



ZONING AI PRECHECK

Frequently Asked Questions

Zoning AI PreCheck is a new, currently optional tool in the Markham permit portal that lets you check your New Single Detached House drawings against the City's zoning by-laws before you formally submit, helping you catch common issues early and submit a cleaner application.

THE BASICS

What is Zoning AI PreCheck?

Zoning AI PreCheck is a currently optional, AI-assisted zoning compliance check built into the City of Markham's online building-permit portal. It lets applicants for New Single Detached House permits upload their drawings and receive a detailed report showing how their plans measure up against Markham's zoning by-laws before they formally submit their application.

Do I have to use it?

No. Zoning AI PreCheck is currently optional. You choose whether to run it, and it never blocks or delays your application. You can apply exactly as you do today without using it.

What does it cost?

Nothing. Zoning AI PreCheck is included in the permit portal at no additional cost to applicants.

Which applications can use Zoning AI PreCheck?

At launch, Zoning AI PreCheck is available for New Single Detached House permit applications. Eligibility depends on the application type and whether the property's zoning is supported. Additional application types may be added in future phases.

When is it available?

Zoning AI PreCheck becomes available for currently optional use in Summer 2026.

HOW IT WORKS

How do I use Zoning AI PreCheck?

It's a simple, currently optional step inside the portal you already use:

1. Apply for a New Single Detached House permit in the Markham portal as usual.
2. If your application is eligible, choose the currently optional "Zoning AI PreCheck" button.
3. Upload your drawings.
4. The system checks them against Markham's zoning by-laws, generates a report and emails you notifying you when complete.
5. Review your report and refine your plans or proceed, your choice.

How long does it take to get my report?

The AI review typically takes one business day to generate. Because of this, we recommend running Zoning AI PreCheck early in your preparation. The value is in catching common zoning issues before you formally submit, so your application arrives cleaner and moves through review with fewer resubmissions.



Does using Zoning AI PreCheck change how I apply?

No. Intake, payment, submission, and the systems you already use are all unchanged. Zoning AI PreCheck is simply a currently optional extra step you can choose to take before submitting.

YOUR REPORT

What's in the report?

Your report gives you:

- A clear pass/fail result.
- Rule-level feedback that cites the specific by-law.
- A list of any corrections to address.
- A downloadable copy you can act on before submitting.

Does Zoning AI PreCheck approve my permit?

No. Zoning AI PreCheck is informational only. It provides guidance to help you prepare a cleaner application. City staff review every application and make all final zoning and permit decisions.

What does Zoning AI PreCheck check?

Zoning AI PreCheck reviews your drawings against Markham's zoning by-laws for a New Single Detached House and identifies the standard zoning requirements that commonly cause issues. It is not a full plan review; City staff carry out the complete review as part of the formal permit process.

What if my report shows corrections or issues?

A report that flags corrections is doing its job, it's showing you standard zoning items to address before you submit. You can refine your drawings and, if you like, run Zoning AI PreCheck again. Using it is always your choice.

What kinds of issues does Zoning AI PreCheck flag?

Common items your report may highlight include:

- Potential zoning non-compliance.
- Dimensional inconsistencies.
- Missing required information or documents.
- Missing labels or annotations.
- Layout inconsistencies.

How will I know when my report is ready?

You will receive an email once your report is complete. You can also log in to track progress. Your report can be viewed online in an interactive viewer or downloaded.

THE TECHNOLOGY

What is Archistar?

Archistar is an AI-powered platform that consolidates planning rules and automates compliance analysis. Markham is applying its automated zoning-check capability to give applicants an early, standardized read on their plans against our by-laws.



How does Zoning AI PreCheck review my drawings?

Zoning AI PreCheck uses artificial intelligence and computer vision to read your uploaded drawings. It detects and classifies elements on the plan, interprets annotations and layout features, compares what it finds against the applicable rules, and generates a structured compliance report. Elements it recognizes include:

- Doors and windows.
- Room types.
- Dimensions.
- Walls and layout features.

The system highlights potential issues, but it supports decision-making rather than replacing it. City of Markham staff make all final determinations.

Are my drawings used to create new building designs?

No. Your drawings may be used to improve the system's ability to read and interpret plans — for example, recognizing doors, windows, and room types more accurately. They are never used to generate new building designs.

YOUR DRAWINGS AND YOUR DATA

Do I keep the copyright to my drawings?

Yes. If you own the drawings, you retain all copyright and existing intellectual property rights in them. Using Zoning AI PreCheck transfers no ownership to Archistar or to the City of Markham.

How is my information used?

Your drawings may be used for three purposes:

- Running the automated compliance assessment.
- Improving system performance.
- Improving the accuracy of the AI's drawing detection.

Your drawings remain your intellectual property. They are not sold, and they are not used to generate new designs.

Where is my data stored?

Canadian data is stored in Canada.

Is my information secure?

Yes. Archistar is certified to ISO 27001, the global standard for information security management systems, and to ISO 42001, the standard for AI management systems. Uploaded drawings are handled using secure systems and appropriate data-handling protocols, and are used only for compliance analysis and system improvement.

PREPARING AND UPLOADING YOUR DRAWINGS

What file format should I upload?

Upload your drawings as a single PDF package. Vector-based PDFs give the most accurate results. Before you upload, check that:

- Files are clear and legible, with readable text and dimensions.
- Pages are correctly oriented and drawings are to scale, where applicable.
- All required sheets are included.



- Scanned or low-resolution images are avoided.
- Flattened or raster-only drawings are avoided where possible.

Why won't my file upload?

The most common causes are a file that exceeds the size limit, a corrupted PDF, a password-protected document, a low-resolution scan, or a browser compatibility issue. Check those first. If the problem continues, contact us using the details below.

Can I change my submission after I upload it?

Once you have submitted, changes may not be possible within the platform. If you need to make a change, submit a new Zoning AI PreCheck request with your revised drawings.

GETTING HELP

Who do I contact if I have questions?

For questions about Zoning AI PreCheck or your permit application, contact the City of Markham Building Standards.

Email: buildingstandards@markham.ca

Phone: 905.475.4858

Remember: *This Zoning AI PreCheck report is informational only. It is not a permit or approval and does not guarantee application approval; City of Markham staff make all final decisions. Generated using Archistar on behalf of the City of Markham.*