

Planning Justification Report

What is the purpose of this?



A *planning justification report* provides the planning rationale for a proposed development. This document is intended to help the applicant organize and substantiate the application and to assist staff in the review of the proposal.

Depending on the complexity of the application, the information requirements may be addressed in a letter format or a more comprehensive report.

Who should prepare this?



A *planning justification report* should be completed by, or under the signature of, a Registered Professional Planner (RPP) recognized through the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) and the Ontario Provincial Planning Institute (OPPI).

When is this required?



A *planning justification report* is required at the time of submission of a development application.

Applications where the County is the approval authority that require a *planning justification report* include, but are not limited to:

- Official Plan Amendment
- Plan of Subdivision / Condominium

Other municipal/provincial level applications that may require a *planning justification report* include:

- Official Plan Amendment (local)
- Zoning By-law Amendment
- Consent
- Minor Variance
- Site Plan
- Development Permits (Niagara Escarpment Commission Development Permits are a Provincial requirement. Study requirements must be scoped to adhere to the policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) (2017) and any applicable guideline which may be more restrictive than municipal standards).

Why do we need this?



Planning justification reports are required to:

- provide a clear understanding of the proposal
- highlight information specific or particular to the proposal
- demonstrate good planning and how the proposal conforms to the *Planning Act*, Provincial Policy Statement, Grey County Official Plan, Niagara Escarpment Plan (if applicable), local official plans, and local zoning by-laws

How should
this be
prepared?



A *planning justification report* should contain:

Background/Introduction

- the proposal
- approvals required (i.e. zoning, site plan, consent, condominium)
- purpose of this report

Subject Lands and Surrounding Land Uses

- property location and description
- surrounding land uses (e.g. farmers' fields, industrial, commercial)
- identification of constraints affecting the site (e.g. water features, hazard lands, access restrictions, etc.)
- maps that help provide reference to the site (e.g. aerial, official plan, and zoning maps)
- identify the land use designation (land use type) under the County and local municipal official plans, as well as the zoning on the subject lands. In some instances, the Niagara Escarpment Plan land use designations will apply

Description of Proposal

- provide enough information to allow the reader to understand the purpose and effect of the application(s)
- details about the proposed uses, proposed buildings, planning history (if known)
- detail the supporting technical studies submitted in support of the application (e.g. traffic studies, noise assessments, hydrogeological study, etc.)

Policy and Planning Analysis

- Provincial Policy Statement and *Planning Act* considerations (section 2 – matters of provincial interest)
- Niagara Escarpment Plan relevant policies (if the lands are within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area)
- relevant official plan policies (Grey County and local municipal official plan), including discussion as to how and why each is addressed by the proposal, specifically sections:
 - Section 3.5(5) – Settlement Area Density Requirements
 - Section 7.11 Implementation – How Do We Protect the Natural Areas
 - Section 8.9 Services, Utilities, Broadband and Other Technology Considerations
 - Section 8.11.3 Existing/Future Uses re: Source Water Protection
 - Section 9.13 Plans of Subdivision and Condo
- relevant zoning by-law information, areas of compliance and non-compliance and why
- discussion of how the proposal will address any other relevant local planning studies or guidelines
- analysis and opinion as to why the proposal is considered appropriate, including issues of impact and compatibility

- outline how the proposal has regard for the *Planning Act*, is consistent with the PPS, and conforms with local OP policies

Recommendation/Conclusion

- indicate how the proposal is consistent and conforms with provincial and local level planning policy documents
- summarize the proposed planning recommendation

Appendices/Maps/Plan

- locational map
- development proposal map
- land use maps (official plan & zoning)

The list may be modified in pre-submission consultation with the review agencies.

What else should we know?

Planning staff should be consulted prior to completing a planning justification report to determine whether information requirements should be addressed in a letter or report format.

Staff recommend referring to the County's public GIS for access to the County Official Plan schedules and appendices: <https://maps.grey.ca/>.

While potentially not a municipally required study, a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) may be required where development is proposed within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area (Part 2.13).

What other resources are available?

Grey Bruce Healthy Development Checklist – <https://docs.grey.ca/share/public?nodeRef=workspace://SpacesStore/28b3ba43-ebc4-497b-9385-4db7cf4e1ad7>

Grey County Official Plan - <https://www.grey.ca/planning-development>

Municipal Contacts -

- Township of Chatsworth - <https://chatsworth.ca/government/planning/>
- Township of Georgian Bluffs - <https://www.georgianbluffs.ca/en/business-development/planning.aspx#>
- Town of Hanover - <https://www.hanover.ca/planning>
- Town of The Blue Mountains - <https://www.thebluemountains.ca/planning-development-services.cfm>
- Township of Southgate - <https://www.southgate.ca/en/municipal-services/planning-and-land-use.aspx>
- Municipality of Grey Highlands - <https://www.greyhighlands.ca/en/business-and-development/planning.aspx?mid=18090>
- Municipality of Meaford - <https://www.meaford.ca/en/business-development/planning-and-development.aspx>
- Municipality of West Grey - <http://www.westgrey.com/buildingplanning.cfm>

Niagara Escarpment Plan - <https://escarpment.org/LandPlanning/NEP>

Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) – Planning Consultant Directory
<https://ams.ontarioplanners.ca/consultant/directory/>

Provincial Policy Statement 2020 - <https://files.ontario.ca/mmah-provincial-policy-statement-2020-accessible-final-en-2020-02-14.pdf>

Planning Act - <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>

*This document is intended to be used for guideline purposes only. It will not be applied as a means of approving or rejecting development proposals, but rather it will be used to provide technical direction throughout the planning and development process.