

Building News

Latest Building News and Bulletin Updates

Do You Want to Build in Hastings Highlands? Step One – Planning

Community planning is aimed at identifying common community goals and balancing competing interests. The County of Hastings Official Plan contains goals, objectives, and policies to manage and direct future growth in the Municipality of Hastings Highlands. The Hastings Highlands Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw is a policy tool that implements the goals and objectives set out in the Official Plan.

The Planning Department provides advice, reviews applications, and makes recommendations to Council and the Committee of Adjustment for planning applications and matters in accordance with Ontario's *Planning Act*.

The Planning Department also reviews applications and is an integral part of the process for landowners purchasing Shore Road Allowances and entering into Development Agreements with the Municipality.



Rural Land Use Planning

Before any development can occur on a property, a landowner is required to have a 911 number to ensure emergency services are able to locate the property and the entrance is built to Ministry of Transportation standards. Contact the Municipality of Hastings Highlands for an Entrance Permit application.

<https://hastingshighlands.ca/services/roads/>



Did you know?

If you're building on waterfront property, silt fencing is one of the cheapest and most effective ways to keep storm water sediment on a construction site from contaminating our lakes.

The Municipality requires a silt fence deposit of \$750.00 for building permits issued within 30 metres of a water body (Refundable after final inspection. Not refundable after three years from permit issued date or if the silt fence is not installed).



Building and Planning Process

Thinking of Building? What Should I Do?

Building a new home, addition or accessory building can be both an exciting and daunting process, and it is always a good idea to involve Hastings Highlands' Planning Department at the early conceptual stages.

As part of the initial process, we strongly recommend you complete a Pre-consultation Form with a sketch/site plan. This helps the Planning Department to review the concept/plan and provide advice from a land use planning perspective.

A Pre-consultation Form can be found at <https://hastingshighlands.ca/services/building-planning/planning/thinking-of-building-what-should-i-do/step-1-planning/>

The complete Pre-consultation Form and sketch/site plan can be submitted through the Customer Service Request by clicking the "yellow button" at <http://www.hastingshighlands.ca> or by mail/drop-off at the Municipal office.

Need more information?

What is the zoning of my property?

Can I sever my property?

Can I buy my Shore Road Allowance?

Do I need a Minor Variance?

What does Environmentally Protected mean?

Submit a **Customer Service Request** and a member of the Planning Team will contact you.



The latest breaking building news!

Step Two - Building

Having worked through the initial Planning Stages (Step 1), you should now be able to establish what structure(s) you can build on your property and the location(s) in relation to your lot lines. You are ready to move from conceptual stage/plans to construction plans.

Homeowners may design their own home and accessory buildings, however, if you have no experience in construction or working with the Ontario Building Code, we strongly recommend you consult with a design professional to minimize potential delays.

Please review the Municipality's Building Permit Guide and Application package, available through our website or by contacting/attending our office. The package includes a checklist and guidance on how to complete the permit application package.

For a building permit application to commence, the Municipality requires a complete package to be submitted, including a site plan, construction drawings, forms from the package completed/signed and building fees paid.

Once the Municipality has received the completed application and fees, the residential permit review process takes ten business days for the initial review, after which the applicant will receive either a building permit, or a plans examination letter explaining what additional information is required for a permit to be issued. **Please note:** If further information is required, the Building Dept. will review any follow up submissions in sequential order.

What other fees and permits are required?

Electrical permits and inspections fall under the jurisdiction of the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA).

It's the responsibility of the homeowner or builder to contact the ESA for permits/approvals.

Septic system permits (up to 10,000 litres per day) and approvals are treated as Building Permits under the jurisdiction of the Municipality.

An **entrance permit** is required to install a new entrance on your property, to change the location of an existing one, or to install a second entrance. Entrance approvals are handled by the Roads & Public Works Department

New civic addresses (9-1-1 numbers) for vacant lots are acquired through the Roads Department. Contact the Planning Clerk for further information.



Projects that require a building permit

Under the *Ontario Building Code Act*, a building permit is required to construct, demolish, renovate, alter, install, or change the use of a building. The following is a list of typical projects or situations that require the issuance of a building permit prior to construction:

- New buildings or structures greater than 10 square metres (108 ft²) in total floor area, measured by the outside dimensions, or any size if they include services. This includes sleeping cabins, boathouses or other accessory buildings or structures, (and single storey sheds greater than 15 square metres in area).
- Additions to existing buildings or structures.
- Renovations that involve structural framing, altering means of egress and for exits.
- New or replacement decks.
- Wood burning appliances, including new or replacement of existing components.
- Replacement of windows or doors if the rough opening size is enlarged.
- Relocation or addition of plumbing fixtures.
- Replacement of interior water supply or drainpipes.
- Wind turbines that generate more than 3 kW of electricity.
- Solar panels on new/existing structures will require a permit.
- Quonset huts and pre-engineered metal buildings.
- Repair or replacement of all types of building foundations. Note that load bearing cement slabs for all houses, and garages greater than 55 square metres (592 sq ft) require engineered design.

Projects that do not require a Building Permit

- Single storey storage buildings with a total floor area of 15 sq. metres (160 ft²) or less. Zoning Bylaw requirements must still be followed.
- Fences but still must be 30 m from water body.
- Replacement of plumbing fixtures (toilet, sink, bathtub, shower, hot water tank) in their original locations.
- Replacement of windows or doors where the rough opening size does not change.
- Replacement of shingles or other non-structural roofing material. Replacing or adding new roof trusses or rafters, requires a building permit.
- Installation of photovoltaic (PV) panels on a pole. Note: an electrical permit may be required. Check with an electrician or the Electrical Safety Authority.
- Wind turbines that generate 3 kW or less of electricity.

Please Note: You must still comply with the requirements of the Municipality's Zoning Bylaw and, if applicable, the Ontario Building Code. If the above lists do not include specifics related to your project, or if you're not sure whether a permit will be required, please contact the Building Department.



The scoop of the day

The latest updates



Waterfront construction site.

Every Summer, there are many reports and enquiries to the Building Department from boaters regarding the occurrence of construction visible from the waterfront. As of the 2021 construction season, Hastings Highlands started providing waterfront permit holders with an additional copy of their building permit. The additional permit will be pink and laminated and is to be visibly posted at the waterfront. Therefore, any new additional construction on a waterfront property without a laminated pink permit, can be reported to the Building Department at 613-338-2811 ext. 255 and the Building Department will investigate.

Frequently Asked Planning and Building Questions

Q: I would like to purchase a set of house plans that I saw in a magazine or on the internet. Would these be acceptable to submit with my building permit application?

A: Under the new Ontario Building Code requirements, all plans, drawings, and specifications submitted for building permit approval must be prepared by the home owner or by a certified designer registered with the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. A certified designer will have a Building Code Identification Number (BCIN).

Q: My brother-in-law knows AutoCAD and has offered to do my house plans for me. Is this, okay?

A: If your brother-in-law is a certified designer and has a registered BCIN number with the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, his drawings would be acceptable for submission with your building permit application. He would need to fill out and sign the Schedule 1: Designer Information sheet, included with your building permit application form.

Q: I'm thinking of finishing my basement. Do I need a Building Permit?

A: Yes, you may require a Building Permit. If your renovation activity includes installation, erection, extension or material alteration or repair, a Building Permit is required. Contact the Building Dept. if you are not sure whether a Building Permit is required.

Q: How can I check if my designer has a BCIN or is qualified under the Building Code?

A: The qualification and registration status of a designer may be verified through the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's public registry, accessible online through their Qualification and Registration Tracking System (QuARTS). To search the Public Register, visit:

<https://csonramp.mah.gov.on.ca/onmah/preLogin.do>, click on Search Public Register, and enter the designer's surname or business name.

Q: Can I do the drawings for my own house or addition?

A: The Ontario Building Code allows a homeowner to prepare and submit their own building plans provided that the plans are legible, drawn at an appropriate scale, and contain all the required information.

Q: Can I erect a utility or storage shed on my vacant property?

A: No. These types of structures are considered "accessory" to the principal building, such as your home or cottage. They are not permitted as the principal building.

Q: When does a building permit application require a septic system approval?

A: A septic permit application is required at the same time you are applying for a building permit if you are (1) constructing a new building; (2) adding a bedroom, sleeping cabin, or washroom; (3) increasing the number of fixture units (sink, toilet, bathtub, shower, laundry, dishwasher, etc.); or (4) increasing the total floor area of the building by 15 percent or more.

Q: I need to replace my existing septic system – do I need a permit and where do I get it?

A: Yes, you do need to get approval prior to installing any new septic system or replacing an old one. This includes greywater leaching pits, leaching pits for overflow from composting toilets (known as a cesspool), septic tanks, tile beds and holding tanks. Septic permits are issued by the Building Department.

Q: How long does it take to process a building permit?

A: 10 business days for residential/septic permits, and a minimum of 15 days to 30 days for commercial permits depending on the major occupancy and size of the structure.



Shipping (Sea) Containers

Depending on the zoning and if the specified provisions can be met, you may be able to use a shipping container as an accessory structure. A building permit may be required when adding these structures to your property. Contact the Building Dept. to find out if you require a building permit. Shipping containers are not permitted on vacant land.

Building or buying a tiny home? Check out the below Government of Ontario website.

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/build-or-buy-tiny-home#section-1>

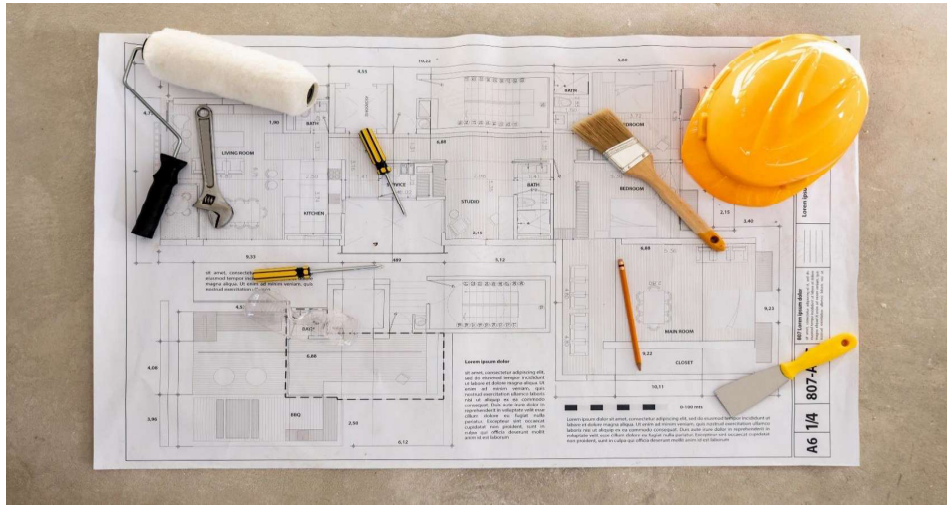
Tiny Homes



Before you decide to add a tiny home to your property, it is important that you first speak with our municipal planning and building departments. They can tell you whether you can add or build a tiny home to your property and answer questions related to the Building Code, zoning and other by-laws.

Some of the important things you should talk to your municipality about as you consider building a tiny home include:

- municipal zoning requirements that apply to your property,
- designing your tiny home to comply with the Building Code,
- getting necessary building permits required building inspections during construction,
- parking requirements,
- size requirements for tiny homes,
- rules about connecting to municipal services, if available.



If you start construction without the necessary permits, you may be ordered to stop work, ordered to remove work already done, charged a 'Commencing Construction before Permit Issued' fee, or prosecuted. Contact the Building Department if you are not sure whether you need a permit for your project.

If the structure was improperly built without obtaining a permit, you still must get a permit to demolish it. If you're working on more than one structure, you must get a separate demolition permit for each one that requires demolition. A shed and detached garage on the same property, for instance, each requires their own demolition permit. So, in that case, you would need to demolition permits.

A building inspector reviews projects during key stages of construction to ensure work complies with the Building Code and the plans originally submitted for review. The inspector may visit a site several times depending on the project. They must be able to see the work that requires inspection. An inspector requires 48 hours' notice to book an inspection.

As the new homeowner, it is your responsibility to ensure you use the home in a manner that meets the Ontario Building Code. Do not assume the previous owner obtained a building permit before doing renovations to the home. Have your real estate lawyer contact the municipality's Planning Dept. for a compliance report before final sale.

Open Building Permits

If you have an open building permit, you are required by law* to notify the Building Department for an inspection. It is also in your best interest to do so, as having an open building permit may affect the following:

- Future real estate transactions
- Mortgage financing

Please contact the Hastings Highlands Building Department to arrange an inspection of your property.

Demolition Permits

A demolition permit is required to demolish any building that is larger than 10 square metres (108 sq. ft.) or any part of a building that is attached to an existing structure. A demolition permit is a legal document that provides you with the right to demolish any structure that requires a building permit to construct. But just because a building permit was not acquired before construction does not mean you don't need a demolition permit.

Don't move into a house without an Occupancy Permit, it's Illegal

The following is a summary of the current criteria for allowing the occupancy of a newly constructed house:

- The structure is substantially completed & ready to be used for its intended purpose,
- The building envelope is substantially completed: cladding, roofing, windows, doors, assemblies requiring a fire resistance rating, closures, insulation, vapour barriers & air barriers.
- Insulation & vapour barrier is protected from mechanical damage where required,
- Required electrical supply is provided,
- Required firefighting access routes have been provided & are accessible,
- Required exits, floor access and egress systems, handrail, guards, smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, fire separations & fire stopping components & systems are completed & operational,
- Required exhaust fumes barriers & self-closing devices on doors between attached or built-in garage & the dwelling unit are completed & operational,
- Water supply, sewage disposal, lighting & heating systems are completed & operational,
- Foamed plastics are protected by an approved covering,
- The water system, building drain, building sewer, drainage system, and venting system are completed and operational,
- Required plumbing fixtures are substantially completed and operational.

