PURPOSE
The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an overview of the basis and need for a formal pre-consultation process for planning applications, and make recommendations with respect to the adoption of a Pre-consultation By-law.

RECOMMENDATION
THAT DEV 33-2017 report regarding a Pre-consultation Process and By-law for certain Planning Act applications be received; and,
THAT Pre-consultation By-Law 93-2017, being a by-law to require mandatory pre-consultation with the Town before submitting certain Planning Act applications, be adopted.

BACKGROUND
The Planning Act provides municipalities with the authority, by by-law, to require applicants to pre-consult with the municipality before submitting applications for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Site Plan Approval, Plan of Subdivision or Plan of Condominium.

Although Town Staff currently pre-consults with applicants on an informal basis, a formal pre-consultation process ensures that appropriate information is submitted prior to pre-consultation and allows for a structured review with all parties at the table.

The benefits of a formalized pre-consultation process include:
• Ensuring the submission of complete applications including required documentation, plans and studies;
• Providing early feedback to applicants including identifying and explaining relevant policies;
• Providing applicants with advice on agencies to consult;
• Helping to streamline the application review process by identifying and addressing issues prior to application submission;
• Avoiding delays in the processing of an application if improper information is submitted;
• Providing applicants the opportunity to refine a proposal based on feedback received prior to formal submission of an application;
• Providing information to applicants regarding anticipated costs and timelines to process the application(s);
• Overall, a more efficient and timely review and approval process.
The Pre-consultation Guide and Application Form attached to this report is intended to identify when pre-consultation is required, provide details regarding the actual pre-consultation meeting, and identify the information needed to complete the application. Meeting requests must be made at least seven business days prior to a pre-consultation meeting.

Although the Planning Act does not provide municipalities with the authority to require pre-consultation prior to the submission of Consent or Minor Variance applications, applicants are strongly encouraged to pre-consult with the Town. The Pre-consultation Guide and Application Form has been prepared to also allow for submissions respecting Consent and Minor Variance applications.

The proposed Pre-consultation By-law attached to this report requires an applicant to attend a pre-consultation meeting prior to the submission of applications for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Site Plan Approval, Plan of Subdivision or Plan of Condominium. The By-law also states that the applicant is required to complete and submit the Town’s Pre-consultation Request Form and required supporting documentation, and that failure to fulfill the requirement to attend a required pre-consultation meeting shall result in the Town refusing to accept the application. However, the By-law also provides the Director of Building and Development the authority to waive the requirement of an applicant to attend a pre-consultation meeting if it is determined there is no need for such consultation prior to the application being filed. Circumstances in which an exemption may be considered include if the proposal is relatively simple in nature and/or there are limited potential issues or concerns.

This report has been presented to provide Council with an overview of the basis and need for a formal pre-consultation process, and to make recommendations with respect to the adoption of a Pre-consultation By-law.

It is staff’s recommendation that Council adopt the proposed Pre-consultation By-law to provide specific direction to staff and the community with respect to the Town’s pre-consultation requirements. There are several benefits related to pre-consultation including reducing uncertainty, ensuring the submission of complete applications, and streamlining the review process.

None at this time.

Not applicable to this report.

Susan Luckhardt, Planning Coordinator

1. Pre-consultation Guide and Application Form

Recommended by the Department

Mark Stone, 
Planner

Grant Brouwer
Director, Building and Development
Recommended by the CAO

Brent Kittmer
CAO / Clerk