
Subject: Development Activity Report 2024

Staff Report No. DS-010-25

**Department/
Commission:** Development Services Commission

Date: April 16, 2025

Recommendation:

- 1) That Council receive Report No. DS-010-25 for information.

Report Highlights

- Provides information on the development activity and building trends for the 2024 calendar year

1. Purpose:

This report is to bring highlights for information the 2024 Annual Development Activity Report as included in Attachment 1 to this report, and provides commentary on the information within it. The Development Activity Report summarizes the planning and building development activity that took place last year in Town in 2024. It provides information on planning applications submitted to Development Services as well as information related to housing, building permit activity and maps showing prominent applications.

2. Background:

The 2024 Development Activity Report is the second annual report which provides information on the development activity and building trends that took place last year in Stouffville. The Development Services Commission conducts ongoing monitoring activities to assist in identifying emerging trends within the development community. Building activity can be used as an indicator of housing and employment levels, and the level of local investment.

In 2024 staff have seen an increasing trend where land use permissions are granted to applications by Council but do not proceed to building permits and construction. This is likely due to a slowdown in market conditions associated with high interest rates, material and labour cost and high land values.

In 2024 City View software was deployed to process planning applications and building permits. This was the first year in which staff have used City View to track development-related information and data received on planning applications and building permits. Data and trends will continue to be reported to Council on an annual basis to assist understanding of development trends.

3. Analysis:

The following are observations and commentary on the statistics provided in the Development Activity Report.

3.1 Planning Act Applications - Activity and Trends

Table 1 below outlines the number of new complete applications submitted from January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024.

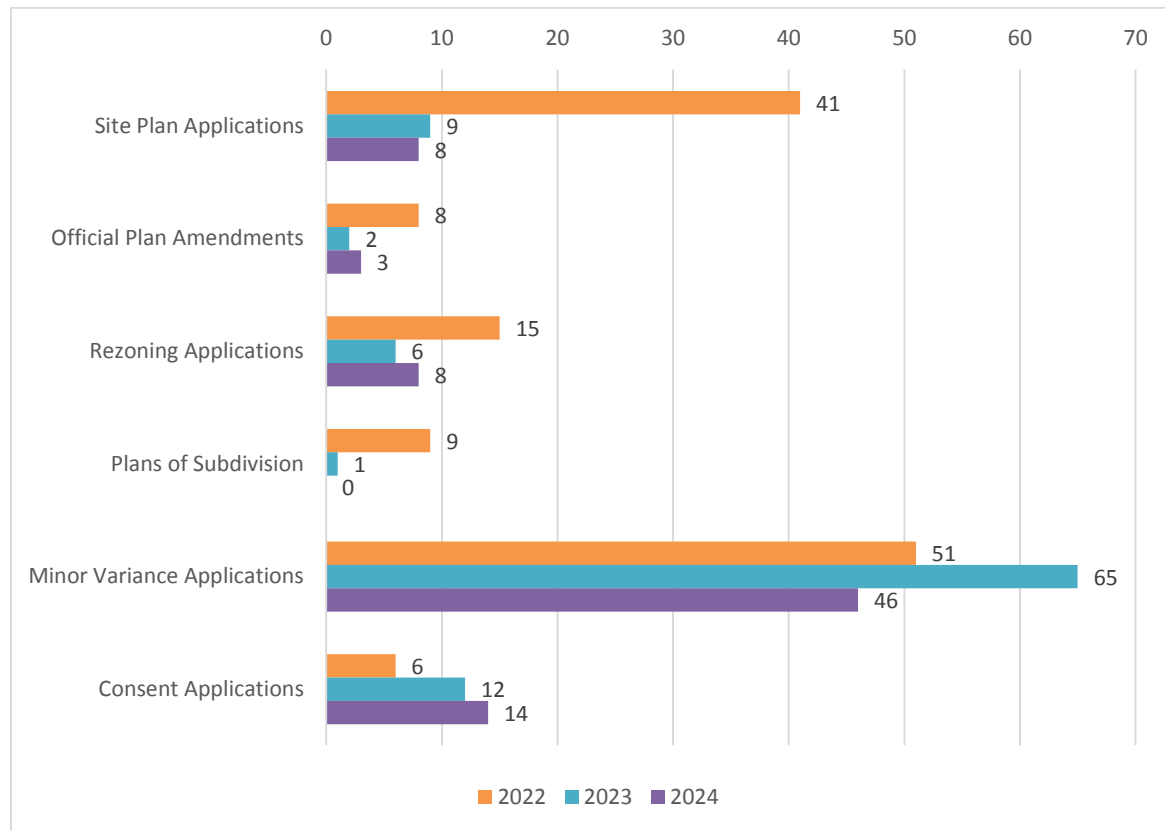
Table 1

Planning Application Type	Count
Pre-consultation Applications	25
Official Plan Amendments	3
Zoning By-law Amendment Applications	8
Site Plan Applications	8
Draft Plans of Subdivision	0
Draft Plan of Condominium	2
Minor Variance Applications	46
Consent Applications	14
Total	106

There has been a 27% decrease in 2024 from the total number of applications received in 2023 (135 applications received in total in 2023).

It is important to review the development activity over the last three years (2022-2024), to see the pattern of development activity in Town, particularly as it best represents the period that faced numerous changes to the Planning Act, and the corresponding market changes that have generally been observed. Amendments to the Planning Act (Bill 23) and the introduction of the CAPP (Bill 109) collectively have impacted the applications processing and approval process. Changes include the sequential processing of applications, fewer concurrent applications, and the removal of the requirement for Site Plan Control for development less than 10 residential units.

Figure 1 below shows the comparison of planning application types over the past 3 years.

Figure 1

Notably, the number of site plan applications and plans of subdivision applications, submitted has decreased over the three years shown in Figure 1. Some of the reduction in the volume of site plan applications can likely be attributed to changes to the Planning Act (Bill 23) which removed the requirement for Site Plan Control for residential developments of less than 10 units (i.e. Heritage and Oak Ridges Moraine Site Plan applications) which previously made up a significant portion of site plan applications processed by staff.

The reduction in the volume of new Draft Plan of Subdivision applications can likely be attributed to the limited supply of greenfield lands left within the Town's settlement areas. As the supply of greenfield areas in Town decreases and less room to accommodate significant ground related development, staff anticipate more intensification opportunities within the strategic growth and built-up areas of Town.

Committee of Adjustment Applications continue to make up a significant portion of the application volume (56%).

While the volume of some planning applications declined in 2024, staff continued to work on the active and open applications submitted in the previous years some of which include the applications subject to Ministers Zoning Orders, which require extensive staff time in processing and coordinating of complex and interjurisdictional matters. In addition, staff

worked on Town initiated Zoning By-law Amendments for Additional Residential Units, which is expected to create more opportunities for housing options in the coming years.

3.1.1 Residential Development

The Development Activity Report demonstrates that:

- 392 new residential units were proposed through rezoning, subdivision or site plan applications in 2024.
- 2,546 residential units were approved through rezoning, subdivision and site plan applications. This includes applications submitted in 2024 and in previous years.

The planning application statistics offer insights for forecasting the Town's ability to meet housing targets in the coming years. The applications currently being processed and approved would result in future housing starts.

Additional information on residential development trends are provided in the 2024 Housing Indicators Monitoring Report.

3.1.2 Industrial, Commercial & Institutional Development (ICI)

- Three (3) ICI site plan applications were submitted in 2024 with a total of 5,136 m² (app. 55,2800 ft²) of GFA. Although the volume of site plan applications has decreased since 2023, staff note that there are additional ICI applications proceeding through the frontloaded Collaborative Application Pre-consultation Process (CAPP) prior to submission of a complete planning application.
- Six (6) additional ICI applications are being processed at various stages through CAPP that propose an additional 47,027 m² (506,194 ft²) of GFA. Staff cannot project the timing of submission of complete planning applications.

3.2 Active Applications in the pipeline – up to December 31, 2024

Staff have reviewed the total number of open applications in CityView. **Table 2** below outlines the number of active files in City View as of December 31, 2024.

Table 2

Planning Application Type	Number
Official Plan Amendment Applications	6
Zoning By-law Amendment Applications	47
Site Plan Applications	21
Draft Plan of Subdivision Applications	19
Draft Plan of Condominium Applications	5
Total	98

Over the past year, staff have effectively implemented the Town's File Maintenance and File Closure Policy, consistently closing inactive files in line with the policy. This ongoing effort has helped streamline the management of planning applications, reduce the backlog, and enhance overall efficiencies.

3.3 Pre-consultation Applications

Twenty-five (25) pre-consultation applications were submitted and processed in 2024. This is a 36% decrease from 2023, where thirty-nine (39) pre-consultation applications were processed. This reduction in volume can likely be attributed to Bill 185, the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024, which removed the requirement for mandatory pre-consultation application before submitting a development application in Ontario. Although staff continue to strongly recommend applicants to submit a pre-consultation application prior to submitting a formal planning application, it is no longer required by the *Planning Act*.

A total of approximately 419 new residential units were proposed through pre-consultation applications received in 2024. It is anticipated that not all of these projects will proceed to formal applications. Staff is unable to project when the complete planning applications will be submitted to the Town.

3.4 Other Notable Development Planning Initiatives in 2024

In addition to development applications processing, planning staff have undertaken initiatives to help facilitate development activities in the Town, as per the strategic objectives of Council. The following sections include notable initiatives that staff undertook in 2024.

3.4.1 Vandorf Secondary Plan Area – Employment lands in the north-west quadrant

Planning Staff, in collaboration with Economic Development staff, were successful in bringing together the landowners in the Vandorf Secondary Plan Area in the Northwest quadrant of the Plan area to coordinate the required studies and initiatives to advance employment development in the area. Through the course of the year staff continued to engage with the Landowners group and facilitated discussions amongst landowners, and relevant departments and agencies, to coordinate delivery of servicing and transportation studies and requirements, that would enable planning approvals for employment development and attract investment in the area. It is staff's goal that timing of planning approvals be aligned with the timing of servicing and transportation solutions delivery, for projects to advance to building permits in a timely manner.

3.4.2 Additional Residential Units

Staff initiated and completed the Zoning By-law Amendment to permit up to three (3) residential units on fully serviced (water and sewer) settlement areas in the Town, that could be either integrated with the primary residential dwelling or accessory to the primary residential dwelling. Since the enactment of the by-law, there has been a significant

interest mostly in integrated accessory units (basement units). Based on Building permit activity 30 building permits were issued for integrated ARUs in 2024.

See attached Attachment 1 to this report that provides a snapshot of development activity and other planning activity that staff undertake.

3.5 2025 Housing Market Outlook

Based on the Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC) housing forecast, the development market being modest in 2025, is expected to pick up in 2026 and 2027, attributing to factors such as lower interest rates, changes to mortgage rules, supportive federal and provincial policies and economic activity picking up in 2026 and 2027¹.

Staff will continue to process applications while improving and streamlining the current processes in place, to help deliver timely decisions on applications.

3.6 Building Permit Activity

3.6.1 Residential Building Permits

The total number of building permits issued in 2024 saw a modest decrease compared to the previous year. The years 2023 and 2024 experienced a significant decline in permits issued for single, semi-detached, and townhouse units compared to prior years. The primary contributing factor continues to be the number of applications for new residential housing units within subdivision developments.

Between 2021 and 2022, new subdivision developments accounted for an average of 500 building permit applications per year. However, in 2024, applications for new housing units dropped to just 18. **Table 3** provides a comparison of new residential unit permits and total building permits issued from 2021 to 2024.

Table 3

Year	Number of Permits Issued for New Housing Units (Single, Semi, Townhouse)	Total Number of Permits Issued
2024	18	318
2023	50	342
2022	606	994
2021	460	798

¹ [2025 Housing Market Outlook](#)

3.6.2 Non-Residential Building Permits

Despite the decline in residential permits, non-residential development remained strong in 2024. **Table 4** below highlights the new Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (ICI) developments and their respective floor areas.

Table 4

PROJECT	LOCATION	USE	FLOOR AREA
Volkswagen Dealership	25 Automall Boulevard	Commercial	11,792 ft ²
Mixed Use Building	16 Cardico Drive	Industrial	17,413 ft ²
Healthcare Office Building	211 Sam Miller Way	Commercial	36,518 ft ²
Galatia Lane Estate	15450 Woodbine Avenue	Industrial	124,928 ft ²
Unionville College	3844 Stouffville Road	Institutional	4386.92 ft ²
Shady Lane Tree	17468 Warden Avenue	Industrial	7438.11 ft ²
Livgreen 2 (Ground Floor Retail)	5945 Main Street	Mixed-use	2760.00 ft ²
Total			205,236 ft² (19,067 m²)

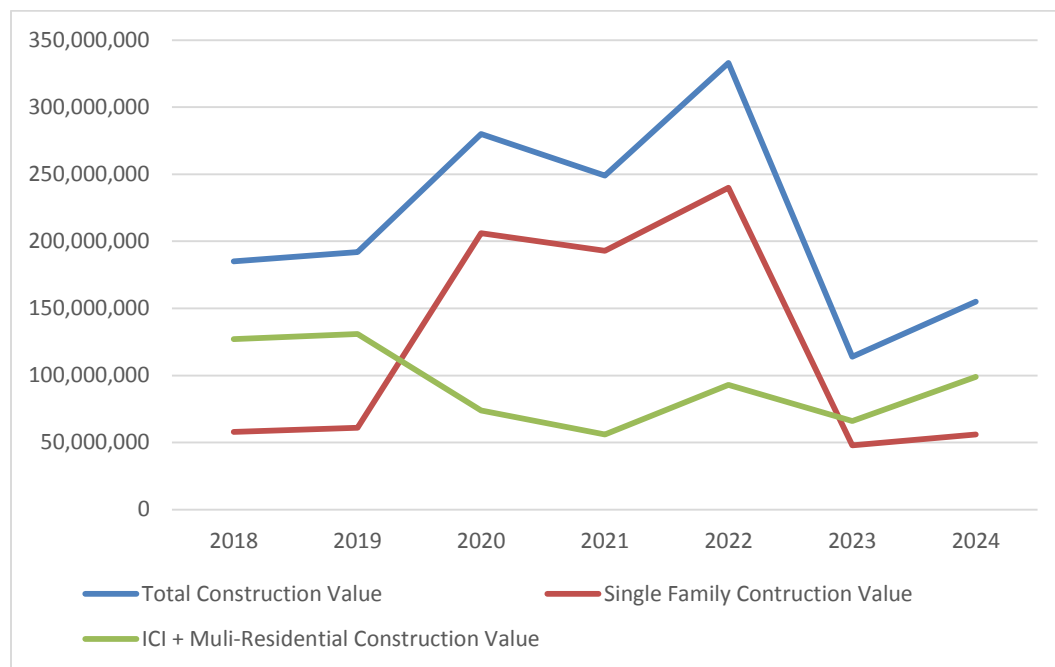
A total of over 200,000 ft² of non-residential floor area was approved through building permits in 2024.

3.6.3 Overall Permit Activity & Construction Value

In 2024, permits were issued for 222 new residential units, which included:

- 18 new single-detached units
- 174 apartment units (as part of the Livgreen2 development)
- 30 new integrated residential units (Second Suites)

The total value of construction activity increased compared to 2023, primarily driven by new ICI projects. **Figure 2** reflects the total construction activity value for permits issued between 2018 and 2024.

Figure 2

Permit revenues collected in 2024 totalled \$1,879,812.06, highlighting sustained growth in non-residential permit activity despite a decline in new housing unit applications during the same period. Building operations continue to be sustained.

4. Financial Implications:

See **Report FI-005-25, 2024 Year-End Financial Results**, dated April 16, 2024, prepared by Finance Services Commission.

5. Broader Intergovernmental Impacts and/or Considerations:

The *Planning Act* plays a pivotal role in shaping land use, development, and community growth across the province. Recent amendments to the Planning Act in the previous years, have introduced significant changes that impact planning applications and development activity in the Town as well as across Ontario, which combined with market conditions has impacted the planning and development trends.

6. Communication:

None

7. Alignment with Strategic Plan:

1. A Town that Grows

A Town that grows in support of complete communities

8. Attachments:

Attachment No. 1 – 2024 Annual Development Activity Report

9. Related Reports:

April 2, 2025 – [DS-005-25](#) 2024 Housing Indicators Monitoring Report

February 21, 2024 – [DS-011-24](#) 2023 Annual Development Activity Report

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