
From: Kytayko, Cathy [mailto:Cathy.Kytayko@simcoe.ca]
Sent: Thursday, December 24, 2015 10:40 AM
To: Stephen Naylor
Cc: Parks, David
Subject: City of Barrie CIP

Dear Stephen: Thank you again for taking time to meet with David Parks and myself.

I am very impressed with the work that has been accomplished through the City's Built Form Task Force and your staff that supports affordable housing development for the City.

The City of Barrie's use of revised Community Improvement Plan, including financial incentives, is completely aligned with *Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy*, regarding 'planning for the public good' specifically under the following recommendations:

- 4.1 amend local Official Plans to include the provision of a full range of housing types, in order to meet diverse needs of residents; and
- 4.3 encouragement to adopt planning, financial, and policy tools highlighted in the Strategy to facilitate and promote affordable housing development.

The Renovation Grant and Redevelopment Grant Programs are good financial incentives, and are also in the spirit of the recommendations of the County's 10-Year Strategy. The County's Social Housing Department and Planning Department staff have just drafted a Council report which outlines a variety of planning tools that can be exercised for the purpose of increasing affordable housing. Our draft report supports the City of Barrie's directions on Community Improvement Plans as a tool to address affordable housing. When our report is finalized and included in a Council Committee agenda, we can share it.

It is good to see that your report has included the full affordable housing continuum as this is also part of the County's 10 Year Strategy. I do however note that the grant amount varies throughout this continuum. The greatest incentives are being provided to housing programs that support emergency and transitional housing which arguably support the most vulnerable individuals in our region. The goal of the County's 10 Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy is to end homelessness through increasing the supply of permanent affordable housing. The strategy supports a "housing first" principle which essentially supports efforts to place individuals in permanent housing as a priority which will provide stability and then provide supports if necessary to help individuals maintain their housing.

Our 10-Year Strategy includes a target to increase the supply of housing by 2685 units by 2024 and this will require partnerships with all levels of government, the private and not for profit sector to achieve this goal. We have heard from developers that financial incentives are critical to encourage affordable housing development. As such, I am wondering if there may be consideration to enhance the incentives provided for social and affordable housing to assist in the creation of supply. Consideration could be given to increase the financial incentive and extend the period of time that the units would need to remain affordable. Non-Profit housing by virtue of the articles of incorporation generally support long term ownership of affordable housing. Private developers on the other hand would not necessarily have this mandate. In either case, for increased incentives, contribution agreements could be put in place to require developers to maintain affordable rents for a defined period of time to be eligible for the financial incentives from the City. Our capital funding programs through the County require rents remain affordable for 20 year.

Just a couple of other observations with respect to your report, the requirements for condo development which meet affordability thresholds, is not an area that was specifically addressed in our 10-Year Strategy. However the Strategy does support working in partnership with the private sector and that does mean there is room for innovative ways of working with condo developers in a similar way as Toronto and York Region have done. Also the definitions of affordable rental housing and affordable homeownership are somewhat different from the definitions we have used. The County's definitions should be finalized in January and again we will be happy to share this information with you.

Again, I so appreciate the time you spent with us and your support for County staff and City of Barrie staff to work together to align our efforts where possible with an ultimate goal to increase the affordable housing options for our residents.

Wishing you the very best for a wonderful holiday season and happy new year.

Regards

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