

Affordable Housing

is typically used to define lower-income housing needs that are eligible for Federal or Provincial Subsidies.

VS.

Housing Affordability

refers to the lack of affordability across not only lower- but also middle- and even higher- income households—be they rented or owned—subsidized or not.

Task Force

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

“What direct actions can the City take to rapidly expand the supply of rental and market affordable housing built by the private sector, and the supply of supportive and affordable housing built by the public sector.”

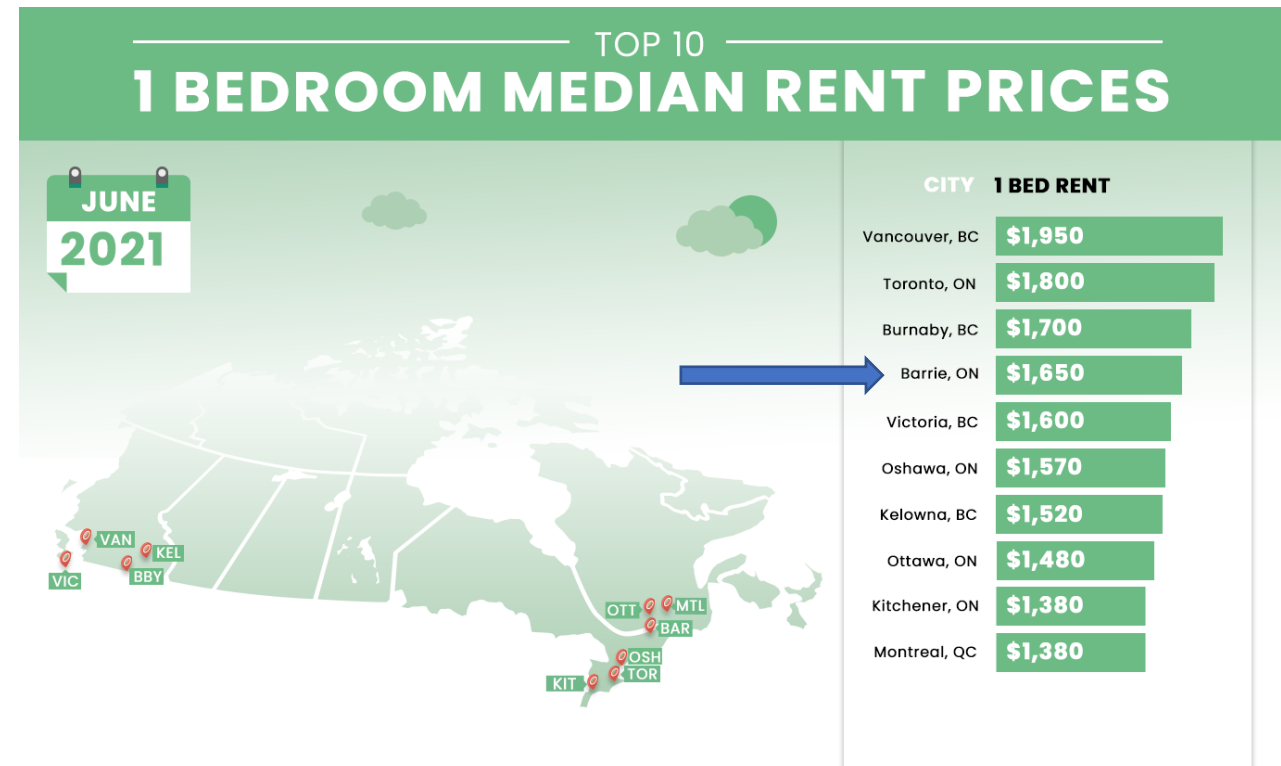
The members of the Task Force are:

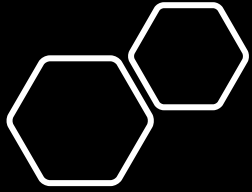
- Mayor Jeff Lehman (Chair)
- Councillor Ann-Marie Kungl
- Andreea Campobasso, Mayor’s Office, City of Barrie
- Michelle Banfield, Director of Development Services
- Sara Peddle, Chair, SCATEH
- Greg Bishop, County of Simcoe
- Andy Thomson, Thomson Architecture
- Ray Duhamel, Jones Consulting
- Tim Kent, Redwood Park Communities
- Ashley Polischuk, Chair, Barrie Housing
- Nina Brancaccio, City of Barrie (admin)

The Math Doesn't Work.

- Simple math shows the scale of the problem
- Ontario Works monthly amount for single individuals is \$733
- A minimum wage job working 25 hours per week brings home take-home pay of about \$1,500 a month
- In November 2021, the average rent for Barrie for a one-bedroom apartment listed online in Barrie was \$1,700 - \$1,740

(Source: based on average rent reports from listing sites including PadMapper.com, Zumper.com, and Rentals.ca).





Breaking down the problem...

The housing crisis is really several separate problems, which affect each other but require much different approaches.

Homelessness needs investment in supportive housing.

Making rental markets more affordable requires new policies and programs to get more affordable supply built.

The high cost of home ownership requires both supply and demand solutions – but many of these need to be driven by the Federal and Provincial governments.

Focusing where we can make a difference

Early in the process, the Task Force decided to focus on two key issues that limit the supply of public and private affordable housing:

1. Land availability
2. Funding for supportive and subsidized housing.

Institutionally- Zoned Sites

- **Recommendation – Allow housing as of right on institutionally zoned lands**
 - Adopted by City Council in June 2021 as a quick start initiative
 - By-law enacted October 2021
- **Recommendation – Fund feasibility studies for housing by institutional property owners and places of worship**
- **Recommendation - Communicate these opportunities to institutional & places of worship landowners**
 - New Foundations program now underway

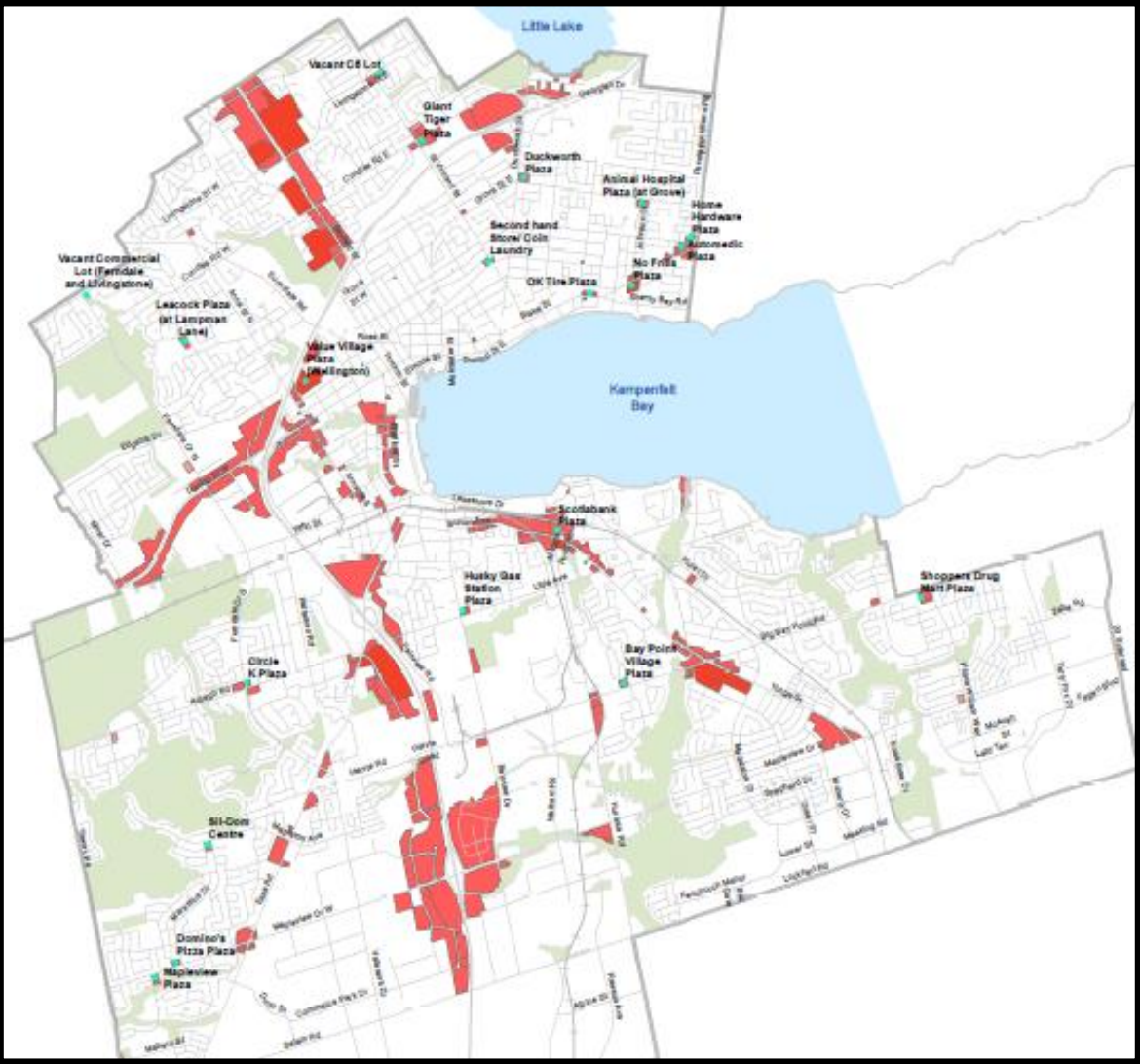
Commercially-Zoned Sites

Recommendation – Allow housing as-of-right on large, well-located commercially zoned properties, develop zoning and site planning policies.

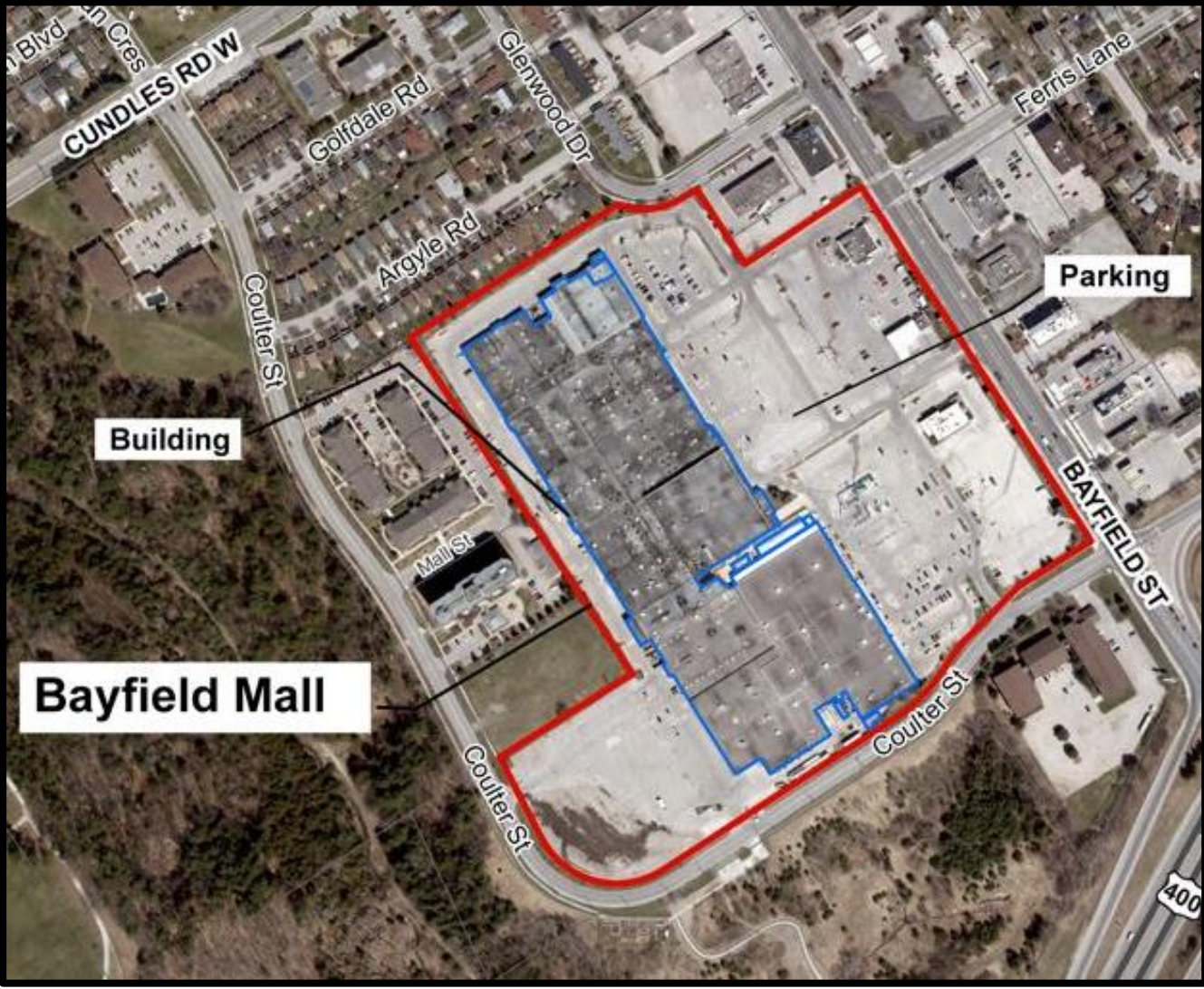
Recommendation – Proactively collaborate with property owners on master planning of residential intensification on general commercial zoned sites in Barrie.

- “Greyfield” sites with excess parking on major commercial strips, such as some plazas and big box stores, may present an excellent opportunity for housing located close to shopping, transit, and services.
- These recommendations could be initiated through a pilot project along the Bayfield strip north from Hwy 400.

Commercially Zoned Sites

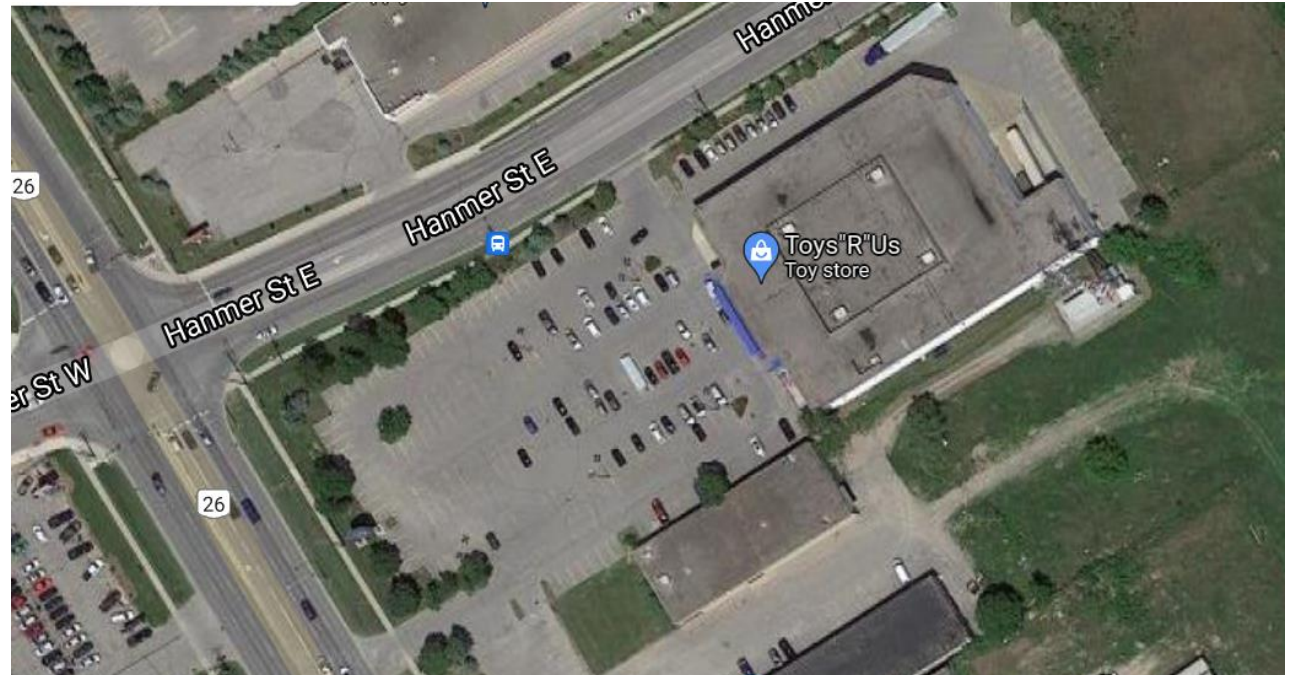


Sample Site: Bayfield Mall



Reduce Parking Requirements

- **Recommendation – Introduce shared parking policies for residential redevelopment on non-residential lands**
- **Recommendation – Eliminate parking standards entirely for certain classes of development (e.g. affordable rental, supportive and social housing).**
 - Shared parking policies allow residential and non-residential uses to share parking on the same site, because the need for parking occurs at different times of the day.
 - Staff in the Development Services department should pursue changes to parking standards through a global zoning-by amendment in 2022.



Dedicated City Resources

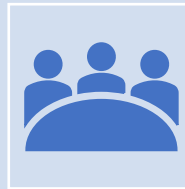
Recommendation – Funding a dedicated staff member in Development Services to oversee and ensure the delivery of the Affordable Housing Strategy

- If the City is to make meaningful progress on this critical priority, it needs at least one staff member whose sole job is to grow the supply of affordable housing in Barrie.
- This position could:
 - Expedite affordable housing approvals
 - Work with community partners to advance specific projects
 - Identify good candidate properties for housing development, and solicit and facilitate proposals from institutional and commercial property owners
 - Write grant applications to Federal funds
 - Work to ensure sites are “grant ready / shovel ready”
 - Revise and update the Affordable Housing Strategy
 - Lead policy initiatives to advance housing affordability and funding

Monitoring, Review Team & Innovative Building Practices



Recommendation – Develop regular housing stock monitoring



Recommendation - Establish a Review Team for an affordable rental or supportive and social housing project



Tiny Homes and Innovative Design

Recommendation – Develop guidelines for best practices in TinyHome design resulting in the lowest possible infrastructure and lifecycle operating costs as well as the smallest carbon footprint.

Recommendation – CBO to convene a working group to discuss innovative forms of housing that could be constructed in Barrie.



Parcels for Community Partnership

Recommendation – call for land to be made available philanthropically for construction of small-scale supportive housing/tiny home projects;

Recommendation – Map all publicly owned lands in Barrie and request good candidate sites be offered to non-profit, and charitable housing providers.

Recommendation – work with the Barrie Legion to build a Homes for Heroes tiny home community for veterans in Barrie (underway)

Community Benefits Charges & Housing- in-Lieu

- **Recommendation – *Develop a Community Benefit Charge program that funds social and supportive housing***
- **Recommendation – *Direct staff to evaluate whether cash-in-lieu of affordable housing (per unit fee) could be established for new development projects.***
 - ***This would be contributed to a dedicated reserve fund similar to parkland, which could then be used to fund affordable housing projects.***



Supportive Housing

Recommendation – Pursue hotel/motel conversions to create supportive housing communities, specifically:

- i. Development of evaluation criteria to identify motel conversion opportunities
- ii. Financial commitments/incentives (guarantees/low or no interest long-term loans (25-50+ years)/grants etc)
- iii. Agreements to jointly purchase with private/public/NGO partners
- iv. Process for fast tracking of conversion/redevelopment through planning and building departments



Immediately Fund
Supportive Housing

Develop targets and
agreement with
County for new
social/supportive units

- **Recommendation – Commit \$5M from the existing balance of the Community Benefit Reserve toward a new supportive housing capital fund within the Barrie Health Accord**
 - make a formal request to County of Simcoe Council to match the contribution at a 2:1
 - Deploy this capital as soon as practicable to create more supportive housing in Barrie.
- **Recommendation – Direct staff to establish a new side letter agreement with specific housing construction targets for supportive and social housing in Barrie through the Service Agreement with Simcoe County**

Organize Philanthropy Summit

Explore setting up a Land Trust

Recommendation – Organize a philanthropy summit to pitch supportive housing, social service projects to potential impact investors

- The Mayor's Office should organize an event when practical early in 2022 to bring together impact investors with an interest in social and supportive housing projects

Recommendation – Explore innovative housing partnership models such as a Community Land Trust, tiny homes communities.

- The Task Force has been compelled by the potential of new forms of market actors to create subsidized housing. In particular, a Barrie Community Land Trust could be effective given the very tight local housing market.

Promising Ideas and Future Work

Task force members brought forward a number of additional ideas, in some cases for even more bold/substantial moves than those recommended above.

These have been captured in the report to provide a basis for additional work by the Planning Department for future years and as part of the next Affordable Housing Strategy.

THANK YOU

Michelle, Shelby, Anna, Nina
for their work

Task Force members – all
volunteers and tons of
collaboration

Council for making this a
priority and supporting quick
start initiatives in June