

Streamlining the Approval Roadmap

Photo source: Hasler Homes Ltd.

Like any journey, building a new home has twists and turns along the way. With careful planning, a clear, early understanding of what is required, and a collaborative spirit, we can get to building the thousands of homes British Columbians were promised, faster and more affordably.

From application to occupancy, we need a streamlined process that all partners can follow, with as few surprises as possible along the way.

As a partner in building homes in the province, the industry is committed to working with all governments to streamline the approvals roadmap and make it easier for all involved.

There are three common barriers in reviewing and approving an application to build homes. These common barriers add costs and delays, but most importantly, impede a future resident from opening the door to their new home.

CHBA BC RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW TO REMOVE ROADBLOCKS:

1. REDUCING REGULATORY BURDENS.

Residential construction is one of the most heavily regulated industries. Although they can be well-intentioned, the layers of policy and outdated bureaucratic practices are unnecessarily delaying the process and make it difficult to have homes delivered.

HOW

Reform provincial authorizations to reduce unnecessary, unclear regulatory and processing requirements across Ministries, especially for permits required through the Heritage Conservation Act, Water Sustainability Act, and Riparian Areas Protection Regulations.



2. MITIGATE AGAINST ADDITIONAL OR NEW POLICY CHANGES ON IN-STREAM APPLICATIONS.

Sometimes surprises come along the way, but far too often applicants are asked to adjust course to adhere to a brand new policy or to fulfill an unexpected request that isn't required in by-laws or policies. Even more challenging is when this happens at the cusp of an approval or a construction schedule. Having to pivot on unknown conditions is a reoccurring issue expressed by all builders and requires conscious efforts from approval authorities to mitigate against.

HOW

Adopt best practices and policy measures that discourage new or additional non-policy requirements during the later stages of review processes, particularly when Council readings are in process or when building permit stage is reached.



3. RELIANCE ON QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS.

Applications often require the involvement of qualified professionals for more technical expertise. Qualified professionals are held to high technical and ethical standards under the Professional Governance Act. Hiring these professionals to consult or prepare a report takes a lot of time and money. We need to increase our productivity and find ways to stop duplicating professionally-reviewed work, and instead rely on their expertise.

HOW

Eliminate or reduce duplicate reviews for professional reports and sign-off, while also introducing expedited approvals stream for applications completed by a qualified professional.



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PRE-APPLICATION 4-10 Months



Due Diligence

- Traffic Study (If required)
- Geographical Report
- Topographic Study
- Order Phase 1 Environmental Report
- Geotechnical Report
- Appraisal for financing

Demolition Needed?

- Apply for Demo Permit
- Prep House (shut off utilities)
- Arborist Report
- Asbestos Testing and Removal (if required)
- Clearance Letter
- Notice of Project

If Developer Permit not required, skip to Building Permit Application



BUILDING PERMIT 5-8 Months



Preliminary

- Approval of Rezoning
- Letter of Approval (3rd Reading)
- 4th Reading/Approval (Rezoning, Development Permit, Subdivision, Servicing)

Consult and Revise



Review

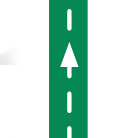
- External Referrals
- Public Input
- Advisory Body Input



DEVELOPMENT PERMIT 6-8 Months



OCCUPANCY



Submit Building Permit Application



Provincial Ministries approvals (if necessary)

Submit Detailed Design (Building, Engineering, Landscaping)

Detailed Review (Planning, Engineering, Landscaping)

Draft Servicing Agreement (Legal)

Pay Securities

Review (Engineering, Building, Landscaping)

Building Permit Approval

Inspections

CONSTRUCTION 24 Months



Review Requirements

- Drawings
 - General
 - Site Plan Drawings
 - Cross Sections
 - Elevations Drawings
 - Floor Plans
- Sealed Engineer's Drawings
- Engineered Truss & Beam Layouts and Designs
- Title Search
- Owner's Authorization
- Owner's Acknowledgement Letter
- Development Approval
- Water Letter
- Septic Approval
- BC Energy Code Pre Build Compliance Report
- BC Energy Modelling Summary
- BC Housing Registration
- Copy of Title Search
- Preliminary Engineering Service and Concept
- Arborist Report
- Tree Planting/Replacement Plans
- Character Study
- Building Design Guidelines
- Preliminary Lot Grading
- Architectural Plans - Various
- Landscape Plans
- Proposed Signage
- Environmental Impact Study
- Geo-technical Impact study
- Traffic Study
- Parking Study
- Site Profile
- Tree retention Strategy
- Additional Engineering Studies

Approvals

- BC Hydro
- Health Authority
- Technical Safety BC
- Fire Department Sign Off
- Indigenous Peoples Land Codes
- Energy Step Code
- National Research Council (NRC)
- Building Code

Provincial Ministries involved

- Ministry of Forests
- Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
- Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs
- Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
- Ministry of Environment
- Partnerships with Indigenous Governments
- Ministry of Housing