
Municipal Land Use Planning

214 Research Guide

**Most Recent Update:
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This research guide has information to assist you in finding Ontario government records related to municipal land use planning. You may also want to consult *Research Guide 208: Records of Ontario Municipal Board Hearings*.

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Getting Started

The Evolution of Land Use Planning in Ontario

Land use planning prior to the First World War in Ontario originated as part of the provincial government's response to two issues:

- the growing interest in urban beautification
- increasing awareness of the impact of industrialization on housing and living conditions.

The development of industrial and residential projects in close physical proximity to each other had a negative effect on both issues.

In 1912, the government of Ontario assumed responsibility for municipal land use planning with the passage of the City and Suburban Plan Act. The act declared that municipalities must submit plans of residential or industrial subdivisions to the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board for review and approval. The act's provisions were limited to road access and the regulation of the proximity of industrial to residential areas.

In the decade following the First World War, the province expanded the Railway and Municipal Board Act. The revisions to the act differentiated between the requirements for recreational and year-round homes, and aimed to balance development between commercial and light industrial growth.

The 1930s saw little change in the government's planning role since most forms of urban development slowed during the depression.

During the final stages of the Second World War, the increasing trend toward urbanization made it necessary to develop an orderly and systematic approach to land development. In 1944, the government of Ontario created the Department of Planning and Development to plan long-term development of the province's economic and human resources. The department established the Community

Planning Branch to administer planning and urban development. The mandate was legislated under the Planning Act, 1944 and under revisions to the Ontario Municipal Board Act the same year.

Between 1944 and the early 1980s, the provincial government was active in developing and implementing urban development policies and land use planning regulations:

- The Official Plan and zoning by-laws provided orderly development within municipalities. The Official Plan outlined broad, land use guidelines while the zoning by-laws addressed specific areas of concern.
- The provincial government encouraged municipalities to establish local planning boards and committees to review proposed developments.

During the same time period, planning expanded beyond urban issues:

- The need to preserve first-rate farmland in the face of expanding suburban development led to new regulations on the subdivision of agricultural property.
- Increased interest in the environment and the preservation of ecologically significant property led to additional guidelines for land use in sensitive areas. For example, the Niagara Escarpment Commission was created to deal with developmental issues along a particularly sensitive part of the province's natural heritage.

At the provincial government level, the Ontario Municipal Board, the Department of Planning and Development and its successors (the Department of Municipal Affairs, the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing) all shared responsibilities for administering the province-wide system.

During the latter half of the 20th century, the concept of land use planning and the rights of property owners led to frequent questioning of the process and its implications. The Ontario Municipal Board was particularly subject to criticism over its powers to overturn local planning decisions. A Select Committee of the Legislature was established in 1972. Its work led to major changes to the procedures of the Board. In 1982, significant amendments to the Planning Act and the Ontario Municipal Board Act reduced provincial involvement in the planning process.

Since 1983, the province's role in municipal land planning has declined, with responsibilities divested to local government levels. The province sets standards and provides forums, like the Ontario Municipal Board, to settle disputes in the implementation of planning decisions.

The current Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (and its predecessor organizations) and the Ontario Municipal Board have handled municipal land use planning issues.

The Records

In this guide, we have arranged the records series according to the major functions they document within the planning process. There is a general description of the records for each series. Reference codes in the Archives Descriptive Database of the series are linked to their corresponding descriptions. [Click here to access the Archives Descriptive Database.](#)

In conducting your research, please note that government records at the Archives of Ontario are subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990. The series descriptions in the Archives Descriptive Database have information about access restrictions related to specific records. [Click here to access the Archives Descriptive Database.](#)

Legislation and Regulations

Several provincial laws identify the roles, procedures and objectives for land use planning in Ontario. The Municipal Act, the Planning Act and the Ontario Municipal Board Act provide the framework. These acts evolved over years of significant amendments. The amendments were aimed at meeting changing objectives and to recognize the shifting roles of the provincial and municipal levels of government. The records in the following series document the ongoing amendments and interpretations of the acts.

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
Click here to access the description for RG 19-39	<p>Legislation Relating to Municipal Affairs and Housing</p> <p>This series documents all legislation related to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, (and predecessor organizations) including local land use planning. There is a detailed finding aid for records pre-dating 1971.</p> <p>The series includes correspondence, reports and draft legislation.</p>	<p>1948-2006</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>
Click here to access the description for RG 19-90	<p>Community Planning Legislation and Legal Opinions Files</p> <p>The series includes letters of inquiry on the legal basis, interpretation and implications of legislation to community planning, and the review</p>	<p>1968-1998</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
	of The Planning Act. It also includes legal opinions on questions submitted by planning officials to the Legal Affairs Branch on the ministry/department.	
Click here to access the description for RG 19-105	<p>Correspondence Files on the Municipal Planning Act</p> <p>The series includes correspondence about the Planning Act from private citizens, municipalities, and other interested parties. The correspondence is to the Cabinet minister responsible for the act, the Premier of Ontario or personnel of the branch responsible for administering the Planning Act. The series also has responses from the branch about functions that the Planning Act sets out.</p>	<p>1972-1994</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>
Click here to access the description for RG 19-152	<p>Records Pertaining to the Review of the Planning Act</p> <p>The series has records that the Planning Act Review Committee and the Local Planning Policy Branch created during review of the Planning Act. Files include correspondence, proposals, minutes of meetings, published reports, studies, legislation and official guidelines, submissions and responses.</p>	<p>1972-1982</p> <p>No additions to holdings expected</p>

Policy and Program Development

The Legislative Assembly has provided the framework for planning through the various acts (see, Legislation and Regulations, above), planning implementation in Ontario depends on developing policies and programs.

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
Click here to access the description for RG 19-165	<p>Municipal Land Use Policy Development Records</p> <p>The records in this series document the research and development of policy and legislation to improve Ontario's planning system. Records also document the monitoring of the planning system. They include correspondence and reports.</p>	<p>1981-2000</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>
Click here to access the description for RG 19-165	<p>Municipal Land Use Policy Development Records</p> <p>The records in this series document the research and development of policy and legislation to improve Ontario's planning system. Records also document the monitoring of the planning system. They include correspondence and reports.</p>	<p>1990-1993</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>
Click here to access the description for RG 19-170	<p>Municipal Planning Policy Closed Committee Files</p> <p>The series includes files of special purpose committees established within the Municipal Planning Policy Branch. The committees were responsible for reviewing specific policy options</p>	<p>1987-1990</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
	related to local planning. Records include correspondence, minutes and related reports.	

Approvals

Since planning became a provincial responsibility in 1912, the nature and complexity of regulations have increased. The two primary approval authorities have been:

- the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- the Ontario Municipal Board.

From the early 1970s, approvals of large-scale environmental assessment studies have also played a major part in the planning process.

The provincial government's involvement in municipal land use planning was based on two perceptions:

- the traditional perception that local governments lacked the necessary expertise to develop effective systems
- the broader public interest is better served through provincial review of local decisions that otherwise might reflect a narrower scope or outlook.

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
Click here to access the description for RG 19-82	<p>Minister's Zoning Orders and Amendments Files</p> <p>When municipalities lack official plans, the Minister responsible for the Planning Act can issue orders to establish zoning control over sensitive areas.</p> <p>The files include original applications, related correspondence and copies of approvals or denials issued.</p>	<p>1970-1998</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>
Click here to access the description for RG 19-83	<p>Municipal Subdivision Files</p> <p>The records document the review of subdivision plans submitted to the minister. The files include applications,</p>	<p>1944-1966</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
	correspondence and reports on problems associated with specific projects.	
Click here to access the description for RG 19-86	<p>Adopted Municipal Plans Working Files</p> <p>The records document the discussions between local planning officials and government planners in developing final versions of official plans that meet both local requirements and provincial planning guidelines and regulations.</p> <p>The files include copies of official plan by-laws approved by the municipality, correspondence between the two levels of government, outside planners and other provincial government ministries regarding the compliance of the proposed plan with overall planning objectives. The final versions of the plans are found in RG 19-87.</p>	<p>1944-1998</p> <p>No additions to holdings expected</p>
Click here to access the description for RG 19-87	<p>Municipal Official Plans and Amendments Approved by the Minister</p> <p>These files document the approval of official plans that municipalities submitted to institute municipal-wide planning controls. Records include drafts submitted by municipalities, correspondence and copies of approval letters signed by the responsible</p>	<p>1945-2004</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
	cabinet minister.	
Click here to access the description for RG 19-163	<p>Minister of Municipal Affairs Consent to Convey Lands Files</p> <p>When municipalities lack Land Division Committees or Committees of Adjustment, the minister has the power to issue orders to authorize land severances or other subdivision proposals. The files include original applications to the ministry to request consent orders, related correspondence, and copies of orders or refusals issued under the name of the minister.</p>	<p>1974-1980</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>
Click here to access the description for RG 37-6	<p>Ontario Municipal Board Applications and Appeals Files</p> <p>The Municipal Board has the power to hear appeals on a wide variety of planning issues. For details, see <i>Research Guide 208: Records of Ontario Municipal Board Hearings</i>.</p>	<p>1925-1993</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>

Research

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing sponsors research for many planning areas including recreational land use, subdivision controls and official plans.

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
Click here to access the description for RG 19-61	<p>Community Planning, Research and Special Studies File</p> <p>The records in this series include correspondence, studies, reports, and photographs related to</p>	<p>1946-1976</p> <p>No additions to holdings expected</p>

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
	<p>planning and implementation of major local studies conducted by the provincial government. The series includes material related to regional studies of population and employment distribution and trends in land use. There is also significant material related to the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Transportation Study (MTARTS). MTARTS reviewed urban development and transportation needs in the Greater Toronto area. Records include correspondence, copies of reports and related documentation.</p>	
<p>Click here to access the description for RG 19-104</p>	<p>Records of Studies, Committees and Task Forces Relating to Local Planning</p> <p>The series consists of subject files of studies and projects on local planning undertaken by the Office of Local Planning Policy and its predecessors. Study titles include Urban Recreational Open Space, Non-conforming Use, and Subdivision and Development Agreements.</p>	<p>1965-1993</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>
<p>Click here to access the description for RG 19-167</p>	<p>Flood Plan Criteria and Management Evaluation Study Records</p> <p>The series consists of correspondence, reports and steering committee minutes related to the work of the Flood Plan</p>	<p>1974-1979</p> <p>No additions to holdings expected</p>

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
	<p>Criteria and Management Evaluation Study, undertaken by the Local Planning Policy Branch. A study conducted jointly by the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Natural Resources developed strategies to reduce economic losses and improve public safety in flood-prone areas. The final report provided guidelines to municipalities and government agencies related to the determination of flood lines.</p>	

Community Planning

In addition to developing planning ideas and related tools, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has also been involved in the development of new communities. The role developed from mining and other resource extraction projects in northern Ontario and from the emergence of new communities in the southern part of the province (e.g., the Seaton community in Pickering and Townsend on Lake Erie).

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
<p>Click here to access the description for RG 19-63</p>	<p>New Townsite Planning and Development Files</p> <p>The Community Planning Branch accumulated or created these records that relate to the development of new towns in Ontario. Although the branch normally provided advice to municipalities on matters such as planning organization, official plans, zoning, and subdivision design, in some cases the branch developed the plans directly. The records document the planning process for services delivery like road access, sewage, water, and electricity.</p>	<p>1954-1978</p> <p>No additions to holdings expected</p>

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
Click here to access the description for RG 19-64	<p>Haldimand Norfolk Community Planning Files</p> <p>The files document the establishment of the Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk and long-term residential and industrial development policy arising from the Nanticoke industrial expansion in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Records include correspondence and reports documenting the development of community planning in the Nanticoke planned community.</p>	<p>1968-1975</p> <p>No additions to holdings expected</p>
Click here to access the description for RG 19-166	<p>North Pickering Planning and Development Files</p> <p>The records document the management of lands that the Province of Ontario acquired to develop the community of Seaton in North Pickering. It documents the land assembly process, the design of the community and the public consultation process surrounding amenities and services. Records include correspondence and reports relating to the development of the Seaton community in North Pickering.</p>	<p>1971-1995</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>
Click here to access the description for RG 43-27	<p>Townsend Community Planning Records</p> <p>The series includes correspondence of the Townsend Community Development Program (and its successor within the Ontario Land Corporation), the Townsend Community and Western Region Branch, and other Ministry of Housing offices, the Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk, the City of Nanticoke, consultants, and Ministry of</p>	<p>1976-1984</p> <p>No additions to holdings expected</p>

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
	Energy, Environment and Transportation/Communications. Correspondence pertains to the development of roads, sewers, bridges, etc., in the Townsend community project.	

Advice to Municipalities and Local Planning Authorities

As noted above (Approvals), much of the provincial government's planning role was based on a perception that local governments had limited expertise. Over the years the government of Ontario, in conjunction with private organizations such as the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, worked with municipalities to develop planning instruments and train staff in planning principles. The records series in this section document provincial government initiatives to improve planning at the local level.

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
Click here to access the description for RG 19-77	Community Planning Correspondence Files The records relate to local community planning and provincial approvals under the Planning Act. The records consist of correspondence, memos, zoning decisions, redevelopment agreements, local by-laws of towns and villages and minutes of a few small municipalities' planning committee meetings.	1944-1990 Additions to holdings expected
Click here to access the description for RG 19-91	Community Planning Study Grant Program Files The records document the administration and operation of a provincial program to fund local planning studies and to improve the level of planning expertise within municipalities. The funding was for municipalities with	1972-1993 Additions to holdings expected

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
	<p>populations of less than 60,000. Records include correspondence and reports documenting financial aid to local communities and copies of final reports issued by the planning study.</p>	
<p>Click here to access the description for RG 19-94</p>	<p>Community Planning Provincial Projects Files</p> <p>The records consist of correspondence, progress reports and meeting summaries related to the establishment of provincial policies, procedures, and guidelines for community planning programs under The Planning Act.</p>	<p>1974-1981</p> <p>No additions to holdings expected</p>
<p>Click here to access the description for RG 19-95</p>	<p>Municipal Community Planning Files</p> <p>This series documents the provision of financial and technical assistance to improve local planning by the various branches responsible for this function within the Ontario government. Records include draft minutes, agendas, and correspondence within the Ontario government and with municipalities and other interested parties.</p>	<p>1946-2002</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>
<p>Click here to access the description for RG 19-100</p>	<p>Northeastern Ontario Planning Project Files</p> <p>The records in this series consist of correspondence, clippings, and copies of recommended plans that relate to assistance given to local planners in</p>	<p>1950-1975</p> <p>No additions to holdings expected</p>

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
	<p>northeastern Ontario. The files deal with procedural problems and technical assistance in the preparation of official plans, amendments to official plans, and zoning by-laws. The files originated with the Sudbury office and ministries responsible for the oversight of local planning. Some files also contain photographs.</p>	
<p>Click here to access the description for RG 19-102</p>	<p>Northwestern Ontario Planning Project Files</p> <p>The files relate to municipal planning in Northwestern Ontario. The records include copies of draft plans for subdivisions; applications for consents, subdivisions and condominiums; notices of applications to the Ontario Municipal Board; correspondence with the Plans Administration Division, municipal staff, other ministries, developers and other concerned parties. The records were generated by the Northwest Regional Field Office (Thunder Bay) of the Community Planning Branch and its successors.</p>	<p>1950-1983</p> <p>No additions to holdings expected</p>

Urban Renewal

Sometimes, urban renewal programs are due to the negative impact of past planning decisions and practices. For instance, the zoning of suburban shopping malls resulted in the decline of many city centres as business moved away from traditional commercial areas. Today, industrial and warehouse districts face pressures to convert to uses more compatible with surrounding residential areas.

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
Click here to access the description for RG 19-65	<p>Records of the Maintenance of Property Study</p> <p>The records are from the Department of Municipal Affairs' study that investigated the adequacy of legislation under which municipalities establish minimum standards for the maintenance and occupancy of property in Ontario. The study was to propose policies and programs to overcome deficiencies, including amendments to The Planning Act. Records include correspondence and draft policy documents with related minutes.</p>	<p>1969-1970</p> <p>No additions to holdings expected</p>
Click here to access the description for RG 19-69	<p>Urban Renewal Program Files</p> <p>The files document Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing renewal programs. Planning and implementation of schemes focused on select urban problems across the province such as decayed downtown areas or industrial zones.</p>	<p>1959-1989</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>
Click here to access the description for RG 19-172	<p>Main Street Revitalization Loan Program Files</p> <p>The series consists of copies of correspondence prepared for signature by the Minister of Municipal Affairs, financial and statistical reports, copies</p>	<p>1992-1993</p> <p>Additions to holdings expected</p>

Reference Code	Series Title	Dates
	of agreements, applications for funds, and accompanying correspondence related to the revitalization of municipally owned lands and buildings.	

Other Resources

For a good overview of the planning process in Ontario today, [click here to access the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing website](#).

The following resources are available in the Library of the Archives of Ontario.

- For commentary and opinion on the planning process as a practical issue for municipalities, see the magazine *Municipal World*, published in St. Thomas, Ontario. This magazine has been produced continuously since 1891. It is a standard source of information for municipal officials in interpreting planning regulations. For information about the magazine, including a comprehensive index of articles from 1966 to 2003, [click here to access the Municipal World magazine website](#).
- Chipman, John George. *A Law Unto Itself: How The Ontario Municipal Board Has Developed And Applied Land Use Planning Policy*. Ottawa: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, c2002.
- Commission on Planning and Development Reform in Ontario; Sewell, John, 1940 [et al]. *New Planning For Ontario: Final Report Summary & Recommendations*. Toronto: The Commission, 1993.
- For other material relating to the planning process, search the Library of the Archives of Ontario *BIBLiON* database:

The Urban Affairs Library, a collection of the Toronto Reference Library, has an extensive collection of books and periodicals relating to the planning process. It is located at Metro Hall in Toronto. Contact information:

Toronto Reference Library
789 Yonge Street
Toronto ON M4W 2G8
416-395-5577

[Click here to access the Toronto Public Library website](#)

Related Records

In addition to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, a number of other Ontario government ministries have records on municipal land use planning. Search the Archives Descriptive Database (advanced option "Find Records Creators" for information about these ministries and their records. Please note

that the lists of records series are *comprehensive* and *not limited to land use planning*.

- The Department of Lands and Forests and its successor, the Ministry of Natural Resources, examines land use in relation to parks and conservation areas.
- The Ministry of Environment plays a role in assessing land use and its impact on the environment, particularly water and air quality.
- Due to increasing traffic demands, the Ministry of Transportation has interests in the development of road systems within and between municipalities.

Words and Terms Used in Municipal Land Use Planning

Committee of Adjustment

A Committee of Adjustment is a planning committee established at the level of a township, town, village, city or county/region. The committees examine requests to make changes to properties or buildings in partial violation of existing planning by-laws and to negotiate agreements between neighbours over conflicts in these matters. Decisions by Committees of Adjustment may be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Consents to Convey Land

Consents to Convey Land are orders issued by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and his/her predecessors on the subdivision of lands in areas that have not yet established Land Division Committees. The Planning Act gives the minister the authority to issue such orders. Such orders may be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Development Charges

Development Charges are charges that municipalities levy on new subdivisions or other projects to help pay for services like schools and water/sewage facilities.

Foodlands

Foodlands is a term that the Government of Ontario uses to describe prime agricultural regions subject to special development controls.

Hazard Lands

Hazard lands are ravines or shorelines subject to special development controls due to the threat of flooding or serious erosion.

Land Division Committee

A Land Division Committee is a planning committee established at the level of a separated city, county, or region to review applications for land severances restricted under local zoning and other land use controls. Land Division Committees' decisions may be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Legal Non-Conforming Use

Legal Non-Conforming use refers to a prohibited business that existed within the area of land use control before there was a prohibition against it. Zoning by-laws can prohibit a particular land use in specific areas but prohibitions do not apply to existing businesses operating in the restricted areas.

Local Improvement

Local improvement refers to money spent for new or renovated facilities like roads, sidewalks, water and sewage works. Generally, Ontario Municipal Board approval is required to spend money on these types of projects.

Local Planning Board

Local Planning Boards are established at the municipal level to study proposals for zoning by-laws, official plans, amendments and other planning instruments. The boards make recommendations to municipal councils about a proposal's feasibility or desirability. In many municipalities, the Local Planning Board may approve specific planning matters that have received general approval through zoning by-laws or official plans. Local Planning Board decisions may be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Minister's Zoning Orders

Minister's Zoning Orders control land uses. Under the Planning Act, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing can issue temporary zoning orders to control land uses in municipalities that have not yet established comprehensive land use plans. These orders may be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Minor variance

A minor variance is an application from a property owner to the municipal government for permission to make a change to the property that would contravene an existing zoning by-law. All municipalities are required to have zoning by-laws controlling matters like densities, lot frontage and free space between buildings. Property owners can apply to the municipal government for a permit that recognizes that a proposed change to their property is a minor variance of the zoning by-law and not a violation of its intent. If the application is rejected, the applicant may appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board. If the application is accepted, neighbours who object to the plan may appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board. See also Committee of Adjustment (above).

Official Plan

Under the Planning Act, all municipalities must prepare an Official Plan to establish overall land use planning regulations for the area. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing approves these plans. Individuals, corporations, and lower tier municipalities may object to the plan through the Ontario Municipal Board. If a proposed plan is particularly complicated or contentious, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing often submits it to the Ontario Municipal Board. Amendments to existing Official Plans are generally referred to the Ontario Municipal Board for review.

Ontario Municipal Board

The Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) is an independent administrative tribunal responsible for hearing appeals and deciding on a variety of contentious municipal matters.

The Ontario Municipal Board is similar to a court of law, but with less formality. Board members are appointed by the Ontario Cabinet and include lawyers, accountants, architects, planners and public administrators. The Ontario Municipal Board operates under the Ontario Municipal Board Act, as well as its own rules of practice and procedure. It reports administratively to the Ministry of the Attorney General. [Click here to access the Ontario Municipal Board website for more information.](#)

Planning Area

The Planning Act permits the creation of planning areas that extend beyond municipal boundaries. The objective is to ensure consistent planning decisions among municipalities that share common interests. Planning areas can range in size from two adjoining townships to the level of a region or county.

Redevelopment Plans

Redevelopment plans are municipal tools to promote improvements in downtown core areas, industrial lands or other under-utilized areas. Ontario Municipal Board approval is required for any capital expenditures (spending) or zoning changes due to the redevelopment plan.

Restricted Area By-law

A restricted area by-law is a mechanism that municipalities use to expand on the general provisions that are in the Official Plan for the area. The municipality applies the intent of the official plan to a particular “restricted area” of the municipality. Generally, a restricted area by-law is used to supplement controls dealing with the expansion of commercial and industrial operations into agricultural or residential areas. Until 1983, Ontario Municipal Board approval was required for all restricted area by-laws. After 1983, the Ontario Municipal Board only heard appeals that residents or businesses affected by the by-law initiated.

Severances

Severances deal with the sub-division of lots. Land Division Committees decide on most severances. However, disputes about farm lots or large rural estates that the owners wish to subdivide for family use often come before the Ontario Municipal Board.

Subdivision

A subdivision is a proposal for the division of a lot or portion of a lot into a group of smaller residential, commercial or industrial lots.

Zoning by-law

See Restricted Area By-law (above).

Making Contact

Ready and Willing

Although unable to do your municipal land use planning research for you, our reference archivists are waiting to assist you. You may telephone or write to them by mail or email or — best of all — visit the Archives of Ontario.

Contact us

Telephone: 416-327-1600 Toll free (Ontario): 1-800-668-9933

Fax: 416-327-1999

Email: [Click here to send an email to the Archives of Ontario](#)

Address: Archives of Ontario, 134 Ian Macdonald Blvd., Toronto, ON M7A 2C5

Website

For information about the Archives' holdings, as well as access to research guides and other customer service materials available through the Archives of Ontario, [click here to access the Archives of Ontario website](#).

Customer Service and Research Guides

The Archives of Ontario has published a series of in-depth research guides on a variety of specific topics. For more information, please see "Research Guides and Tools" under "Accessing Our Collection" on the home page of the Archives website.

occasionally occur. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information. Readers should where possible verify the information before acting on it.