

Planning & Development Services Activity Summary



Planning 101 Series #7 – Heritage Planning

Planning is a discipline that tends to be forward-facing, as practitioners study, design and regulate the built environment to ensure that it meets the needs of future generations. Given this focus on the future, it can be easy to overlook how planning intersects with our past.

That's where heritage planning comes in. Heritage planning is one of many specialized subfields of planning and focuses on the conservation of important heritage resources and their integration into our contemporary environment. While heritage planning typically involves the protection of historical assets in the form of buildings and structures, it can also include the preservation of our natural heritage (e.g. forests, wetlands, watercourses).

Why is Heritage Planning important?

Heritage planning ensures that cherished landmarks and landscapes are preserved so they can be enjoyed by future generations. These preserved heritage resources then deliver important social, economic and environmental benefits that enrich our communities and improve the quality of life for residents.

The benefits of heritage conservation are so significant that legislation and policies have been established at all levels of government (international, federal, provincial and municipal) to ensure that our heritage assets are protected. For example, the Provincial Policy Statement, which provides policy direction on land use planning issues for all Ontario municipalities, includes an entire section on cultural heritage. The first policy in this

section requires that "Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved."

Social Benefits

"Study the past if you want to define the future." – Confucius (Ancient Chinese Philosopher)

In the broadest sense, heritage planning is important because it fosters our relationship with the past. It encourages the identification, protection, management and promotion of tangible and intangible assets that help tell the story of who we are. These connections to our past allow us to define our identity and find meaning in our built environment. As the world shifts towards a global community, more and more places are beginning to look the same. Integrating landscapes from the past into our present communities reflects our true history and establishes an authentic identity that can never be duplicated anywhere else.



St. George's Anglican Church is the oldest remaining Place of Worship in Ajax and its construction is closely linked with the arrival of the railway in the 1850s.

Economic Benefits

“New ideas need old buildings.” – Jane Jacobs
(American/Canadian Urban Theorist)

Many of the economic benefits of heritage planning are tied to the fact that people generally desire exposure to historical sites. They marvel at the fine craftsmanship of old buildings and value the unique ambiance of walking along historic streetscapes. In this sense, good heritage planning enables our communities to become economic engines as destinations for tourists. But it’s not just tourists who appreciate our heritage. Old buildings also tend to be incubators for creative industries and are often home to trendy restaurants, cafes, craft breweries, art studios and other uses that form destinations for the residents of our communities. Further, and contrary to popular belief, heritage designation drives real estate markets by increasing, not decreasing, property values. Prospective buyers often desire properties in established communities that are full of unique and charming character, and it is heritage designation that is the most effective way to ensure the preservation of this character.



JamFest is an annual event that benefits from the backdrop of historic buildings in Pickering Village. Photo courtesy of Pickering Village JamFest.

Environmental Benefits

“The greenest building is one that is already built.” – Carl Elefante (American Architect)

When we think of sustainable development, we often visualize brand new buildings constructed of space-age materials to the highest environmental standards. However, the most environmentally-sound form of development is to retain and reuse our existing building stock. Heritage planning allows us to do this, as we convert old factories into offices and old churches into condominiums. Approximately one-third of all waste in Canada is construction and demolition waste. Repurposing old buildings and retrofitting them with new sustainable technologies (windows, heating systems,

insulation, etc.) enables us to preserve their embodied energy (and their inherent beauty), while diverting valuable materials from the waste stream.



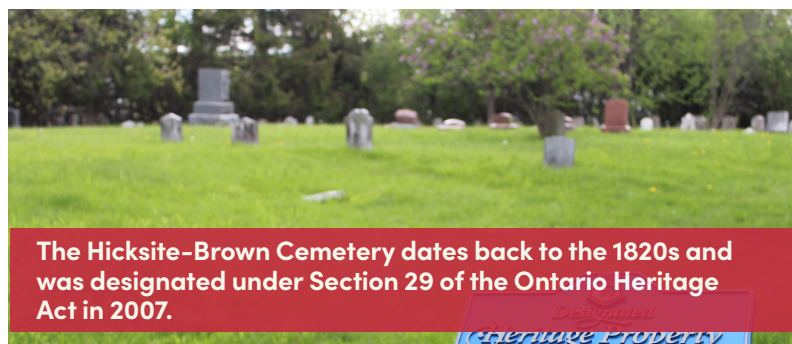
Demolition of an unsalvageable former cottage building near Duffins Creek in Ajax

What tools are available to support Heritage Planning?

In Ontario, many of the tools available to support heritage planning are available by way of the Ontario Heritage Act (the Act). Enacted in 1975, the Act is most significant for its role in granting municipalities the authority to formally designate properties as “heritage.”

Individual Designation

Section 29 (Part IV) of the Act enables municipalities to designate individual properties as heritage properties. In order to be designated, a property must satisfy two or more of the nine criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06, which relate to a property’s associative, design and contextual value. A property becomes designated once a municipality passes a by-law that articulates the property’s cultural heritage value and lists the physical attributes of the property that embody its heritage value. Once designated, a property owner cannot demolish any structure on the property or alter any heritage attribute without the written approval of the municipality. This enables the municipality to play an active role in the property’s long-term management and ensures that its heritage value is preserved for the benefit of the community. In Ajax, there are 31 individually designated properties across the municipality.



The Hicksite-Brown Cemetery dates back to the 1820s and was designated under Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in 2007.

Heritage Property

Heritage District Designation

Section 41 (Part V) of the Act enables municipalities to designate clusters of heritage properties under a single designation known as a Heritage Conservation District (HCD). HCD designation is important because it allows a municipality to identify and protect heritage value that spans across multiple properties. In addition to the assets on the individual properties within the HCD, the designation can also include streets, bridges, trees, views and other shared assets that contribute to the collective value of the area. In order for an HCD to be designated, a study must first be completed to ensure that at least 25 percent of the properties in the defined area satisfy two or more of the nine criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06. Further, the designation by-law for an HCD must include a Heritage Conservation District Plan, which provides policy, guidelines and procedures to manage property modifications and new construction within the designated area. In Ajax, there is one designated HCD, located in Pickering Village, which consists of 59 separate properties.



Pickering Village contains a wealth of historic commercial and residential buildings that are now protected by a Heritage Conservation District.

Listing of Non-Designated Properties

Section 27 (Part IV) of the Act requires that each municipality keep a register of designated heritage properties. It also, however, allows for the listing of non-designated properties, provided that each property meets at least one criterion from Ontario Regulation 9/06. The benefit of listing a non-designated heritage property on the Heritage Register is that it affords the municipality a 60-day review period if the owner of the property intends to demolish a building on that property. This enables the municipality to complete adequate research on the value of the property to determine if it should be designated, as opposed to demolished. Non-designated heritage properties may be listed on a Heritage Register for a period of two years, at which time they expire and are subject to a five-year moratorium from reintroduction to the Register. While there are properties in Ajax that continue to be evaluated for heritage value, there are

presently no non-designated properties on the Heritage Register.



The Arnold Estate is one of approximately one hundred properties in Ajax that are thought to have heritage value but are not designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Can heritage properties be developed/redeveloped?

It is a common misconception that designated heritage properties cannot be developed or redeveloped. To the contrary, one of the main responsibilities in the field of heritage planning is to manage new development on heritage properties so that the heritage value of the property is not negatively impacted. There has been new development on a handful of designated heritage properties in Ajax, with the most recent being a residential infill project at the Westglen Property on Westney Road near Taunton Road. This property, which features an 1850s-era farmhouse was subdivided in 2017 to permit the development of 13 new residential lots. The farmhouse was retained and the landscape around it was enhanced and restored to accurately reflect its 19th century rural setting.



The c. 1856 Westglen farmhouse was restored and rehabilitated as part of an infill development project approved by the Town in 2017.

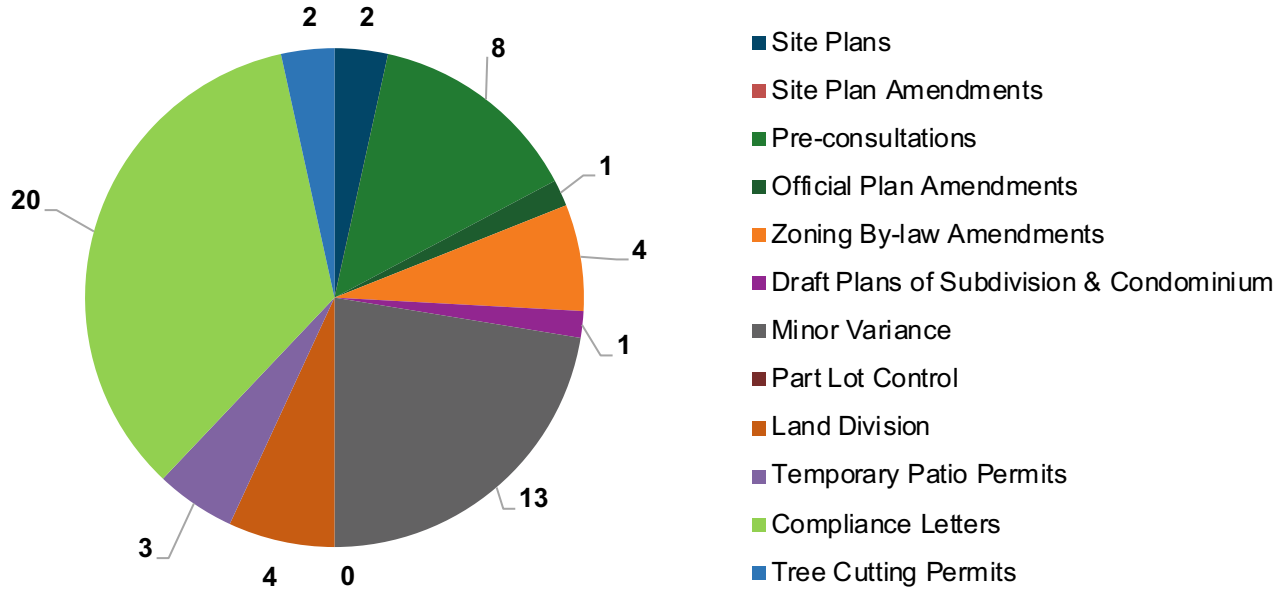
The goal of heritage planning should never be to sterilize a property or to freeze it in time. The goal should be to integrate the property into our contemporary environment, while preserving its heritage value, so that it can continue to contribute to, and be appreciated by, the local community.



Development Planning Updates

Development Planning Applications

The breakdown below represents the number of Development Planning Applications processed between April 1 – June 30, 2024.



Development Planning Applications (April 1 – June 30, 2024)		Total Applications by Type
Site Plans		2
Site Plan Amendments		0
Pre-Consultation		8
Official Plan Amendments		1
Zoning By-Law Amendments		4
Draft Plans of Subdivision and Condominium		1
Minor Variance		13
Part Lot Control		0
Land Division		4
Temporary Patio Permits		3
Compliance Letters		20
Tree Cutting Permits		2
Total:		58

Noteworthy Development Applications under Review

Ajax Industrial on the Park – Northeast Corner of Bayly Street West and Church Street South

Ajax Industrial on the Park is a new development by Crestpoint Real Estate Investments Ltd. that has received site plan approval. This industrial campus, currently under construction, is located at the northeast corner of Bayly Street West and Church Street South.

The campus will consist of three buildings:

- Two buildings, each with a gross floor area of approximately 18,195.33 m² (195,853 ft²).
- One building with a gross floor area of about 64,874.28 m² (698,301 ft²)

The buildings are intended for warehouse and distribution purposes and will feature construction techniques aimed at delivering superior energy efficiency. As such, Ajax Industrial on the Park is targeting tenants with a focus on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles. The largest of the three buildings is expected to be completed in 2024.

Surrounding the campus are 82 acres (33 hectares) of natural heritage features and green space, which will include trails for pedestrians and cyclists. These trails are designed to connect the area to other significant employment zones, recreational amenities, and transit facilities.



Ajax Industrial on the Park

Policy Planning Updates



Zoning Our Future

The Town is completing a comprehensive review of its Zoning By-law to ensure that it aligns with the Town's Official Plan and other best practices from across Ontario. The Zoning By-law applies to all lands within Ajax and regulates matters such as:

- How land and buildings may or may not be used;
- The size and location of buildings and structures;
- Required lot sizes and dimensions;
- Minimum or maximum parking space and loading space requirements; and
- Minimum and maximum building heights and densities.

A Zoning By-law cannot regulate the exterior design of a building (e.g. colour or architectural style of a building), the people who occupy a building, or the relationship between those occupants.

For residents, a zoning by-law considers setbacks to homes, height of buildings, size of decks, permissions for home-based businesses, minimum parking standards for vehicles and bicycles, among many other matters. One of the biggest changes will be permissions that allow all properties containing a detached, semi-detached,

or townhouse dwelling to have up to four (4) dwelling units per property. This change is intended to provide additional housing units, while also diversifying the housing stock through modest infill development.

The review of the Zoning By-law is an opportunity to make improvements, evaluate best practices, resolve any challenges and implement direction from Council. Residents and stakeholders are encouraged to review the draft By-law and to share your thoughts and participate in upcoming public open house events. To learn more visit ajax.ca/zoningourfuture2024.



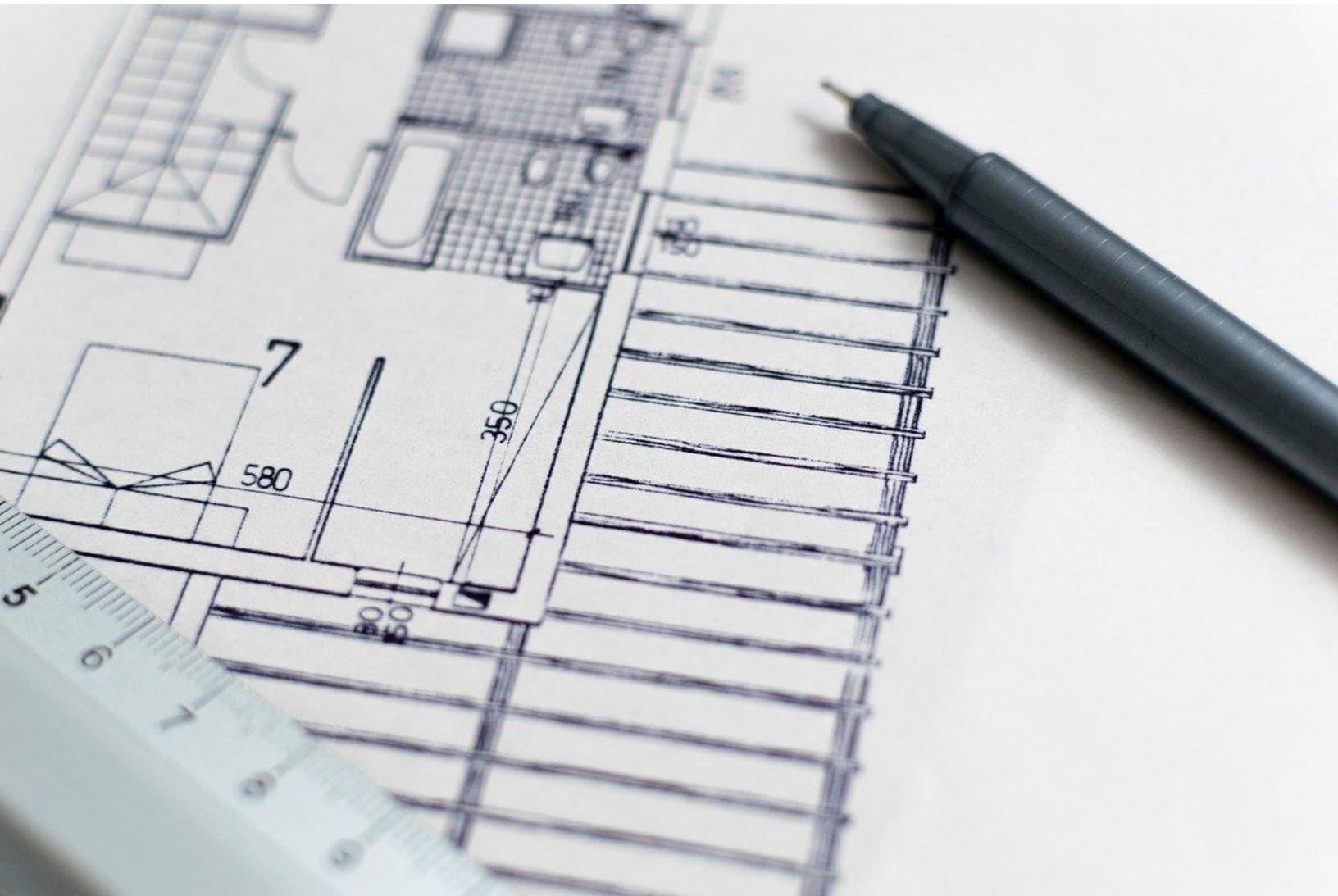
Bill 185: Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act

On June 6, 2024, Bill 185: Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act received Royal Assent in the Provincial Legislative Assembly. Bill 185 made several amendments to the Planning Act which will impact planning within the Town, including:

- No more third party appeals of Official Plan Amendments and Zoning By-law Amendments.
- Municipalities may no longer require development proponents to pre-consultant with the Town prior to submitting a planning application.
- The Town will not be permitted to require a minimum number of parking spaces in future Protected Major Transit Station Areas (e.g. Area surrounding the Ajax GO Station).
- A requirement for municipalities to refund planning application fees if legislative timelines are not met has been removed.

- A tool created by the Province in 2023 called a Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator Tool has been eliminated. The Province will continue to consider Minister Zoning Orders, and has released a framework to outline information to be provided to the Minister prior to consideration of a Minister Zoning Order.

Other upper-tier municipalities such as the Regional Municipality of Peel, Regional Municipality of Halton, and Regional Municipality of York no longer have a role in planning as of July 1, 2024. The Regional Municipality of Durham will also have planning authority removed at a future date yet to be announced, and their responsibilities will be downloaded to all the lower-tier municipalities, including the Town of Ajax. Town staff continue to monitor the rapidly changing planning environment and continue to respond to change.

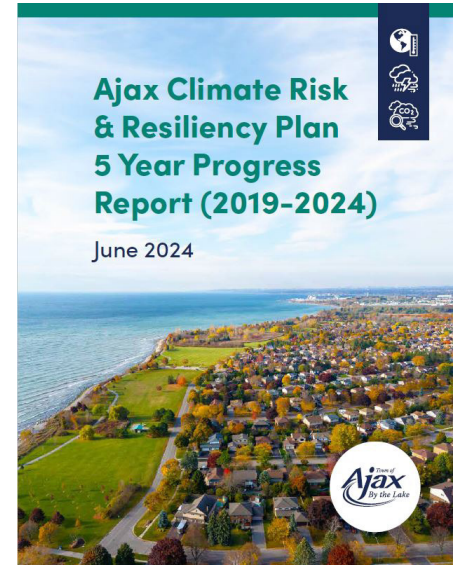




Sustainability & Climate Change Updates

Ajax Climate Risk and Resiliency Plan: 5-Year Progress Report

The [Ajax Climate Risk & Resiliency Plan \(ACRRP\)](#), and associated [Implementation Strategy](#), was approved in June 2019. The ACRRP was developed to provide Council and staff with a strategic framework to address current and future climate change risks and to support greater adaptive capacity and resilience to the impacts of climate change. The 10-year vision encourages coordinated action and real progress in response to multiple climate related threats across a variety of sectors. The ACRRP Implementation Strategy identified 50 realistic actions that were organized within 8 Objectives. The ACRRP 5-Year Progress Report identifies the number of actions, and their status, under each Objective. The Progress Report also highlights significant projects completed in the first 5 years of the ACRRP. To stay informed and provide your feedback, please visit the [ACRRP Implementation Strategy 5-Year Update IMO Page](#).



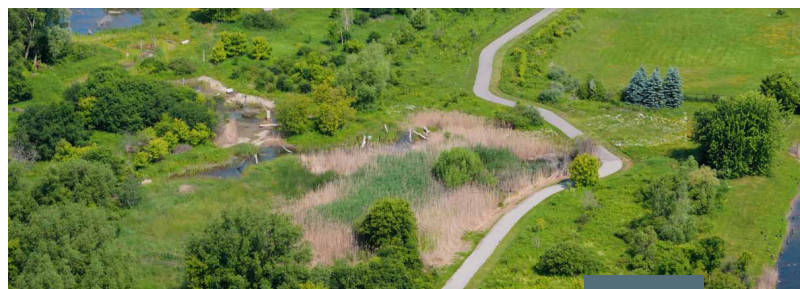
Ajax SNAP Resilience Strategy

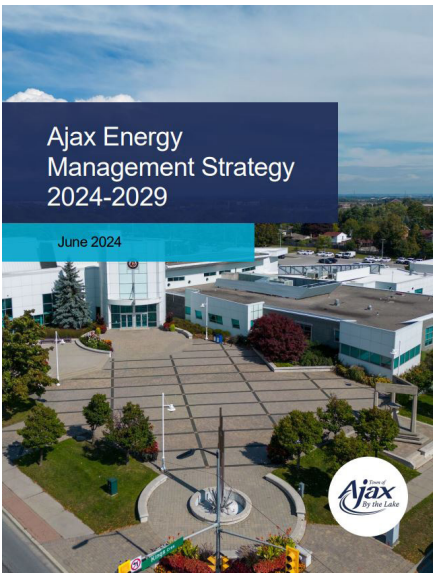
In 2024, the Town of Ajax was successful in securing a Green Municipal Fund grant to advance deliverables identified in the Ajax Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan (SNAP) and to develop a detailed Ajax SNAP Resilience Strategy. To inform the Resilience Strategy, the Town completed a community-wide survey and a Community Leaders Forum to gather essential feedback on the community's concerns. The information gathered from this consultation will be used to create a community asset map and will serve as the foundation for the Ajax SNAP Resilience Strategy. To stay informed and provide your feedback, please visit the [Ajax SNAP IMO Page](#).



TOA and University of Toronto address Invasive Phragmites in Ajax

Recently, the Town of Ajax, in partnership with the University of Toronto (U of T), [conducted a biological control release in the Kerrison Wetland](#) in Ajax to address the spread of invasive Phragmites. Phragmites, a perennial reed grass, originated in Eurasia and is considered one of the worst invasives plants in Canada due to its negative impacts on our wetlands, waterways and natural areas. The control release consisted of releasing a special type of moth (200 eggs and 120 larvae) within two areas of the Kerrison Wetland where Phragmites remains healthy and dominant. These moths are highly host specific to invasive Phragmites, and their release as biocontrol agents in Canada was approved in 2019. The site will be monitored throughout the year by U of T researchers to help inform future management approaches. Following established release and monitoring protocols, the Town's goal is to help assess agent release success and impacts and support the establishment of new nursery sites, similar to Kerrison, and expand the program and research.





Ajax Energy Management Strategy 2024 - 2029

The [Ajax Energy Management Strategy 2024 – 2029](#), in accordance with the updated regulation (O Reg. 25/23), serves as an update to the [Town's 2019 Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan](#). This strategy will be developed to reduce energy usage and achieve Council mandated corporate greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets of 20% by 2025, 40% by 2030 and 100% by 2050 (below 2019 levels).

Building Updates

Building Permits – A Sensible Investment

Your home and property are the single highest investment that you will ever make, and it is important to protect that investment. By obtaining a building permit you are ensuring that the construction that you are doing or having completed by a contractor is done correctly thereby safeguarding that your investment will not be devalued and last for many years. Another benefit to getting a building permit is that you will be caring for the health and safety of your family, friends and tenants with construction built to Ontario Building Code standards.

The following are a few of the projects that require a building permit, a comprehensive list can be found at: [Home and Property Renovations - Town of Ajax](#).

- New buildings, additions, and alterations
- Additional dwelling unit (accessory apartment)
- Attached or detached garage, carport, or other roof structure
- Finishing an unfinished basement or alterations to a finished basement
- Sheds great than 15 m² (160 ft²)
- Decks more than 0.6 m (24 in.) from adjacent grade or attached to other structures
- Plumbing new or alterations

Regardless of whether you require a building permit or not, you are required to comply with the requirements of the [Zoning By-law](#).

If you have questions on whether your project requires a building permit, or have questions about the building permit application process, we are here to help you. Please call (905) 619-2529 Ext. 3653 or email: buildingpermits@ajax.ca.



Major Building Permits Issued – April 1 to March 31, 2024

Description	Location	Area (sq. m.)	Value (\$)
One Storey, Multi-Unit Industrial Building	9 Barr Road	1,800	2,700,000
Safari Kid Canada – Child Care Facility	479 Kingston Road West	546	500,000
Building Demolition	282 Monarch Avenue	9,076	370,000
Genesis Ajax – Automotive Dealership Addition	250 Westney Road South	756	3,840,000

Major Building Permit Applications Under Review

Description	Location	Area (sq. m.)	Value (\$)
Marriot Fairfield – 6 Storey, 120 Suite Hotel	650 Beck Crescent	6,300	12,600,000
Malpack Ltd. – Industrial Building Enlargement	510 Finley Avenue	3,458	15,000,000
DDSB – 2-Storey Elementary School	92 Hurst Drive	5,527	20,000,000
Promita Holdings – Shoring for 25-Storey, 380-unit Apartment Building	310 Kingston Road East	2,752	800,000
Medallion Developments Inc. – Block B – Shoring for 8-Storey, 336-unit apartment building and 21 townhouse units	460 Rossland Road East	4,068	500,000
Suncity Building ‘G’ – Multi-Unit Commercial Building	1120 Salem Road North	547	1,560,000
Suncity Building ‘A’ – Multi-Unit Commercial Building	1130 Salem Road North	2,468	7,040,000
Suncity Building ‘B’ – Multi-Unit Commercial Building	1160 Salem Road North	1,717	2,850,000
Suncity Building ‘D’ – Multi-Unit Commercial Building	1190 Salem Road North	752	2,145,000
Suncity Building ‘C’ – Multi-Unit Commercial Building	1200 Salem Road North	904	2,530,000

Q1 Building Permit Statistics

April 1 to June 30, 2024

Permit Type	No. of Permit Applications		Construction Value (\$)
	Received	No. of Permits Issued	
Residential	162	155	14,342,666
Commercial	49	51	11,893,361
Industrial	9	9	11,128,207
Servicing	2	8	9,822,770
Total	222	223	47,187,004





Transportation Updates

Traffic Calming Update

As part of 2022 traffic calming project, traffic calming measures such as speed humps, speed cushions, flexible bollards and signage were installed on 13 streets throughout the Town. To facilitate winter maintenance activities, flexible signs and flexible bollards are typically removed in the Fall season of every year. The flexible bollards and signage were re-installed in the beginning of May 2024.

Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE)

In January 2024, Council directed staff to expand the Town’s ASE program from the current 15 ASE locations to 28 ASE locations. Council also directed staff to increase the annual ticket limit from the current 5,000 tickets to 15,000 tickets. The new schedule of ASE camera rotation will begin on July 3, 2024, and cameras will be rotated to additional Community Safety Zone locations.

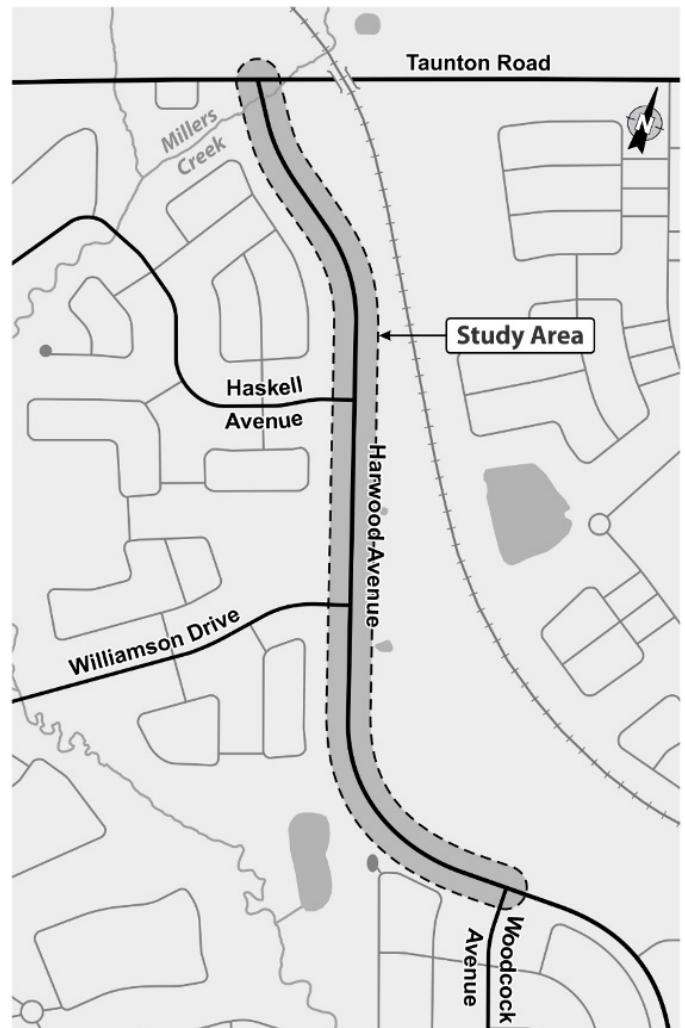
Currently, ASE cameras are installed at Ashbury Boulevard, Ritchie Avenue and Thackery Drive. As of May 2024, a total of 2,763 speeding charges have been laid so far this year.



Harwood Avenue Environmental Assessment (EA)

The Town initiated a Schedule C Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) study to assess potential transportation improvements to widen Harwood Avenue between Taunton Road and Woodcock Avenue. A draft Environmental Study Report (ESR) was circulated to the approval agencies and indigenous communities for comments, prior to filing the ESR for a mandatory 30-day public comment period.

The Project Team has received comments from the approval agencies and Indigenous Communities. A Notice of Study Completion will be issued in late July 2024. The ESR will be available for a mandatory 30-day public review period immediately following the issuance of a Notice of Study Completion.





Active Transportation Updates

Shared E-scooter & E-bike Pilot Program continues with over 10,000 Trips

To provide more options for people to get around the Town of Ajax, E-scooter and E-bikes are available throughout the Town through Bird Canada Inc. Simply unlock the vehicle in the Bird app, which also contains information on pricing, parking locations, and safety tips.

From October 2023 to June 2024, there were 13,115 trips using Bird E-scooters and E-bikes.

In response to concerns about mis-parked and abandoned E-scooters and E-bikes, Bird Canada Inc. has implemented the following measures:

- Doubled the number of staff on their Safe Streets Team with a particular focus on the new staff at the waterfront. The Safe Streets Team serves to address mis-parked E-scooters / E-bikes and educate riders on how to park them properly.
- Escalated their 3-strike system. The 3-strike system involves educating, suspending, then banning users who fail to park safely.
- Organized demonstrations at Pickering Village Square and the Waterfront Trail on Canada Day.

Since the relaunch of the program in April 2024, the Town has collaborated with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind to implement 6 E-scooter and E-bike Safety pop-ups, engaging 391 people of different ages and abilities.

The Town will launch a video campaign on E-scooter and E-bike safety on trails and multi-use paths in late July, which will be available at: ajax.ca/emobility.

A map of fixed parking locations is available at each community centre as well as the main branch library.

To find out how to use a Bird E-scooter or E-bike, see the Beginners Guide to using E-scooters and E-bikes at: ajax.ca/emobility4beginners.





Engineering Updates

What does it mean to assume a subdivision?

When a developer is constructing a new subdivision, they will construct the roads, sewers, watermains and sidewalks, which will eventually become municipal assets. The maintenance, upkeep, and repair are the obligation of the developer until the Town “assumes” responsibility for the infrastructure. Engineering staff inspect all of this infrastructure and ensure that the developer rectifies any and all deficiencies. Council then passes an assumption By-law making it officially ours.



Subdivision Assumptions

Stormwater Master Plan Update

The Town’s Stormwater Master Plan will be kicking off this summer. The Master plan will help inform, prioritize, and modernize the Town’s stormwater program. It will look at pond rehabilitation schedule, capital improvements, monitoring, and recommended future infrastructure projects.



Underground stormwater storage system being installed at the Annandale Business Park. This will provide infiltration and quantity control for the runoff generated by the new development.



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