



The Corporation of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

Staff Report

Report Title: E-file Registration Ontario Land Tribunal

Date: Oct. 7, 2024

Report Number: CLK-2024-10-38

Department: Legislative Services

File Number: C11 CLK 24

Prepared By: Jennifer White, Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk

Attachments: correspondence OLT, E-file Portal Overview

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receive Report 2024-10-38 prepared by Jennifer White, Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk;

AND FURTHER THAT Staff be directed to proceed with registering for the E-File portal to submit appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal;

AND FURTHER THAT the Clerk be authorized as the Level-1 Administrator for the E-file portal.

Background:

The Township has received correspondence from the Ontario Land Tribunal with respect to a municipality's ability to submit appeals electronically using an e-file portal.

Staff are recommending that the Township of Huron-Kinloss approve the use of e-file to forward appeals to the Tribunal and authorize the Clerk as the Level-1 administrator.

Discussion/Analysis/Overview:

Correspondence was received from the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) noting a public consultation period on proposed updates to the Tribunal's Rules of Practice and Procedure. The full suite of proposed changes and revisions can be found on the website https://olt.gov.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/OLT_Rules-of-Practice-and-Procedure_2024-07-25-redline.pdf.

A key change is the Tribunal introducing a mandatory requirement for municipalities and other approval authorities to forward appeals through the E-file portal, an online platform that simplifies the appeal filing process.

It is expected that following the commenting period, which ended September 27th, the Province will move forward with submitting appeals via the e-file portal becoming mandatory for all municipalities.

Municipalities are being encouraged to register early for E-File to avoid delays which may occur following the requirement becoming mandatory.

Benefits of E-File

E-file is an electronic alternative to the current manual appeal process and offers an accessible, efficient and user-friendly method to submit appeals to various planning decisions.

E-file allows an applicant to:

- File on their own behalf or the behalf of someone else (for example, a family member, a business or organization, or a client)
- File multiple related appeals
- Upload required documentation
- accurately complete appeal forms by only showing required information or documentation
- Pre-populates data where applicable, minimizing time to complete forms
- Pay filing fees online
- Print or save a PDF of the completed application

E-file benefits to Staff

- Digital Submission of appeal documentation, reducing mail/courier costs
- Ability for related appeals to be easily and quickly be grouped together
- Facilitates accurate completion of mandatory information
- Minimizes data entry for both appellants/applicants and municipal staff
- Streamlines payment
- Reduces time spent scanning documents and preparing appeal packages and payments to forward to the Tribunal
- Use generated checklists to ensure all required documents are included with the Townships submission

Overall, the e-file process will allow the Township to serve the public more effectively, efficiently and quickly.

Staff have participated in a demonstration of the e-file process from both the appellant and approval authority standpoints. Staff are satisfied that ease and efficiency will be improved for appellants and for staff in processing any appeals.

Note: Case updates are not provided via efile, as it is intended to direct the submission process of appeals only.

Next steps

For the Township to begin using e-file a registration process is required, and updates to notices of decision or other communications must be completed. Updates would include how to file an appeal, pay the appeal fee, submit alternatively if the e-file portal is down, and provide more clear detail on timing of the expiry period for appeals.

The E-file Registration form must be completed and sent to the Ontario Land Tribunal with sample copies/templates of the updated notices/communications. The registration process includes the designation of a Level One administrator who will manage the portal process on behalf of the municipality.

The Registration and authorisation of a Level One administrator(s) must be approved by the Ontario Land Tribunal. Once registered, level-1 administrators are responsible for granting access to other staff in their office as needed. There is no limit to the number of users an approval authority can have.

It is the recommendation of Staff that the Clerk as the staff member legislated to receive appeals be authorized as the Level-1 administrator and that Staff be directed to register and use the e-file process to submit appeals to the OLT.

Financial Impacts:

There are no costs associated with registering for the e-file portal. It is anticipated that using e-file will minimize the costs associated with staff time to receive, prepare and submit appeal packages.

Performance Measurement:

Reduction in time required to submit appeal packages to the Ontario Land Tribunal

Strategic Area:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Embrace a thriving rural lifestyle | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Municipal Service Delivery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for Inclusive Growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure Financial Stability |

Strategic Goal: Strive for continuous improvement and increased efficiency

Respectfully Submitted By:

Jennifer White, Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk

Report Approved By:

Jodi MacArthur, Chief Administrative Officer