



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES MEMORANDUM

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TO: MAYOR A. NUTTALL AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

**FROM: J. ROBERTS, MANAGER STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, POLICY AND ANALYSIS
EXT. 4705**

WARD: ALL

**NOTED: M. BANFIELD, RPP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

RE: UPDATE ON THE HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND APPLICATION

DATE: MARCH 27, 2024

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of Council with an update on the City of Barrie's Housing Accelerator Fund Application.

Background

On August 16, 2023, Council directed staff to submit a Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) as the municipality's application under the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) (DEV041-23). To access funding, municipalities were required to:

- develop and submit an action plan to undertake in an effort to boost housing supply and speed up approvals;
- commit to a housing supply growth target;
- complete or update a housing needs assessment report; and
- agree to submit periodic progress reports to CMHC.

Staff submitted the application to CMHC on August 17, 2023. The Action Plan included 9 initiatives to facilitate the building of additional residential units under the HAF agreement by the end of 2026.

1. System Improvements/ Enhancements to the current E-Permitting System for all APLI applications to better manage documents and allow for mobile inspections.
2. Enable Electronic Payments for Development Applications and associated fees.
3. Incentivize the creation of new affordable housing units building on the concept plans from New Foundations as well as initiatives coming out of the updated Affordable Housing Strategy and an updated Community Improvement Plan.
4. Incentives to move units from Development Approval to Built and Occupied Units through any available financial incentives and outreach to the existing development community with approved but unbuilt projects.
5. Policy reform to Facilitate Growth through a proposed Community Planning Permit System and zoning reform through the new Zoning By-law.
6. Evaluate Land opportunities for Affordable Housing through public and private partnerships.
7. Encourage and Incentives Additional Dwelling Units / Enhance the certified model program for second suites and detached dwelling units.
8. Infrastructure Modelling and Growth forecasting to better assess available capacity and potentially reduce engineering requirements for each development application.
9. Service Enhancements – Streamline permitting process and enhanced customer service.

On October 25, 2023, Council passed motion (23-A-109) in an effort to secure HAF funding;

- a. to have staff prepare a zoning by-law amendment that would permit as of right building permits for up to 4 residential units wherever a zone permits singles, semis, or street townhomes for consideration by Council as soon as permitted by the statutory requirements of the *Planning Act*;

The public meeting for the zoning by-law amendment permitting 4 residential units took place on December 13, 2023, the staff report is expected for Council's consideration in Q1 2024.

- b. Rezone some or all of the municipal lands identified in motion 23-G-179 to build more housing.

The public meeting for the zoning by-law amendments for three City owned properties took place on February 27, 2024.

Update

On March 14, 2024, the [Federal government announced](#) the City of Barrie has been successful in obtaining HAF funding. The City of Barrie will receive \$25,684,990 over the three-year program with a commitment to complete our submitted Action Plan and to have 6825 housing starts* by March 31, 2027.

6825 housing starts includes 688 units fast-tracked by the HAF funding and also includes a target of 210 housing starts to be affordable.

*CMHC defines a housing start as "...the beginning of construction work on a building. This is usually when the concrete has been poured for the whole of the footing around the structure or an equivalent stage where a basement will not be part of the structure."

The monies received from this program will be spent completing the nine (9) initiatives laid out in the Action Plan (Appendix "A") this includes financial incentives and resourcing required to complete the initiatives.

The intent is to use the funds to support transformational change through continuing to streamline development and creating the conditions, through incentives/grants, for example, to incentive housing supply in both the short and long term.

The remaining monies can be allocated for the following purposes:

Investments in affordable housing:

- construction of affordable housing
- repair or modernization of affordable housing
- land or building acquisition for affordable housing

Investments in housing-related infrastructure:

- drinking water infrastructure that supports housing
- wastewater infrastructure that supports housing
- solid waste management that supports housing
- public transit that supports housing
- community energy systems that support housing
- disaster mitigation that supports housing
- brownfield redevelopment that supports housing
- broadband and connectivity that supports housing
- capacity building that supports housing
- site preparation for housing developments



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Investments in community-related infrastructure that supports housing:

- local roads and bridges that support housing
- sidewalks, lighting, bicycle lanes that support housing
- firehalls that support housing
- landscaping

Funding will be released to the municipality in four equal payments. The first payment is expected to be received in Q1 2024. The second and third payment are to be provided in 2025 and 2026 contingent on meeting the milestones outlined for each initiative in the Action Plan. Reporting on our progress on each initiative and housing start is required biannually to CMHC and will also be provided to Council.

The release of the final payment is contingent on CMHC assessing whether the municipality has completed its Action Plan and met the housing supply growth target of 6825 housing starts.

Next Steps

Staff will prepare a comprehensive project plan including a full resourcing, budget, and strategic communications plan, understanding that to successfully complete our Action Plan we will need to pull together a cross functional project team. Staff will report back to Council with a detailed implementation plan before the end of September 2024.



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APPENDIX “A”

Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan

Action Plan Initiative #	Action Plan Initiative	Details
1	System Improvements / Enhancements to the current E-Permitting System	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement a document management system within APLI• Implement mobile inspections for Building inspectors
2	Enable Electronic Payments for Development Applications and associated fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement a system to allow the entire development and building permit process to be handled electronically including the payment of required fees
3	Incentivize the creation of new affordable housing units	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partner with Non-Profits who have concept plans for affordable units to assist them with obtaining building permits• Community Improvement Plan for Affordable Housing
4	Incentives to move from Development Approval to Permitted Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incentivize approved development applications to pull building permits• Outreach to the development community to learn about barriers approvals are facing
5	Policy reform to Facilitate Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement a Community Permitting Planning System (CPPS)• New comprehensive Zoning by-law to encourage affordable and ‘missing middle’ units (Project underway)
6	Evaluate Land opportunities for Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate municipal and non-profit land holdings to find suitable sites for affordable housing• Evaluate opportunities, complete development feasibility studies for top options
7	Encourage and Incentivize Additional Dwelling Units this includes permission for 4 units as of right wherever zoning currently permits single, semi or street townhouses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementing the required policy framework to permit 4 units as of right wherever zoning currently permits single, semi or street townhouses (Process underway)• Provide information and financial incentives towards the increased construction of accessory dwelling units on existing suitable lots
8	Growth Modeling and forecasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement a growth forecasting software, enhance current tracking and monitoring• Update Infrastructure Modeling
9	Service Enhancements – Streamline permitting process and enhanced customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This initiative involves systemic change to the approvals process to expediate both building and planning approvals. Changes include additional staffing, enhanced hours of operations, and fast track permitting program