



**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
MEMORANDUM**

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TO: MAYOR, J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

**FROM: M. BANFIELD, RPP, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
A. SAJECKI, SUPERVISOR OF GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

**NOTED: B. ARANIYASUNDARAN, P. ENG., PMP, GENERAL MANAGER OF
INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

**D. McALPINE, GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE
SERVICES COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**RE: REPORT BACK ON HOUSING AFFORDABILITY TASK FORCE
RECOMMENDATIONS**

DATE: FEBRUARY 14, 2022

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of Council with an update. On January 10, 2022, at General Committee, the following motion was given “That staff in the Development Services and Building Departments, and Mayor’s Office report back to General Committee by February 14, 2022, via memorandum with intended timelines and resource requests associated with implementing the Housing Affordability Task Force.” The purpose of this memorandum is to provide this report back, with City of Barrie staff’s input and estimation on how the City might best address these recommendations from a timeline and feasibility perspective.

However, since members of Council initially considered the recommendations of the Affordable Housing Task Force, additional recommendations from the Performing Arts Task Force and the Market District Task Force have been put forward. When taken together, many of these recommendations are outside of the existing departmental work plans and budget. The impact to departments must be assessed holistically with this in mind and prioritization must take place. Therefore, staff will also be providing a follow-up memo to cumulatively address any budget and resourcing considerations arising from the task forces.

[The Housing Affordability Task Force Final Report](#) presents 22 recommendations for improving housing affordability in Barrie. The recommendations are grouped according to areas of improvement and placed into two buckets. The first bucket deals with land availability, while the second bucket focuses on recommendations to help fund subsidized and supportive housing. While Development Services is focused on improving housing affordability in a number of ways, the recommendations provided by the task force would involve, in their execution, participation from a number of other departments, including Building, Finance, as well as Community and Corporate Services. The Final Report also highlights a couple of recommendations which may best be led by the Office of the Mayor.

An estimated timeline for implementation, as provided below, was created based on feedback from the above-mentioned departments. It was designed with particular consideration to how recommendations could align and build on initiatives already underway or anticipated (allowing for quicker or more seamless implementation). Following the timeline, anticipated additional resource requirements are also provided.



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For more information, please contact Michelle Banfield, RPP, Director of Development Services at 705-739-4220 ext. 5466 or by email at michelle.banfield@barrie.ca.



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Estimated Timeline: Implementation of Housing Affordability Task Force Recommendations

Recommendations Already Implemented or Ongoing

Recommendation	Area of Improvement	Bucket	Implementation	Staff Response
Allow housing as of right on institutionally zoned lands.	Institutionally Zoned Sites	Land Availability	Q4 2021	The City's Zoning By-law was amended on October 4, 2021.
Communicate the opportunity to institutional & places of worship.	Institutionally Zoned Sites	Land Availability	Q4 2021	Communications began in December 2021 and have continued into 2022, with an open house held on January 26, 2022.
Pursue hotel/motel conversions to create supportive housing communities.	Parcels for Community Partnerships	Land Availability	Ongoing	While some initial work has been done to pursue hotel/motel conversions, this work will be further advanced in collaboration with the update to the City's existing affordable housing strategy (which is expected to be led by a consultant, beginning in Q2/Q3). It should be noted, however, that the City's current debt projections and credit rating by Standard and Poor's do not contemplate the City's financial backing of these projects; doing so may reduce financing flexibility for future capital budgets. Additionally, the annual debt servicing costs for these projects may have to be funded from the tax levy as they are not projected in the County's DC background study.



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Implementation Beginning in 2022

Recommendation	Area of Improvement	Bucket	Estimated Start	Staff Response
Fund a dedicated senior staff member in Development Services to oversee and ensure the delivery of the Affordable Housing Strategy.	Dedicated City Resources	Land Availability	Q2 2022	Staff will put forward a motion in Q2 2022 asking for funding to secure a full-time affordable housing position at a senior level.
Fund feasibility studies for housing by institutional property owners and places of worship.	Institutionally Zoned Sites	Land Availability	Q2 2022	Staff estimate that an RFP will be issued in April 2022 for the feasibility studies, and that work by a consultant will begin in May 2022.
Commit \$5 million from the existing balance of the Community Benefit Reserve toward a new supportive housing capital fund within the Barrie Health Accord and make a formal request to County of Simcoe Council to match the contribution at a 2:1 ratio.	Expanding Funding Programs	Funding Subsidized and Supportive Housing	Q2 2022	A formal request can be made in Q2 2022 to the County of Simcoe regarding the matching of a \$5 million commitment at a 2:1 ratio. Following the response from the County, the City will revisit what's possible in terms of commitments. Currently, the Community Benefit Reserve is forecast to have enough uncommitted funds over the next 5 years to allow for the allocation of these dollars in 2022. However, it should be noted that the long-range financial plan highlighted a number of commitments that the city currently has, which are putting pressure on the reserves; in order to balance competing pressures, a governance structure should be introduced to ensure these funds are allocated in a fair and equitable manner.
Evaluate whether cash-in-lieu of affordable housing (per unit fee) could be established for new development projects.	Expand Funding Programs	Funding Subsidized and Supportive Housing	Q2/Q3 2022	As part of the Official Plan implementation plan, staff will begin work on an inclusionary zoning implementation study. The evaluation of a cash-in-lieu of affordable housing approach for the City would be done in conjunction with this work, and would also be



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				coordinated with the work being completed on the DC background study and the Community Benefits Charge by-law background study.
Explore innovative housing partnership models such as a Community Land Trust, Co-Housing and Tiny Home Communities.	Recruit Philanthropy and Impact Investment	Funding Subsidized and Supportive Housing	Q3 2022	A best practices review/jurisdictional scan of innovative housing partnership models could be conducted in-house once a dedicated staff person is hired to focus on housing affordability. This work would also be done in conjunction with the update to the City's existing affordable housing strategy, which is scheduled to begin Q2/Q3. (Development Services has already allocated dollars to bring on a consultant to update the strategy.)
Allow housing as-of-right on large, well-located commercial zoned properties, develop zoning and site planning policies.	Commercial Zones	Land Availability	Q4 2022	While residential uses are already permitted in many commercially zoned areas, Development Services staff will address whether zoning can further this type of development as part of the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law. The current timeline for completing the Comprehensive Zoning By-law is end of 2022. Development Services staff will consider if a standalone City initiated pilot zoning program may be appropriate.
Introduce shared parking policies for residential development on non-residential lands.	Commercial Zones	Land Availability	Q4 2022	Development Services staff will explore this as part of the work being done to introduce a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law. The current timeline for completing the Comprehensive Zoning By-law is end of 2022. Development Services staff will consider if a standalone City-initiated pilot zoning program may be appropriate.



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Eliminate or reduce parking standards entirely for certain classes of development (e.g., affordable rental, supportive and social housing).	Commercial Zones	Land Availability	Q4 2022	Development Services staff will explore this as part of the work being done to introduce a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law. The current timeline for completing the Comprehensive Zoning By-law is end of 2022. Development Services staff will consider if a standalone City-initiated pilot zoning program may be appropriate.
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Implementation Beginning in 2023

Recommendation	Area of Improvement	Bucket	Estimated Start	Staff Response
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.	Expanding Funding Programs	Funding Subsidized and Supportive Housing	Q1 2023	Currently, a tri-party Municipal Services Management Agreement is in place between the City of Barrie, City of Orillia and County of Simcoe, which in part pertains to the delivery of various social assistance programs. The agreement period ends on December 31, 2022, though it continues in force and effect until a new agreement is executed by all three parties. As part of the renewal of the City of Barrie's service agreement, a side letter could be established, which would include agreed-upon targets for supportive and social housing over the next 5-10 years.
Develop regular housing stock monitoring, to allow for evidence-based policy responses to housing needs and opportunities.	Dedicated City Resources	Land Availability	Q1 2023	This work would be done as part of two initiatives: the Official Plan implementation plan (to ensure housing targets in the Plan can be properly tracked) and the update to the City's existing affordable housing strategy (which is expected to be led by a consultant).



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				Work on both initiatives will advance concurrently, and thus advancement of the city's housing stock monitoring would be a coordinated effort.
Establish a review team for an affordable rental or supportive and social housing project, to determine a minimum feasible approvals process for affordable rental or supportive and social housing.	Exempting Certain Classes of Development	Land Availability	Q1 2023	While members may be invited to join the review team earlier, the work of the review team should begin just after implementation of the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law, Urban Design Guidelines and Official Plan. Development Services staff will consider if the works associated with the New Foundations project may be appropriate for piloting this review team concept.
Work with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to develop guidelines for best practices in tiny home design.	Parcels for Community Partnerships	Land Availability	Q1 2023	Development Services is currently working on City-Wide Urban Design Guidelines, which staff aim to have ready by the end of 2022. Staff can incorporate some guidelines on tiny home best practices into the guidelines and ensure these guidelines align with Provincial direction/Building Code requirements. Should a separate best-practices document additionally be requested, this work should be done in conjunction with the CBO working group and a consultant can be hired to lead its creation.
Proactively collaborate with property owners on master-planning of residential intensification on general commercial zoned sites in Barrie.	Commercial Zones	Land Availability	Q1 2023	The intention is to explore an initiative encouraging mixed-use development of commercial sites in Barrie after the New Foundations initiative wraps up (to ensure integration of any lessons learned). Given the timeline for New Foundations, work on a new affordable housing initiative focused on commercial zoned sites would begin early 2023 in a pilot program capacity likely in one or two areas of the City first.



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<p>The Chief Building Official (CBO) should convene a working group with architects, housing providers, and other local experts to discuss innovative forms of housing that could be constructed in Barrie.</p>	<p>Innovative Building Practices</p>	<p>Land Availability</p>	<p>Q2 2023</p>	<p>While Building staff have met with tiny homes representatives and have processed a permit for utilizing shipping containers, Building and Development Services staff will begin meeting in Q2 2023 to convene an “innovative homes” working group.</p>
<p>Develop a Community Benefit Charge program that funds social and supportive housing.</p>	<p>Expanding Funding Programs</p>	<p>Funding Subsidized and Supportive Housing</p>	<p>Q2/Q3 2023</p>	<p>The City will be preparing a Community Benefit Charge (CBC) strategy that will include funds for social and supportive housing projects, with by-law passage planned for 2023. Early estimates anticipate that the maximum funding through a CBC would be in the range of \$60 to 80 million over 30 years; the amount to be dedicated to housing would depend on finalized regulations and the type of strategy that is approved.</p>
<p>Call for land to be made available philanthropically for construction of small-scale supportive housing/tiny home projects.</p>	<p>Parcels for Community Partnerships</p>	<p>Land Availability</p>	<p>Q3 2023</p>	<p>Development Services, with support from the Communications team, can prepare a communications strategy to make land available philanthropically to support small-scale supportive housing and tiny home projects. Development Services would then support the facilitation of projects once any land has been made available.</p>
<p>Work with the Federal, Provincial, County governments to map all publicly owned lands in Barrie and formally request good candidate sites to be offered to non-profit, and charitable housing providers and builders.</p>	<p>Parcels for Community Partnerships</p>	<p>Land Availability</p>	<p>Q3 2023</p>	<p>Development Services staff, with the assistance of the GIS team, can lead mapping Barrie lands owned by the County, Province or Federal governments. A communications strategy can then be prepared for making a formal request to different levels of government for the dedication of sites. Development Services would then support the facilitation of projects once any land has been made available.</p>



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Recommendations to Be Led by the Office of the Mayor*

**Staff from other City of Barrie departments are available to assist, as needed.*

Recommendation	Area of Improvement	Bucket	Estimated Start	Staff Response
Work with the Barrie Legion to build a Homes for Heroes tiny home community for veterans in Barrie.	Parcels for Community Partnerships	Land Availability	Currently Underway	This recommendation has been actioned by the Mayor's Office and discussions with the Legion, Homes for Heroes, and potential partners are underway.
Organize a philanthropy summit to pitch supportive housing and social service projects to potential impact investors.	Recruit Philanthropy and Impact Investment	Funding Subsidized and Supportive Housing	Q4 2022	The intention is to have MaRS institute work with the Mayor's Office/Development Services staff to organize an online summit.



Anticipated Resource Requests:

Implementation of Housing Affordability Task Force Recommendations

- a) Dedicated funding to support the hiring of a full-time staff member to focus on housing affordability.
- b) Funding of \$200,000 to support the creation of feasibility studies for housing by institutional property owners and places of worship; prior direction on this was given in a council motion dated August 9, 2021.
- c) Funding to support the master-planning of residential intensification on general commercial zoned sites in Barrie.
- d) Funding to support the creation of Tiny Home Guidelines, should Council prefer a standalone document further to any guidelines given in the City-Wide Urban Design Guidelines.
- e) Honorariums to support the Chief Building Official's working group with architects, housing providers and other local experts to discuss innovative forms of housing.