

CHAPTER 12: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following list of frequently asked questions should act as a quick reference for municipal planning commissioners. If a commissioner has additional questions beyond those supplied in this handbook, they should feel free to contact their municipal manager or planning staff.

Q: What is my role on the Planning Commission?

The primary purpose of a municipal planning commission is to plan for the future of their community. Planning commissioners are expected to think long term and anticipate tomorrow's consequences from today's actions. Planning commission members should provide their input on the task at hand as a representative of the community.

Q: Who is in charge of the Planning Commission?

The Planning Commission has a chairperson which is appointed annually by a vote of appointed CRPC members. A vice-chair is also elected to fulfill the duties of the chairperson in their absence. The following are some of the duties of the chairperson:

- *Ensure that meetings are run in an orderly fashion and that a quorum exists*
 - *Respond or refer to staff to all questions, whether from the floor or from a planning commission member, which should be addressed directly to the chairperson*
 - *Provide direction to planning commission members for the fulfillment of their collective responsibilities*
 - *Lead discussion of pending issues*
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Q: Who do I represent?

Each member of the planning commission is a representative of their municipality.

Q: What should I do if I disagree with other planning commission members?

Members of planning commissions are not expected to agree with one another on all points or approaches. Being able and willing to express differing viewpoints is vital to ensuring the proper function of a Planning Commission.

Q: What should I do to prepare for a meeting?

- *Read the staff reports, attachments, and minutes of the previous meeting*
- *Visit properties you are unfamiliar with or their surroundings*

- *Understand the proposals and the pertinent facts*
 - *Think through the key issues and be prepared to have a dialogue regarding issues at the meeting*
 - *Alert staff prior to the meeting if something needs clarification*
 - *Prepare questions to ask staff, the applicant, or other interested parties at the meeting*
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Q: What is the Centre Regional Comprehensive Plan?

The Centre Regional Comprehensive Plan is a multi-municipal plan that dictates public policy related to transportation, utilities, land use, recreation, and housing for the six Centre Region Municipalities. The plan was most recently updated in 2013. The plan is intended to guide growth and development in the Centre Region for the next 20-30 years. Municipal actions related to land use and development, including zoning ordinances, should be consistent with the plan.

Q: What is the Regional Growth Boundary?

The Regional Growth Boundary (RGB) is established by the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan and defines the geographic area where the Centre Region municipalities have agreed to direct the majority of future growth and development. Growth is permitted outside of the boundary but generally at a lower densities that do not require the extension of public services. The RGB is enforced through municipal action, primarily zoning regulations, which limit development densities outside of the boundary. The Regional Growth Boundary is coterminous with the Sewer Service Area, which defines where public sewer service is planned for and provided. These two boundaries work together to direct growth within the RGB and also provide public services in a cost effective manner.

Q: What is a Development of Regional Impact?

A Development of Regional Impact, or DRI, is defined by the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area Implementation Agreement as:

Any land development that, because of its character, magnitude, or location will have substantial impact upon the health, safety, or welfare of citizens in more than one Centre Region municipality. The Region will assess the impact on public services including, but not limited to, public sewer, public water, public transportation, fire, police, and schools in determining what qualifies as a Development of Regional Impact.

A DRI application is required whenever there is a request to expand the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area or whenever a municipality seeks to rezone or amend zoning ordinances to permit a density greater than one dwelling unit per acre. A DRI application can only be approved with five affirmative votes from the six Centre Region municipalities.