



## Holding Symbol (Prefix) in Zoning

### What is a Holding Symbol?

The Planning Act allows a municipal Council to add an (H) Holding Symbol as a prefix to a zone to specify the future use of lands, buildings or structures until such time as conditions for removing the “H” are met and it has been removed by by-law. The Holding Symbol sends a message to owners, developers and Municipal staff that while future use of lands has been determined, there is a process to be followed before proceeding with development.

For example, a property with General Commercial (C1) may have a holding symbol prefix (H)C1. Until the (H) Holding Symbol is removed, commercial uses are not permitted. The only uses permitted on lands with a holding symbol are existing legal uses, conservation, forestry and farm uses, excluding a livestock operation.

### What is the purpose of a Holding Symbol?

At the time of rezoning, the (H) Holding Symbol may be applied to vacant, undeveloped or under-developed lands.

The Clarington Official Plan requires that the following matters be addressed satisfactorily before lifting an (H) Holding Symbol:

- Services and municipal works
- Measures to protect natural areas
- Measures to mitigate the impact of development
- Submission of technical studies
- Remediation of contaminated soil, if necessary
- Legal agreements with the Municipality, the Region and any other agency (i.e. subdivision, site plan, servicing)

Sometimes lands are rezoned at the time of subdivision approval but cannot proceed until water and sewer services are extended, roads are constructed, and other financial arrangements are made with the Region of Durham and the Municipality of Clarington. While the underlying zoning is “approved,” the (H) Holding Symbol is used to ensure that the permitted future uses are not developed prematurely or without all arrangements being finalized with the Municipality.

### How do I apply?

Should all conditions be satisfied, the owner/developer can make an application for rezoning to lift or remove the (H) Holding Symbol. Hard copy [application forms](#) are available from the Planning Services Department. The application form must be completed (with the lands identified) and submitted to the Planning Services Department with the required fee.

**What happens next?**

Planning staff review the application and if all requirements of the Official Plan and any site-specific conditions are satisfied, a report and draft by-law are presented to the Planning and Development Committee. Council then may remove the (H) Holding Symbol by passing a Zoning By-law amendment to lift the “hold” on the zoning. By removing the (H) Holding Symbol as a prefix to the zone category, the underlying uses may proceed. There is no notice provided for surrounding property owners; only the landowner receives notice of the meeting at which the Planning and Development Committee/ Council will consider the application.

**Can the decision of Council be appealed?**

The owner of the lands has the right to appeal the application to the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal (LPAT) if Council refuses or neglects to make a decision on the applications within 90 days of the receipt of the application.

Since the principle of the land use has previously been determined, and the removal of the (H) Holding symbol simply gives effect to the previously approved zoning rights, there is no appeal process for a third party.