

Memorandum

Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019

To: Members of Council

From: Marisa Williams, Team Lead Official Plan Review/Senior Policy Planner, Community Services

Subject: Increasing Housing Supply in Ontario

This purpose of this memo is to provide Council with an update on the Province's Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) consultation document about increasing the housing supply in Ontario.

MMAH issued a consultation document regarding increasing housing supply in Ontario. The consultation document can be found at the following link: www.ontario.ca/housingsupply. The Province was seeking comments by January 25, 2019.

Background

MMAH has heard from the public as well as the development community that there is a high demand for all forms of housing types, price points and tenure, but with limited supply to address the needs. In high growth areas, the house prices and rent are high making it difficult for people to enter the housing market and affording appropriate housing to suit their needs. The high prices are particularly felt where there is a lack of supply and rental housing being hard to find.

Part of the solution is creating more housing enabling home ownership and rent at more affordable prices.

Housing Action Plan

To address the increasing housing supply, MMAH is developing a Housing Action Plan (Plan). This Plan will provide measures that the Province can take to increase housing supply; it will be based on suggestions and comments provided by the public through this consultation.

Five Barriers to Creating New Housing Supply

The Province, through comments they have already received, identified five (5) general themes as to the barriers to creating new housing supply:

- **Speed** – It takes too long for housing projects to be approved. To get a new home from a plan to market there are many different approvals and permits required from various agencies and levels of government. Since some of these approvals and permits may duplicate/or generate delays, the burden of the development costs is borne by the builders and then passed onto consumers. While the various requirements for approval

were established to serve policy objectives, public interest and government goals, an effort to streamline these requirements would be needed.

- **Mix** – There are too many restrictions on what can be built and where. Not enough housing appropriate for rental, families and seniors wishing to downsize are being built in areas where infrastructure exists (e.g. transit, schools, workplaces, etc.). Mix of housing types such as mid-rise, stacked townhouses, townhomes, duplexes and semis are all types of housing that provide more options.
- **Cost** - Fees and costs are too high because of high land prices and fees associated with approvals. Housing development requires access to serviced land (e.g. water and sewer, roads, etc.) and lack of serviced land is one of the reasons that land prices are driven higher. The costs of government-imposed fees and charges, which are needed to provide infrastructure, makes it more expensive to develop new housing.
- **Rent** – It is hard to be a landlord and tenants need protection. The Province indicates that landlords of small holdings state legislation well as the Building Code requirements make it difficult to provide second units. Tenants have indicated that there is a need for stronger protections against evictions and unmaintained rental units.
- **Innovation** – Other concerns, opportunities and innovations are needed to increase housing supply. There is an interest in creative ways to increase the supply of ownership and rental housing. The Province is interested in learning about other issues that people may face when looking for a home.

Questions to Consider

Based on these five (5) areas, the consultation paper asks several questions:

- How can the development approval process be streamlined when balancing competing interests and the broader public interest?
- How can we make the planning/development process more effective to build appropriate and affordable housing, in the locations with the right supports?
- How can new types of housing be added to existing neighbourhoods while maintaining the qualities that make these communities desirable places to live?
- How do we balance the need for more housing with the need to maintain employment and industrial lands?
- How can development costs be lowered while ensuring funds are available for growth related infrastructure?
- How can serviced land be made available in the right locations?
- How can we make the system work better for landlords while adding additional protections for tenants?
- How do we encourage homeowners create legal second units and developers to built new rental units?
- How do we encourage innovation in the building industry while maintaining safety?
- What innovative forms of housing are there (e.g. shared ownership, rent to own, etc.)?
- What creative solutions could help increase the housing supply?
- What type of protections would help new homebuyers?

Region of Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan

The Region of Peel is working on the following two (2) key strategies identified in the Peel's Housing and Homelessness Plan. A copy of the Plan can be found at this link: [Housing and Homelessness Plan](#).

Housing Master Plan:

The Housing Master Plan, which is a plan that will recommend to Council, the locations and types of housing the Region plans to build over the next 10 years. The plan will include several recommendations that involve regenerating Peel Housing Corporation sites, but it will also highlight where other partners are needed to meet community need. The plan will include finance and investment strategies.

Incentives Program:

As well the Region is working on a targeted incentives program, with the goal of getting the market to produce more of the right type of affordable units (e.g. larger family units as opposed to bachelor apartments) in the right location. The Region will be issuing an RFP to hire a consultant to assist with program design, using a CIP (Community Improvement Plan) as the tool to administer the program.

Town of Caledon Initiatives

The Town of Caledon has made efforts providing age friendly housing. This is an innovative approach, stemming from the work of the Seniors Advisory Committee (now known as the Seniors Task Force), where developers are required as part of their approvals, to provide a floor plan and universal design features list, posted in their sales office. The floor plan is to show main floor living (e.g., provide master bedroom and ensuite, larger door openings, larger width hallways, etc. within the main floor of the house) as well as locations within the house where if the need arises for an elevator.

Another endeavour, through the work of the Caledon Housing Initiative, is a partnership with Raising the Roof – Reside and TRCA, to retrofit a heritage building (owned by TRCA). This building is located on Cedar Mains Road and will be available for rent by three adult individuals with developmental disabilities to allow them independent living.

In 2017, the Town of Caledon completed its Housing Study. The Study identified two (2) key housing deficits: Seniors and Rental Housing. As part of the Official Plan 2041 work plan, an Affordable Housing Strategy was identified, which is planned to commence in 2019.

The Town and Region are currently involved in securing new affordable housing sites in the Mayfield West Phase 2 area with Habitat for Humanity and by Peel Living.

Next Steps

Town Staff are consulting with Regional staff to discuss comments on the consultation document; and will provide a response to the Province.