

Planning Advisory and Regulatory Services

Why Fees?

Section 20 of the Conservation Authorities Act empowers a conservation authority to manage the resources of the watershed. Section 21 of the Act broadly describes the powers of a CA. Section 28 of the Act enables a CA to administer regulations over prescribed areas as approved by the Minister of Natural Resources; RVCA administers Ontario Regulation 174/06 a “Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses” regulation.

Conservation Authorities also review and comment to municipal approval authorities on applications made under the Ontario Planning Act. Circulation regulations approved under the authority of the Ontario Planning Act require that we be notified when a planning application is under consideration by a municipal approval authority. Our review is often the only environmental review such applications receive; Provincial ministries have not been involved in site specific plan review for some years. We review applications for potential impacts on natural hazards such as flood plains and unstable soil or slopes as well as for effects on natural heritage features such as wetlands, stream corridors, and wildlife and fish habitat. Impacts on rivers and lakes as well as protection of the quality of ground and surface water are also essential elements of our review. In some municipalities the CA is also contracted to undertake septic system approval functions under the Ontario Building Code. This all helps protect the environment for our common enjoyment.

Some of the matters to be reviewed are complex involving expertise in such diverse fields as water resources engineering, groundwater science, aquatic and terrestrial biology and municipal planning. Particularly in rural areas a site inspection is most likely required. This work all takes time to ensure that meaningful recommendations are made to decision-makers.

As a result of reduced provincial transfers, most Conservation Authorities commenced charging fees in 1997 to recover the cost of providing many services. To enable this the Province amended Section 21 of the CA Act which now states:

Powers of authorities

[21. \(1\)](#) for the purposes of accomplishing its objects, an authority has power,

(m.1) to charge fees for services approved by the Minister;

The Ministry of Natural Resources has produced a guideline outlining the services the Minister considers may be subject to the application of fees. The RVCA’s Board of Directors has approved a guideline implementing the Minister’s direction. The guideline establishes a process for how fees will be charged in an accountable manner.

The Planning Advisory and Regulatory Services Fee Schedules (“A” through “D”) approved by the Conservation Authority’s Board of Directors for implementation are available for viewing on our web site at www.rvca.ca. The fees are intended to cover costs incurred in reviewing development applications and those expenses exclusively; they are reviewed annually by the Board of Directors to ensure that cost recovery and performance standards are met. There is also a process to ensure harmonization of fees amongst adjoining CA’s.

Before submitting a regulatory application contact the LandOwner Resource Centre in Manotick to determine if a pre-consultation meeting with one of our inspectors would be advisable. Before formally submitting an application to your municipality, a discussion with the CA Planner for your area is also recommended to make sure all necessary information is taken into account as early as possible in the planning process.