

## **A Preamble to Municipal Planning**

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Municipalities are constantly evolving, and consequently, there are many opportunities that need to be captured and challenges that need to be addressed for them to be viable in the future. Municipalities should consider how they will address long and short term economic fluctuations, urbanization in rural areas, climate change, aging populations, and residents expectations for better municipal services.

Land use planning is one approach through which municipalities address such challenges. This approach seeks to regulate land use in an efficient way, and thus prevent land use conflicts through a variety of means. Some of the primary ways land use planning considers changes within municipalities include municipal development plans that guides future land use patterns, land use bylaws that regulate and control the use and development of land and buildings in a municipality, and area structure plans that establish a general planning framework for future subdivisions and development for an area of undeveloped land.

We at Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency work with local government to resolve some of the many challenges that municipalities encounter by offering long-range and day-to-day planning advice. We are excited that Mile Zero News has provided us with the opportunity to offer our perspective on local planning concerns through a series of articles. We believe these articles are especially important because they will provide information to residents so that they will participate in community building.

We hope that these articles will encourage dialogue on land use issues, clarify the role of planners and inspire positive change that ensures that all the opportunities available to your community are captured. Through our articles we hope to discuss Main Street improvements, accessibility, climate change adaptation, public consultation and engagement, and a variety of other topics.