

INTENSIFICATION / CHANGE OF USE APPLICATION

Planning & Development | Town of High River

This information sheet provides basic information on change of use/Intensification of use development permit applications. The information is a simplification of the Town's [Land Use Bylaw](#). In the event of any discrepancy/omission, the Land Use Bylaw takes precedence.

Pre-application meetings are **required** for a **discretionary** Intensification/Change of Use permit and are not **required** for a **permitted** Intensification/Change of Use permit. The Land Use Bylaw lists the uses in the Land Use Bylaw that are discretionary and permitted in each zone. Staff will determine for you whether the use that you are proposing is discretionary or permitted in the applicable zone. Staff reserve the discretion to require a pre-application meeting if staff believe that the complexity of the application warrants it.

Regardless of whether the intensification/change of use is permitted or discretionary, we ask that you fill in the **Intensification/Change of Use application form** (found at highriver.ca/development-permits). **The Town will not require a payment for permitted uses** and will keep the application form on file for information tracking purposes. If staff determine that your proposed use is discretionary, you will submit the Intensification/Change of Use application form, the fee and all requirements (unless otherwise discussed with staff). **The Town does NOT accept incomplete applications.**

If you would like to book a pre-application meeting or would like to speak with the Planning & Development Services Division before submitting your application, please contact us at planning@highriver.ca or at 403.652.2110 and we would be pleased to assist you.

If any part of the application does not comply with the [Land Use Bylaw](#) (at the Town's discretion), you will be required to either revise the application or apply for a variance application (found at highriver.ca/development-permits) which costs \$175 as per the [Rate Bylaw](#).

Do I need a development permit for my intensification/change of use proposal?

- The Land Use Bylaw lists the uses in the Land Use Bylaw that are discretionary and permitted in each zone. Development permits are only required for discretionary uses. Planning & Development staff will review the proposal to determine if the proposed use is discretionary or permitted.

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- You may require Building Permits. This will be discussed at the pre-application meeting. Please contact permits@highriver.ca for more information.

What does the Town look for during the review process?

- The Town's Land Use Bylaw includes two guiding principles. These guiding principles are very critical and the Town will use them to evaluate the suitability of your application.

Guiding Principles for evaluating applications

The Town's Land Use Bylaw includes two guiding principles. These guiding principles are very critical and the Town will use them to evaluate the suitability of your application.

A Pedestrian as the Universal Measure of Design:

- The Town of High River is to be designed based on a scale that is comfortable to people, encourages walking, accommodates a variety of functions, can change and adapt over time, and that will foster an environment that supports and reinforces the social aspects of the Town.

Stewardship through Sustainable Design:

- The Town, the community, and the development industry act as stewards for the High River of tomorrow. All development shall focus on long term quality over short term gains.

- The Town also reviews the application to ensure that it complies with all of the Land Use Bylaw regulations as well as the policies in the [Town Plan](#) and in any other applicable policy documents (Area Structure Plans, Area Redevelopment Plans, Neighbourhood Outline Plans, etc. found [here](#)).
- If there are aspects of your proposal that do not comply with the Town's regulations/policies, staff will go through options with you. Options could include applying for a variance or applying to amend the applicable policy document

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Development Permit Process

The approximate timeline to issue a Development Permit for a Change of Use/Intensification of Use (when a Development Permit is required) is 2 week for permitted and 4 weeks for discretionary (from acceptance of application to end of appeal period).

PRE-APPLICATION

- Pre-application meetings are **required** for a **discretionary** Intensification/Change of Use permit and are **strongly recommended** for a **permitted** Intensification/Change of Use permit.
- Pre-application meetings are an opportunity to discuss the application with representatives from all relevant departments. They are an effective and efficient way to catch any “red flags” and generally result in a more efficient application processing time. We will also go through the Town’s Guiding Principles (noted above) with respect to your application.
- Please contact staff at 403.652.2110 or at planning@highriver.ca to book a pre-application meeting/discuss your proposal. Please give us 2-3 business days to set up the meeting.
- We will also go through the Town’s Guiding Principles (noted on previous page) with respect to your application.

APPLICATION

- Application Fee: \$250 (as per [Rate Bylaw](#))
- Application form (found at highriver.ca/development-permits)

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TOWN REVIEW

- Planning staff circulate to internal departments for their comments. They are given 1 to 2 weeks to provide comments at the discretion of Planning & Development staff based on the complexity of the application. Staff also have the discretion to circulate external agencies (e.g. Alberta Transportation) if the change/intensification is major and is likely to have a significant impact on the area.
- You can see the progress being made on your application [here](#). This webpage shows the progress of all current applications and is updated every week.
- You will be provided with the comments received through a formally compiled letter after the circulation period is complete.
- If revisions are required, you will need to resubmit applicable drawings in the same size and format as you submitted them in your original application. These comments may become conditions of your permit.
- You will have the opportunity to review these conditions and let the Town know if you have any comments or concerns before the Town issues the decision/permit.
- These comments may include requests for revisions.

TOWN DECISION

- After receiving satisfactory revisions (if applicable), the Town issues its decision on the application, known as the “Notice of Decision” (support with conditions or refusal with reasons).
- If you disagree with the Town’s decision, you have the opportunity to file an appeal (see “Appeals by Applicant” below) within 21 days from the date the Notice of Decision was issued.

PUBLIC REVIEW

- If the use is **permitted**, there is no opportunity for public appeal.
- If the use is **discretionary** and the Town supports the application, the Town posts a notice on the property to notify the public of the application, the Town’s decision, and conditions (if applicable) for 21 days. Any member of the public can appeal a decision on a **discretionary** use (see “Appeals by Public” below)

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ISSUANCE (IF NO APPEAL)

- If there are no public appeals (in the case of a discretionary use application), the Town issues you the Development Permit.

APPEALS (BY APPLICANT)

- You can appeal the Town's decision on your application by submitting the [Notice of Appeal](#) through the Legislative Services Department via legislativeservices@highriver.ca. You must submit your appeal application within 21 days of the date that the Notice of Decision was issued.
- The appeal fee is \$300 (as per [Rate Bylaw](#))
- Your hearing will take place within 30 days of your appeal being filed. You will be notified in writing of your hearing date at least 5 days prior to the hearing date.

APPEALS (BY PUBLIC)

- The public can also appeal the decision on a **discretionary** use by submitting the [Notice of Appeal](#) through the Legislative Services Department via legislativeservices@highriver.ca. The public appeal must be submitted within 21 days of the date that the Notice of Decision was issued.
- The appeal fee is \$300 (as per [Rate Bylaw](#))
- The hearing will take place within 30 days of the appeal being filed. You will be notified in writing of the hearing date at least 5 days prior to the hearing date.