracking System Information Management and Technology

In order to create a transparent and coordinated process, the Task Force has identified information management and technology as an area for improvement and enhancement.

A technology review will need to be undertaken to support the development review process, with an eye to purpose, efficiency, coordination, and measurement. Key areas of focus include:

- Developing an ~~easy-to-use~~ **easy-to-use** and accessible tracking system that monitors where an applicant is at in the development review process, including external stakeholder approval processes;
- Developing technology that monitors the broader development review process and provides metrics and indicators to support ongoing evaluation by tracking overall timelines and identifying where there were delays in the process, and thereby highlighting areas for process enhancements.

The end result related to this ~~priority is~~ **should be** user friendly technology that staff and applicants can use to solve issues in the development review process as well as ~~streamlined approvals~~ **reviews** and modernized ~~service delivery and~~ performance measurement.

The need for a performance measurement ~~process~~ **system** for the **City's** development review process has also been identified by the Task Force. An optimized performance measurement system ~~will~~ **should** ultimately result in a streamlined process that can be regularly and consistently measured and adjusted for greater impact over time.

Key aspects include:

- Establishing clear metrics and indicators of success that can inform evaluation processes;
- Developing strategies and approaches that result in continual systems improvement;
- Obtaining regular feedback from all key stakeholders to ensure inclusive and diverse input and perspectives;
- Sending mandatory customer service surveys to applicants following the completion of their development review processes;
- Circulating annual surveys for internal staff to share ideas and generate solutions related to evaluation and continual improvement strategies for the process;

- Compiling and summarizing the results of evaluation and performance measurement processes that can be shared with stakeholders, applicants, the business community and broader community members.

As Kingston more effectively measures and benchmarks its development review process and results, it will be able to communicate and promote its efficiency and value to potential investors, business and community economic development proponents, and the media.

This ~~will~~ **should** result in the creation of a true “open for business” culture as community members, stakeholders and investors begin to understand Kingston’s increased commitment to creating a thriving local economy.

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THE OPEN FOR BUSINESS APPROACH

The Task Force is committed to establishing conditions that will result in responsible, high quality new development, protection of Kingston's natural resources and heritage, and heritage development and preservation of a high standard with a view to enhancing the quality of life for community members and visitors.

The "open for business" approach, in the view of the Task Force, is an appropriate one for the City of Kingston at this stage in its development. It offers responsible and simplified economic policies and practices. This approach is based on creating streamlined, efficient and coordinated development processes and government services that facilitate responsible economic growth while protecting the public interest. It does not mean saying "Yes" to everything a proponent may request, nor does it mean saying "No" without appropriate rationale and explanation. The "open for business" approach can ensure protection of Kingston's heritage and natural resources, while allowing for a positive and energizing climate for business development.

OVERARCHING GUIDELINES AND PARAMETERS FOR THE TASK FORCE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

In order to guide its process, the Task Force has identified a number of key areas on which to focus its work. It considers the following guidelines and parameters integral to the City's development review process:

1. **Efficiency and Timeliness:** Inefficiencies in the process and any resulting delays represent additional costs in time and money, both to the applicant and to the departments/agencies involved in the process.
2. **Quality Customer Service:** The development review process must be transparent, and clearly and respectfully communicated. It must be seen to be fair.
3. **Accessibility and Easy Navigation:** Applicants and other stakeholders must have easy access to up-to-date and clearly articulated policies/guidelines, consistent rules/interpretations, and organized processes.
4. **The Official Plan:** All development must fall within the framework of the City's Official Plan. The Official Plan, Zoning By-laws and guidelines must be up-to-date, consistent and aligned with all provincial policies, statutes, regulations and standards.
5. **Relevant Federal and Provincial Statutes, Regulations and Policies:** All City policies and processes need to be reviewed against current relevant federal and provincial statutes, regulations and policies to ensure compliance including the following:
 - The Provincial Policy Statement;
 - Ontario Planning Act;
 - Condominium Act;
 - Municipal Act;
 - Ontario Heritage Act;
 - Building Code Act;
 - Ontario Building Code;
 - Clean Water Act; and,
 - Source Protection Plan.

In addition there are various Provincial Guidelines, Federal Statutes, such as the Fisheries Act and Navigable Waters Protection Act, and municipal by-laws, such as the Official Plan, Zoning By-laws, Tree By-law, Site Alteration By-law, Delegation of Authority By-law, Site Plan Control By-law, etc.

THE TASK FORCE'S INITIALLY IDENTIFIED FOCAL POINTS

Within these broader guidelines, the Task Force has initially identified the following focal points for its development review process. Identification of these key areas will help focus the research and best practice review to be undertaken by the consultant on behalf of the Task Force and assist in shaping the framework for the Final Report recommendations to Council.

The following are the initially identified focal points. The Task Force may revise this list and/or expand on the specific areas of review outlined under each focal point based on further consultations with or submissions from stakeholders in the development review process:

- Optimized Efficiency and Coordination;
- Accessible Information and Resources for Applicants;
- Streamlined Approach for Heritage Development Reviews;
- Collaboration, Creativity and Flexibility
- Clearly defined and communicated Roles and Responsibilities for Stakeholders;
- Synergy with External Agencies;
- Committed, Well-trained and Experienced Staff;
- A Welcoming, Well-designed and Functional Development Hub;
- Up-to-date Computerized Tracking and Process Evaluation System; and,
- Ongoing and Inclusive Process Performance Measurement.

Optimized Efficiency and Coordination

The Task Force sets as a focal point the design and implementation of a consistent, streamlined and timely development review process for applicants. From the point of initial contact through to occupancy.

Persons wishing to develop in the City of Kingston should experience a seamlessly coordinated review of their proposals and applications through city departments (e.g. Planning & Development, Fire & Rescue, and Building & Licensing) and agencies external to the City (e.g. Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Health Unit, Provincial Ministries, KEDCO).

As part of the Task Force's review, all key steps in the development review process - from pre-application to occupancy approval - will be examined in the light of other municipal and provincial benchmarking in order to present recommendations that meet or exceed the responsiveness, timeliness and efficiency rates of the development review processes in comparable municipalities in south-eastern Ontario.

Specific areas of review identified by the Task Force for this focal point include:

- Developing a planning application checklist for applicants and staff to assist in achieving shorter timelines and to facilitate complete applicant submissions;
- Ensuring completion of the pre-building permit checklist as early as possible;
- Establishing a consolidated pre-occupancy meeting for occupancy permits;
- Developing strategies for more consistent interpretations and decisions amongst building inspectors;
- Making pre-decision site visits by Planning Committee members part of the process;
- Ensuring timely issuance of conditional permits and Pre-Servicing Agreements;
Developing strategies and recommendations for better information flow and coordination between City departments and all internal stakeholders.

Accessible Information and Resources for Applicants

Another key focal point for the Task Force is ensuring that individual City staff members communicate effectively and on a timely basis

with applicants and other staff. Further, the tools and resources that applicants use throughout the development review process should be up-to-date, user-friendly and accessible.

In addition to ongoing staff contact with and support for applicants, the Task Force has identified the following focus areas:

- Providing clear online information about the development review process;
- Providing clear guidelines that set out the requirements for complete applications;
- Ensuring that accessible and easy-to-understand resources, forms, guidelines and applications are available both online and in hard copy.

Streamlined Approach for Heritage Development Review

Kingston has a quality and quantity of heritage buildings and cultural resources that rivals any municipality in Canada. Its built heritage is one of the City's most valuable economic assets. The current heritage development review process in Kingston is lacking in timeliness and efficiency. In order to protect significant heritage resources and encourage development that will enhance the quality of place, tourism benefits and civic pride, the review process for designated properties and heritage districts needs to be streamlined, have clearer requirements for applicants, become less onerous for applicants and make the best use of available local expertise in the preservation and adaptive re-use of heritage buildings.

The Task Force has identified the need to create a streamlined and responsive approach to heritage development in Kingston.

Areas of focus include:

- Establishing clearer policies, and guidelines (e.g. checklist) for heritage applicants and staff;

- Preparing and distributing information about the value of good quality heritage preservation and restoration, and the heritage development review process.
- Increasing staff resources to support the review of heritage development applications;
- Delegating additional approval authority to staff for routine and standardized applications to improve efficiency and timeliness;
- Establishing a heritage and urban design resource centre to assist and educate staff, applicants and the general public in the value of incorporating a high quality of urban design into development projects, be they new or heritage, and how to achieve this. In the case of heritage development projects, the centre would offer resources focused on historical sources and preservation techniques.

Collaboration, Creativity and Flexibility

Central to enhancing the development review process at the City of Kingston is the need for all stakeholders to participate in the development and maintenance of a collaborative, creative and flexible working style. This style should be evident in all City departments and related stakeholder agencies involved in the new development and heritage development review processes.

Recommendations and strategies coming out of the Task Force process need to include:

- Promoting a working environment that encourages City staff to bring added value and customer service excellence to the process;
- Promoting a collaborative, creative and flexible approach when seeking solutions.
- Identifying strategies to ensure a collaborative rather than an adversarial working relationship between staff and applicants;
- Ensuring a clear understanding and articulation of staff roles
- Setting clear, well-defined and transparent expectations.

- Establishing protocols that enable front-line professional staff to make decisions and take ownership of their work with pride.

Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

All internal and external stakeholders need to understand their roles and responsibilities as they relate to the broader city development review process and how their actions or inactions may impact the overall timeliness and efficiency of the process. The Task Force identified the need to develop recommendations and strategies that will educate and inform all stakeholders in the process about their distinct roles and responsibilities in making it work. The effective integration of all the players into the process is one of the keys to Kingston's success as we move forward.

Specific actions to advance this focal point could be:

- Arranging joint educational sessions with the City and the development communities to enhance an understanding of each other's roles, processes, challenges, etc.;
- Continuing the bi-annual meetings between the City, the Kingston Home Builders Association and the Kingston Construction Association, etc.;
- Developing education and outreach strategies for all stakeholders in the development review process to ensure that there is a clear shared vision for the process including expectations regarding response timelines, the need for consistency, the importance of pre-consultation meetings, etc.

Synergy with External Agencies

The development review process regularly involves external agencies in the approval process (e.g. Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Health Unit, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Culture, etc.). The Task Force has identified the need to increase collaboration with these external review agencies to ensure more timely and integrated responses to development applications.

Areas to examine related to this focal point include:

- Developing a realistic plan for response deadlines for external agencies which takes into account pre-set and unchangeable existing deadlines
- Investigating opportunities for the City to be delegated approval authority from external stakeholders;
- Working with the external agencies to ensure a mutual understanding of the development review process, roles in the process, timing expectations and applicant needs;
- Developing strategies to foster stronger relationships and ongoing collaboration with external review agencies.

Committed, Well-trained and Experienced Staff

At the heart of this focal point is the Task Force's commitment to ensuring that the City hires and supports the best, most experienced and qualified staff – from front-line to management positions - members to carry out the development review process. Ensuring that the City Departments are fully resourced (staff, equipment, technology, accommodations) will contribute to achieving an efficient and functional process.

Specific actions to advance this focal point could be:

- Developing a 3-5 year staff resource plan and budget that provides sufficient human resources to all aspects of the City's development review process (e.g. urban design expertise);
- Providing sufficient budget allocation to accommodate ongoing training and staff development (including out-of-country) so that skills training and professional development is current and continual;
- Developing a program of regular evaluation of staff levels, workloads, and portfolios to ensure that all Departments are appropriately resourced.

A Welcoming, Well-designed and Functional Development Hub

Currently, the City's public customer service counter and its offices at John Counter Boulevard related to the development review process lack the necessary space, privacy and presence to foster customer service excellence. Applicants line up in cramped space and receive

customer service support in a less than adequate physical environment (i.e. little or no privacy, inadequate meeting rooms, etc.).

The Task Force has identified as a focal point the need to create a physical development hub that is welcoming and functional and supports excellent customer service while creating a positive impression for applicants and all stakeholders.

Areas to examine related to this focal point include:

- Creating a positive customer service experience while projecting the City of Kingston's brand and commitment to economic development;
- Providing a welcoming, well-designed and spacious reception and service counter space for applicants and front-line staff;
- Creating additional appropriately sized meeting rooms for increased privacy and problem solving among staff and various stakeholders;
- Improving staff's physical office environment for greater privacy, efficiency, comfort and productivity.

Information Management and Technology

In order to create a transparent and coordinated process, the Task Force has identified information management and technology as an area for improvement and enhancement.

A technology review will need to be undertaken to support the development review process, with an eye to purpose, efficiency, coordination, and measurement. Key areas of focus include:

- Developing an easy-to-use and accessible tracking system that monitors where an applicant is at in the development review process, including external stakeholder approval processes;
- Developing technology that monitors the broader development review process and provides metrics and indicators to support ongoing evaluation by tracking overall timelines and identifying where there were delays in the process, and thereby highlighting areas for process enhancements.

The end result related to this should be user-friendly technology that staff and applicants can use to solve issues in the development

review process as well as streamlined reviews and modernized service delivery and performance.

The need for a performance measurement system for the City's development review process has also been identified by the Task Force. An optimized performance measurement system should ultimately result in a streamlined process that can be regularly and consistently measured and adjusted for greater impact over time.

Key aspects include:

- Establishing clear metrics and indicators of success that can inform evaluation processes;
- Developing strategies and approaches that result in continual systems improvement;
- Obtaining regular feedback from all key stakeholders to ensure inclusive and diverse input and perspectives;
- Sending mandatory customer service surveys to applicants following the completion of their development review processes;
- Circulating annual surveys for internal staff to share ideas and generate solutions related to evaluation and continual improvement strategies for the process;
- Compiling and summarizing the results of evaluation and performance measurement processes that can be shared with stakeholders, applicants, the business community and broader community members.

As Kingston more effectively measures and benchmarks its development review process and results, it will be able to communicate and promote its efficiency and value to potential investors, business and community economic development proponents, and the media.

This should result in the creation of a true "open for business" culture as community members, stakeholders and investors begin to understand Kingston's increased commitment to creating a thriving local economy.

From: Megan Coughlin [megan.knott@parks.on.ca]
Sent: Tuesday, April 03, 2012 9:26 AM
To: Arjoon, Kevin
Subject: Recommended changes to the framework focal points for the Mayor's task force

POINT: 3rd paragraph in the doc

OVERARCHING GUIDELINES AND PARAMETERS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

In order to guide their process, the Task Force has identified a number of key areas on which to focus their work and recommendations going forward. At the heart of these focal points, the Task Force has agreed that the following guidelines and parameters are integral to the City's development review process:

Don't know if there should be wording in this paragraph to include that they are listed in no priority order

POINT: 2nd focal point

Accessible Information and Resources for Applicants

Another key focal point for the Task Force is ensuring that City staff communicates effectively and on a timely basis with applicants. As part of this, the tools and resources that applicants utilize throughout the development review process should be up to date, user friendly and accessible.

In addition to ongoing liaison with and support for applicants, the Task Force has identified the following focus areas:

- Providing clear online information about the development review process;
- Providing clear guidelines that set out the requirements for complete applications;
- Ensuring that accessible and easy-to-understand resources, forms, guidelines and applications are available both online and in hard copy.

Two things- from the 'homeowner' wanting to put a structure over their deck to transition it into a sunroom for example- and the docs that they receive with the heavy jargon that they need to weigh through I wanted to add or make emphasize to the last bullet point where it says easy to understand should be applications – the more independent the applicant can be on an application with easy to digest forms the less they will rely on staff to help understand or fill out ; I also wanted to ensure that staff are protected in this process with timelines that are also on the applicant to meet and should the applicant be the one to slow the process down and that these are clear from the outset as well so staff have these to rely on in the event the applicant takes issue with the process

POINT: 7th focal point

Committed, Well-trained and Experienced Staff

At the heart of this focal point is the Task Force's commitment to ensuring that the City hires and supports the best, most experienced and qualified staff – from...ect

I know we have heard from a few presenters to date that the peer review system is an area of concern and frustration- should mention be made and if not in this point in another area to speak to the review of this process and the timelines and guidelines and COST that surround that ??

POINT: 9th focal point

Computerized Tracking and Evaluation System

In order to create a transparent and coordinated process, the Task Force has identified information management and technology as an area for improvement and enhancement.

A technology review will need to be undertaken to support the development review process, with an eye to purpose, efficiency, coordination, and measurement. Key areas of focus include:

- Developing an easy to use and accessible tracking system that monitors where an applicant is at in the development review process, including external stakeholder approval processes;

To this bullet point should it be that instead of the word developing it should be the immediate purchasing and implementation of an online tracking system so that both the staff and applicant can submit, track and expedite the process

POINT 5: end paragraph

As Kingston more effectively measures and benchmarks its development review process and results, it will be able to communicate and promote its efficiency and value to potential investors, business and community economic development proponents, and the media.

Should we add in the word applicant to keep consistent- just b/f investors let's say?

This will result in the creation of a true "open for business" culture as community members, stakeholders and investors begin to understand Kingston's increased commitment to creating a thriving local economy.

Should we add in a word here as well – I believe we are already open for business and were by way of the task force trying to be the gold standard community that is open for business providing the most customer oriented and service friendly system by which to develop from the smallest to largest scaled projects?

Megan (Coughlin) Knott
Sales and New Business Development Consultant
St. Lawrence Parks Commission
Tel: 613.542.7388 Ext. 4207
Cell: 613.561.5305
megan.knott@parks.on.ca

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Mayor's Task Force on Development

INITIAL FRAMEWORK AND FOCAL POINTS

(As Identified on March 19, 2012 and Revised March 26, 2012)

***Change "priority" areas at the bottom of each page.

MANDATE AND ACTIONS

"The *Mayor's Task Force on Development* will focus on the issues and challenges presented throughout the development process within the City of Kingston, recognizing the requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement and provincial legislation under the Planning Act, Heritage Act and Building Code Act and other relevant regulations. They will take a critical look at the current policies and practices of the departments that affect the way businesses, residents and developers move through the system."

"The *Task Force* shall:

- Identify the main issues and concerns to be addressed throughout its term.
- Review the planning and development policies and processes within the City of Kingston from the point of initial application through to occupancy.
- Identify Best Practices in planning and development policies and processes by reviewing five comparable Ontario municipalities; to include the role and appropriateness of outside agencies.
- Prepare a comprehensive report with recommendations to Council on policy and process changes Kingston needs to make to adopt Best Practices.
- Identify best methods for outside agencies to facilitate timely responses and enhance customer service (CRCA, Health Unit, provincial and federal agencies, etc)."

ANTHE OPEN FOR BUSINESS CULTURE APPROACH

The Task Force is committed to establish conditions to enable an open for business culture that supports responsible, high quality development resulting in a resilient community that people want to live in and enjoy a high quality of life.

Safeguarding the public's interest is a key component to this, as is the protection of Kingston's heritage and natural resources, but without constraining a positive and energizing climate for business development. Ultimately, the Task Force is committed to enhancing the quality of life for community members through responsible and simplified economic policies and practices.

In short, an open for business culture means that the City of Kingston will create streamlined, efficient and coordinated development processes and government services that facilitate responsible economic growth while protecting the public interest. It does not mean saying “Yes” to everything that a proponent may request, nor does it mean saying “No” without appropriate rationale and explanations. A solutions-oriented culture will be a key to success.

The Task Force is committed to establishing conditions that will result in responsible, high quality new development, protection of Kingston’s natural resources, and heritage development and preservation of a high standard, with a view to enhancing the quality of life for community members and visitors.

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The “open for business” model, in the view of the Task Force, is an appropriate one for the City of Kingston at this time in its development. It offers responsible and simplified economic policies and practices. The “open for business” approach is based on creating streamlined, efficient and coordinated development processes and government services that facilitate responsible economic growth while protecting the public interest.

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It does not mean saying “Yes” to everything a proponent may request, nor does it mean saying “No” without appropriate rationale and explanation. The “open for business” model can ensure protection of Kingston’s heritage and natural resources, while allowing for a positive and energizing climate for business development.

OVERARCHING GUIDELINES AND PARAMETERS FOR THE TASK FORCE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

In order to guide their process, the Task Force has identified a number of key areas (listed in no priority order) on which to focus their work and recommendations going forward. At the heart of these focal points, the Task Force has agreed that it considers the following guidelines and parameters are integral to the City’s development review process:

1. **Time is Money. Efficiency and Timeliness:** Inefficiencies in the process and any resulting delays represent additional costs in (time and money), both to the applicant and to the departments/agencies involved in the process.
2. **Quality Customer Service Focus:** The development review process must be open, and transparent, and clearly and respectfully communicated. It must be

~~seen to be fair. with a focus on excellent customer service and efficiency, from both a time and cost savings perspective.~~

3. ~~**A System that is Easily Access and Navigate.**~~ **Accessibility and Easy Navigation:** Applicants and other stakeholders must have easy access to up-to-date and clearly articulated policies/guidelines, consistent rules/interpretations, and organized processes.
4. ~~**Guided by the**~~ **The Official Plan:** All development must fall within the framework of the City's Official Plan. The City's Official Plan, Zoning By-laws and guidelines must be up-to-date, consistent and aligned to ~~with~~ all provincial policies, legislation, standards and regulations. ~~The Official Plan must guide all development going forward,~~
5. ~~**Compliant with**~~ **Relevant Federal and Provincial Statutes, Regulations and Policies:** All policies and processes need to be reviewed against current relevant federal and provincial statutes, regulations and policies to ensure compliance. ~~This includes including~~ the following Provincial legislation:
 - The Provincial Policy Statement;
 - Ontario Planning Act;
 - Condominium Act;
 - Municipal Act;
 - Ontario Heritage Act;
 - Building Code Act;
 - Ontario Building Code;
 - Clean Water Act; and,
 - Source Protection Plan.

In addition there are various Provincial Guidelines, Federal legislation statutes, such as the Fisheries Act and Navigable Waters Protection Act, and municipal legislation ~~by-laws~~, such as the Official Plan, Zoning By-laws, Tree By-law, Site Alteration By-law, Delegation of Authority By-law, Site Plan Control By-law, etc.

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THE TASK FORCE'S INITIALLY IDENTIFIED FOCAL POINTS

Mayor's Task Force on Development
INITIAL FRAMEWORK AND PRIORITY AREAS FOCAL POINTS

Within these broader guidelines, the Task Force has **initially** identified the following focal points for ~~the~~**its** development review process. Identification of these key areas will help ~~to~~ focus the research and best practice review to be undertaken by the consultant on behalf of the Task Force and assist in shaping the framework for the Final Report recommendations to Council.

The following are the **initially** identified focal points. The Task Force may revise this list and/or expand on the specific areas of review outlined under each focal point based on further consultations with or submissions from stakeholders in the development review process:

- Optimized Efficiency and Coordination;
- Accessible Information and Resources for Applicants;
- Streamlined Approach for Heritage Act Approvals **Development Reviews**;
- Solutions-Oriented Culture; **Collaboration, Creativity and Flexibility**
- **Informed** Roles and Responsibilities for Stakeholders;
- **Collaborative** Synergy with External Agencies;
- Committed, Well-trained and Experienced Staff;
- A Welcoming, **Well-designed** and Functional Development Hub;
- **Up-to-date** Computerized Tracking and **Process** Evaluation System; and,
- Ongoing and Inclusive **Process** Performance Measurement.

Optimized Efficiency and Coordination

The Task Force sets as a ~~top~~ focal point the **design and implementation of need** for the City of Kingston to facilitate a consistent, streamlined and timely development review process for applicants. ~~From from~~ the point of initial application ~~contact~~ through to occupancy,

Persons wishing to develop in the City of Kingston ~~must~~ should experience a **seamlessly coordinated** the review of their proposals and applications of development applications through city departments (e.g. Planning & Development, Fire & Rescue, and Building & Licensing) and agencies external to the City (e.g. Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Health Unit, Provincial Ministries, **KEDCO**).

As part of the Task Force's review, all key steps in the development review process – from pre-application to **occupancy** approval - ~~need to~~**will** be examined in the light of other municipal and provincial benchmarking in order to present recommendations that **meet or exceed the responsiveness, timeliness and efficiency rates of the development review processes in comparable municipalities in south-eastern Ontario.** ~~ensure a more responsive, timely and coordinated review process.~~

Specific areas of review ~~and focus~~ identified by the Task Force for this focal point include:

- Developing a planning application checklist for applicants and staff to assist in achieving shorter timelines and to facilitate complete applicant submissions;
- Ensuring completion of the pre-building permit checklist as early as possible;
- Establishing a consolidated pre-occupancy process meeting for building occupancy permits;
- Developing strategies for more consistent building inspections, interpretations and decisions amongst building inspectors.;
- Encouraging Making pre-decision site visits by Planning Committee members part of the process;
- Ensuring timely issuance of conditional permits, approvals and Pre-Servicing Agreements;
- Investigating the establishment of a “fast-tracking” process (types of applications, criteria, funding);
- Developing strategies and recommendations for better information flow and coordination between City departments and all internal stakeholders.

Accessible Information and Resources for Applicants

Another key focal point for the Task Force is ensuring that individual City staff members communicates effectively and on a timely basis with applicants and other staff. As part of this, Further, the tools and resources that applicants utilize use throughout the development review process should be up-to-date, user - friendly and accessible.

In addition to ongoing liaison staff contact with and support for applicants, the Task Force has identified the following focus areas:

- Providing clear online information about the development review process;
- Ensuring that there is an understanding on the part of applicants that their timely responses to staff requests for further information is key to an efficient review process;
- Providing clear guidelines that set out the requirements for complete applications;
- Ensuring that accessible, user-friendly and easy-to-understand resources, forms, guidelines and applications are available both online and in hard copy.

Streamlined Approach for Heritage Act Approvals Development Review

Historically, the approach to heritage development in Kingston has been confusing. Kingston has a quality and quantity of heritage buildings and cultural resources that rivals any municipality in Canada. Its built heritage is one of the City's most valuable economic assets. The current heritage development review process in Kingston is lacking in timeliness and efficiency. In order to protect significant heritage resources and encourage development that will enhance the

quality of place, tourism benefits and civic pride, the ~~approvals~~ **review** process for designated properties and heritage districts needs to be streamlined, have clearer requirements for applicants, become less onerous for applicants and make the best use of available local expertise in the preservation and adaptive re-use of heritage buildings.

The Task Force has identified the need to create a streamlined and responsive approach to heritage development in Kingston.

Areas of focus include:

- Establishing clearer policies, and guidelines (e.g. checklist) for heritage applicants, ~~to help inform the process and staff;~~
- **Preparing and distributing information about the value of good quality heritage preservation and restoration, and the heritage development review process.**
- Increasing staff resources to support **the review** of heritage development applications;
- Delegating additional approval authority to staff for routine and standardized applications to ~~avoid unnecessary expense and delays~~ **improve efficiency and timeliness;**
- Establishing, a heritage **and urban design** resource centre **to assist and educate staff, applicants and the general public in the value of incorporating high quality of urban design into development projects, _ be they new or heritage and how to achieve this..** In the case of heritage development projects, the centre would ~~_offer resources focused on historical sources and preservation techniques.~~ **or hub that focuses on heritage preservation and development.**

Solutions-Oriented Culture Collaboration, Creativity and Flexibility

Central to enhancing the development review process at the City of Kingston is the need for all relevant stakeholders to ~~create a solutions-oriented culture.~~ **The Task Force has identified the need to create a culture of collaboration, creativity and flexibility, participate in the development and maintenance of a collaborative, creative and flexible working style.** This style should be evident in all City departments and related stakeholder agencies involved in the **new development and heritage development** review processes.

Going forward, recommendations and strategies coming out of the Task Force process need to include:

- Promoting a working culture that encourages City staff to bring added value and a customer service excellence approach to the process;
- Promoting ~~a culture of~~ collaboration, creativity and flexibility to find solutions;

- Identifying strategies to ensure a ~~more~~ collaborative **rather than an adversarial approach** ~~working relationship~~ between staff and applicants (i.e. “not us versus them”);
- Ensuring a clear understanding and articulation of staff roles ~~so that expectations are defined and transparent~~;
- Setting clear, well-defined and transparent expectations.
- Establishing protocols that enable front-line **professional** staff to make decisions and take ownership of their work with ~~professional~~ pride.

Informed Roles and Responsibilities for Stakeholders

All internal and external stakeholders need to understand their ~~collective~~ roles and responsibilities **related in relation** to the broader **city** development review process and how their actions (or inactions) may impact the overall timeliness and efficiency of the process. The Task Force identified the need to develop recommendations and strategies that will educate and inform all stakeholders in the process about their distinct roles and responsibilities in making it work. The effective integration of all the players into the process is **a key one of the keys** to Kingston’s success **as we move forward**. ~~moving forward.~~

Specific actions to advance this focal point could be:

- Arranging joint educational sessions with the City and **the development community** ~~communities~~ to enhance an understanding of each other’s roles, processes, challenges, etc.;
- Continuing the bi-annual ~~liaison~~ meetings between the City, the Kingston Home Builders Association and the Kingston Construction Association, etc.;
- Developing education and outreach strategies for all stakeholders in the development review process to ensure that there is a clear shared vision for the process including expectations regarding response timelines, the need for consistency, the importance of pre-consultation meetings, etc.

Collaborative Synergy with External Agencies

The development review process regularly involves other external agencies in the approval process (e.g. Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Health Unit, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Culture, etc.). The Task Force has identified the need to increase collaboration and synergy with these external review agencies to ensure more timely and integrated responses to development applications.

Areas to examine related to this focal point include:

- Developing strategies to achieve compliance with response deadlines by external agencies;
- Investigating opportunities for the City to be delegated approval authority from external stakeholders;

- Working with the external agencies to ensure a mutual understanding of the development review process, roles in the process, timing expectations and applicant needs;
- Developing strategies to foster stronger relationships and ongoing collaboration with external review agencies.

Committed, Well-trained and Experienced Staff

At the heart of this focal point is the Task Force's commitment to ensuring that the City hires and supports the best, most experienced and qualified staff – from front-line to management positions - members to ~~manage~~ carry out the development review process. Ensuring that the City Departments are fully resourced (experienced and qualified staff, equipment, technology, and accommodations) will contribute to achieving an efficient and functional process and also facilitate the in-house review of technical reports/studies and thereby reduce the need for peer reviews.

Specific actions to advance this focal point could be:

- Developing a 3-5 year staff resource plan and budget that provides sufficient human resources to all aspects of the City's development review process (e.g. urban design expertise);
- Providing sufficient budget allocation to accommodate ongoing training and staff development (including out-of-country) so that skills training and professional development is current and continual;
- Developing a program of regular evaluation of staff levels, workloads, and portfolios to ensure that all Departments are appropriately resourced;
- ~~Investigating the possible secondment of City staff from other departments to the development review process, as appropriate.~~

A Welcoming and Functional Development Hub

Currently, the City's public customer service counter and its offices at John Counter Boulevard related to the development review process lack the necessary space, privacy and presence to foster customer service excellence. Applicants line up in cramped space and receive customer service support in a less than adequate physical environment (i.e. little or no privacy, inadequate meeting rooms, etc.).

The Task Force has identified as a focal point the need to create a physical development hub that is welcoming and functional and supports excellent customer service while creating a ~~great~~ positive impression for applicants and all stakeholders.

Areas to examine related to this focal point include:

- Creating a positive "~~one-stop~~" customer service experience while projecting the City of Kingston's brand and commitment to economic development;

- Providing a more welcoming, **well-designed**, and spacious reception and service counter space for applicants and front-line staff;
- Creating additional appropriately sized meeting rooms for increased privacy and problem solving among staff and various stakeholders;
- Improving staff's physical office environment for greater privacy, efficiency, **comfort** and productivity.

Computerized Tracking System **Information Management and Technology**

In order to create a transparent and coordinated process, the Task Force has identified information management and technology as an area for improvement and enhancement.

A technology review will need to be undertaken to support the development review process, with an eye to purpose, efficiency, coordination, and measurement. Key areas of focus include:

- **Developing-Purchasing and implementing** an **easy-to-use** and accessible tracking system that monitors where an applicant is at in the development review process, including external stakeholder approval processes;
- Developing technology that monitors the broader development review process and provides metrics and indicators to support ongoing evaluation by tracking overall timelines and identifying where there were delays in the process, and thereby highlighting areas for process enhancements.

The end result related to this **priority is** **should be** user friendly technology that staff and applicants can use to solve issues in the development review process as well **as** **streamlined** **approvals** **reviews** and modernized service delivery and performance measurement.

The need for a performance measurement **process** **system** for the **City's** development review process has also been identified by the Task Force. An optimized performance measurement system **will** **should** ultimately result in a streamlined process that can be regularly and consistently measured and adjusted for greater impact over time.

Key aspects include:

- Establishing clear metrics and indicators of success that can inform evaluation processes;
- Developing strategies and approaches that result in continual systems improvement;
- Obtaining regular feedback from all key stakeholders to ensure inclusive and diverse input and perspectives;

- Sending mandatory customer service surveys to applicants following the completion of their development review processes;
- Circulating annual surveys for internal staff to share ideas and generate solutions related to evaluation and continual improvement strategies for the process;
- Compiling and summarizing the results of evaluation and performance measurement processes that can be shared with stakeholders, applicants, the business community and broader community members.

As Kingston more effectively measures and benchmarks its development review process and results, it will be able to communicate and promote its efficiency and value to potential investors, ~~business and community economic development proponents~~applicants, and the media.

This ~~will~~ should result in the creation of an ~~true-enhanced~~ “open for business” culture as community members, stakeholders and ~~investors~~applicants begin to understand Kingston’s increased commitment to creating a thriving local economy through customer service excellence for the smallest to largest development projects.