

**Ontario Association of Architects
2025 Admission Course
Planning and Development Approvals**

Presenter

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Description

This course provides an overview of the planning and land development approvals process in Ontario. Topics covered include the roles architects, other professionals and authorities having jurisdiction play in that process. The course describes the various planning tools that implement Ontario's planning legislation and provides a guide to understanding and navigating the complex development approvals process.

Course Objectives

- Explain why the land use planning and development process is relevant to architects.
- Identify the ways the province and municipalities plan for growth.
- Identify the authorities that have decision-making powers within the planning process.
- List, describe, and compare the planning instruments that control land development in Ontario.
- Describe the circumstances under which planning instruments constitute applicable law.
- Explain how the various planning instruments are amended.
- Describe how to prepare an application for a planning approval.
- Outline the criteria used to evaluate planning applications.
- Identify issues that can affect the approval process and how to address them.
- Describe the architect's role in the planning and development approval process including as an expert witness before planning appeal bodies.
- Describe what the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) and the Toronto Local Appeal Body (TLAB) take into consideration in making decisions on planning appeals.

Course Topics

Why architects need to understand the planning and development approvals process and how to work within it.

- Planning approvals apply to most development projects architects are involved with.
- Planning instruments and regulations define part of the framework for the architect's design.
- Some planning approvals constitute applicable law for the purpose of obtaining a building permit.

Planning instruments architects most frequently encounter and how they regulate development:

- Official Plans, including: Secondary Plans
- Zoning By-laws:
- Area and site specific by-laws
- Zoning amendments, minor variances and Committees of Adjustment
- Site Plan Control
- Plans of Subdivision and Consent Applications
- Urban Design Guidelines

The Planning Approval Process

- What the process is and how it works
- Planning applications
- Who does what
- How to manage the process
- Understanding and incorporating municipal requirements
- Gathering information and building your case to get your project approved
- Planning approvals and the building permit process
- Public consultation and meetings
- Working with staff, politicians, and the public

What happens when your project is challenged?

- Appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) and the Toronto Local Appeal Body (TLAB)
- The Architect at the LPAT and TLAB

Texts

Citizen's Guides to Land-use Planning

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/citizens-guide-land-use-planning>

The Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended

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