



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Foundations initiative supports Council’s goal of getting more affordable housing options built in Barrie

(Barrie, ON) - The City of Barrie invites places of worship and owners of institutional-zoned properties to help the municipality find ways to create more affordable housing options in the city, through an innovative initiative called New Foundations.

In October 2021, Barrie City Council adopted an amendment to Zoning By-law 2009-141, which makes it possible to now build affordable housing within Institutional zones—areas of Barrie that include places of worship, community centres, assisted living facilities and other similar types of properties. Following this, Council put forward a motion to fund affordable housing feasibility studies for properties zoned Institutional, as well as for certain places of worship outside of Institutional zones. This initiative is called New Foundations.

“We all know Barrie is facing a housing affordability crisis,” notes Mayor Jeff Lehman. “There are more and more people in our city who deserve a place to live and yet cannot find anywhere affordable. This new initiative is just one way in which the City is committed to working with partners to bring more affordable housing to Barrie.”

“Many of these sites would have the space to build affordable townhomes or small- or mid-sized apartments in conjunction with the existing permitted institutional use,” says Michelle Banfield, Director of Development Services. “One of Council’s strategic priorities is to get more affordable housing built and New Foundations is a significant step forward to make it easier to build more affordable housing, together.”

Through the Housing Affordability Task Force and this new project, the City will provide financial incentives to institutions looking to provide housing, so that Barrie can offer housing options for all residents.

New Foundations offers select property owners, based on zoning eligibility, a chance to apply for support to undertake an affordable housing feasibility study. The feasibility study would provide a vision for what building affordable housing on the site could look like and would outline the practical steps needed to make that vision a reality. Each feasibility study awarded through the initiative is worth approximately \$20,000 and the City will be funding up to 10 studies.

You are eligible to apply for New Foundations if:

- you own or represent a Barrie property that is zoned “Institutional”
- you own or represent a place of worship in Barrie that is zoned “Residential”

Eligible applicants are invited to attend a virtual [Open House](#) on January 26, starting at 10:30 a.m. At the Open House, City staff will answer further questions about the initiative and the application process. An application portal will open in February.

More information on the New Foundations initiative can be found at barrie.ca/NewFoundations.

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