

PLAN REVIEW AND PERMITTING SERVICES FEE POLICY AND SCHEDULE

Frequently Asked Questions

Why have the fees increased?

Otonabee Conservation's current fee schedule for both plan review and permits came into effect on January 1, 2014. Previous to this 2014 revision, fees were last updated in 2009. As a result, fees increases had not kept pace with increases in operational costs. Since the 2014 increases, the Authority has monitored costs to make sure they keep pace with inflation.

Doesn't my tax dollars/levy pay for this?

Otonabee Conservation's Plan Review and Permitting Services program budget is partially subsidized by the municipal levy. Services that are paid for through this levy include pre-consultation, services to our watershed municipalities, and complaint investigation. Municipal services paid for by the levy include commenting and technical support during Environmental Assessments, input into municipal planning documents, and the review and processing of municipally-driven planning and permit applications.

Otonabee Conservation's Board of Directors has endorsed a user-pay principle for third-party applications.

I already paid for a review under the Planning Act – why do I need to pay for a permit?

Otonabee Conservation has differing roles and responsibilities under the *Planning Act* and the *Conservation Authorities Act*. Generally, different staff are involved in the review of *Planning Act* applications than permit applications and there are different administrative processes involved in these reviews.

Is anyone exempt from paying a fee?

Under the policy, exemptions to the fees include:

- Non-profit conservation groups contributing to the protection and restoration of the natural environment such as Ducks Unlimited (DU), Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), Ontario Federation of Hunters and Anglers (OFAH), Kawartha Land Trust (KLT), and Community Stream Stewards Program (CSSP).
- Inquiries, planning applications, permits and Environmental Assessment review and support for watershed municipalities (including the County of Peterborough).
- Works requiring a Letter of Authorization from Otonabee Conservation - see Policy 3.1.2(1) of Otonabee Conservation's 'Watershed Planning and Regulation Policy Manual' for a list of these works.

Can a fee be appealed?

An applicant has the right to request either a reduction in or waiving of the fees. To appeal a fee, the applicant must submit the reasons for the appeal in writing. The review of the appeal will be based on: 1) the amount of work required to administer and review the application and supporting technical reports; and 2) if the municipality has waived or reduced their application fee.

Why does Otonabee Conservation review my planning application?

Conservation Authorities are considered to be ‘public bodies’ under the *Planning Act*, and must be given the opportunity to comment on policy documents and planning applications prescribed under the *Act*.

In addition, Otonabee Conservation - like all conservation authorities - has delegated responsibilities from the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry to represent provincial interests on matters related to natural hazards during the planning process. Through this delegated authority, *Planning Act* applications are reviewed for conformity with Section 3.1 (“Natural Hazards”) of the Provincial Policy Statement.

Otonabee Conservation also provides technical and planning advice on matters related to natural heritage to each of the municipalities within our watershed. Here, Otonabee Conservation reviews *Planning Act* applications and advises on whether they meet provincial and municipal natural heritage policies and guidelines.

Who collects the planning fee?

There are no changes with the way fees are collected under the fee policy and schedules. Fees for *Planning Act* applications are collected by either the municipality or invoiced by Otonabee Conservation in the following way:

- a. Application fees for Minor Variances, Zoning By-Law Amendments and Site Plan applications are collected by the municipality.
- b. Fees for Consents (Severance), Plans of Subdivision and Plans of Condominium are collected by the municipality within the City of Peterborough, the City of Kawartha Lakes and the Municipality of Trent Hills. Fees for Consent (Severance), Plans of Subdivision and Plans of Condominium within the County of Peterborough will be directly invoiced to applicants by Otonabee Conservation.
- c. Fees for Official Plan Amendments will be collected by the municipality within the City of Peterborough, the City of Kawartha Lakes, the Township of Douro-Dummer, the Township of Cavan Monaghan, the Township of Otonabee South-Monaghan and the Municipality of Trent Hills. Fees for Official Plan Amendments will be directly invoiced to the applicant by Otonabee Conservation within the Township of Asphodel-Norwood and Selwyn Township.

How do I know what is a ‘Minor’, ‘Intermediate’ and ‘Major’ application?

Minor – An application is considered “Minor” where there is low risk of impact on a natural hazard or natural features and no technical letters or studies are required. Subdivisions less than 5 hectares in size are considered to be “Minor”.

Intermediate – An application is considered “Intermediate” where there is moderate risk of impact on natural hazards or natural features and/or the review of a single technical report/plan (e.g., Environmental Impact Study, Floodplain Analysis, Stormwater Management Plan) is required.

Major – An application is considered “Major” where risk to natural hazards and natural features is high and/or the review of 2 or more technical reports/plans (e.g., Environmental Impact Study, Floodplain Analysis, Stormwater Management Plan) is required. Subdivisions greater than 5 hectares are determined to be “Major”.

What if several planning applications are being submitted for the same property?

Consolidated *Planning Act* applications will be subject only to the higher application fee if submitted within a one year time period.

How long does it take for Otonabee Conservation to process a permit?

Otonabee Conservation turnaround times are generally based on the volume of permits being processed at any given time. Otonabee Conservation is required to make a decision on complete permit applications within 30 days for a minor application and 90 days for a major application. Generally, a complete minor application is often ready in 15 business days.

Is there a fee for talking to staff at Otonabee Conservation about a project?

No. We encourage people to come in and talk to us about their project as early as possible to discuss what Otonabee Conservation's concerns or information requirements will be. Free preconsultation is part of our commitment to excellent customer service. Occasionally, where more in-depth research or site visits are required to assess the proposal, staff will recommend that an applicant submit a Proposal Inquiry before a formal application is made.

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