



To: **Committee of the Whole**

Agenda Section: Corporate Services
Division: Engineering, Planning and Environment
Department: Planning Department

Item Number: **CCW - 2023-179**

Meeting Date: June 27, 2023

Subject: **County of Simcoe's Housing Attainable Supply Action Plan Project Update**

Recommendation

That Item CCW 2023-179, dated June 27, 2023, regarding the County of Simcoe's Housing Attainable Supply Action Plan Project Update, be received.

Executive Summary

In 2022, County Council approved a consultant to be hired to assist with developing a Simcoe County-specific housing strategy with a focus on attainable market-supplied housing. As a result of this recommendation, County of Simcoe Planning staff, together with the Planning staff at the City of Orillia, and N. Barry Lyons Consultants Limited (NBLC), are currently preparing a Housing Attainable Supply Action Plan (Housing ASAP).

During the development of the Scope of Work for the Housing ASAP Project, local municipal partnerships were explored with several Simcoe area municipalities. Following these discussions, the City of Orillia remained as an interested partner in the project. A Request for Quote (RFQ) was issued in the fall 2022 and several submissions were received. The RFQ included a provisional component for the City of Orillia to partner with the County on this project. The project was awarded to NBLC in February 2023. NBLC has a long history of completing this type of work, specializing in housing, community renewal, development feasibility and real estate strategy. The City of Orillia accepted the provisional component of the RFQ and is a partner on this initiative. It should be noted that NBLC has also been hired by the Town of Collingwood and the City of Barrie to complete similar work related to affordable housing in each of those municipalities. As a result, the County is well positioned and committed to collaborate with the Consultants

across the County, with the Cities of Orillia and Barrie, and the Town of Collingwood, and to coordinate and align the projects as much as possible.

The Housing ASAP project is intended to identify tactics, strategies, and tools that can be implemented by the County, the City of Orillia, and lower-tier municipalities in the next five (5) years to increase the supply of attainable housing provided by the private market. The project is considering the market housing supply and delivery system with a focus on workforce and missing middle (private market rental and/or ownership) housing in Simcoe County.

The recommended Action Plan will provide direction and options to the County and municipalities that will result in a diverse mix of housing options and densities to meet market demand and affordable housing needs of current and future residents in the County and the City of Orillia. The anticipated timeline for project completion is early 2024.

Additional housing initiatives are currently underway at the County level as part of the 'Building Up' communication strategy. Firstly, the Homelessness System Review seeks to find ways to better service people impacted by poverty and homelessness through strong community partnerships. Secondly, the Simcoe County Housing Corporation Master Plan is a multi-year plan to sustain and expand the County's affordable housing system through repairs, new construction, support, and improved efficiencies.

Ultimately, the update to the County's 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy will consider all current housing types and future gaps to set goals to create housing for everyone from very low to moderate household incomes. This Strategy will tie all the County housing initiatives together.

For additional detail on these related, but distinct Simcoe County initiatives, all of the County Housing 'Building Up' projects are further described on our County of Simcoe website: <https://www.simcoe.ca/Housing>.

Background/Analysis/Options

Having housing that is within reach of working individuals and families is a primary focus across Ontario. Increasing the supply of affordably priced housing is one way to assist in this housing crisis, although it will not solve the housing affordability issue on its own. Meaningful change by every level of government is required to address the complex issue of the inability to attain market-sourced housing.

The County's Housing ASAP project will help explore the issues of housing and outline the tools, policies, and actions that could be implemented to increase the supply and address the affordability and attainability of housing in Simcoe County. The objectives will focus on the attainability of market housing and the missing middle, the factors impacting attainability, and the causes and effects of creating effective housing tools. The Action Plan will result in recommended tools that are most useful and relevant to Simcoe County,

the City of Orillia, and our municipal partners, to increase the supply and attainability of housing for Simcoe County residents.

The Housing ASAP project will also enable services and programs to be advanced in order to assist member municipalities increase the supply and variety of attainable housing aligned with local workforce needs. This could include future initiatives such as model policies, development industry engagement, and programs.

The Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Attainable Housing & Purpose-built Rental Task Force has proposed a definition for 'Attainable' Housing. The Housing ASAP initiative is building on this definition, with clarifying details regarding various built forms and densities in rental or ownership, missing middle and/or workforce housing.

The Housing ASAP is definitively answering the following questions:

What is Attainable?

In each sub-region of the County (refer to Schedule 1), what is the target sale price and target rent that is within reach of the working individual and family?

What is Missing?

Why is the existing supply of housing and/or planned housing units insufficient?

What are the number and types of dwellings that need to be integrated into each sub-region for the private sector to deliver market-based housing that is attainable?

How can we help?

What can municipalities do to help facilitate the attainable units that are needed?

The initiative includes four project components:

Component 1: Gap Analysis and Background Review (Current Stage)

This includes drafting of a Gap Analysis Project Update Report in the form of a Housing Needs Assessment. The County's Planning and Social Housing teams have provided all relevant data to NBLC as part of this process. The Consultants have completed the market research for the gaps analysis and are now drafting the Housing Needs Assessment. The completion of this report is anticipated by the beginning of July 2023. The Consultants will present the draft Housing Needs Assessment to the internal Project Steering Committee and a final Housing Needs Assessment will be presented to Committee of the Whole and the County's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.

Component 2: Public and Stakeholder Engagement

A website has been created on the County of Simcoe and City of Orillia websites to identify this project. The County's Social Housing team, together with Planning, have created a Key Stakeholder Engagement phone survey for our housing projects, which our own Service Simcoe team will be conducting on our behalf. The Consultants will develop Public Engagement Tools as part of this component of work, meeting with local Council representatives as necessary, undertaking stakeholder consultations and public information session(s), and subsequently drafting a summary report. This process is anticipated to begin late September 2023. In-person public information sessions are

anticipated for Bradford, Barrie, and Orillia. Online sessions would be more fitting for some of the surrounding rural areas.

Component 3: Solution Oriented Best Practices

Solution oriented Best Practices will be investigated from across the County, City of Orillia, and the Province as part of this project. This component is anticipated for later in the fall of 2023.

Component 4: Recommended Action Plan

The project objective is for a Recommended Action Plan that will identify concrete opportunities and innovative ideas that could be implemented in the next five (5) years throughout the County and City of Orillia to deliver attainable market housing. The Action Plan is trying to influence market provided attainable housing by understanding the integration of infrastructure needs and housing goals, how to deliver housing types at a certain cost, how to incentivise attainable housing through innovations, and how to make it profitable for developers to use innovative tools.

The County of Simcoe Planning staff are leading this initiative, while including other relevant departments. The County's Social Housing group are sharing resources for this initiative as they update their 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy, with a similar timeframe for completion. Simcoe Planning staff are also working closely with the County's Economic Development group to potentially tie in economic development, workforce retention, and the missing middle. To ensure collaboration throughout this initiative, the County's Planning team has created several collaboration groups.

1. **Project Steering Committee:** This Committee is our staff-level collaboration committee to determine the approach, goals, and optimal coordination of the project. This Committee includes the Consultants, Planning, Social Housing, Economic Development and Orillia Planning staff. Our initial meeting with the Consultants took place in March 2023.
2. **Municipal Collaboration Team:** This Team is represented by the Project Steering Committee, plus Town of Collingwood and City of Barrie staff to ensure open communication and resource sharing regarding each of our affordable housing projects. Additional discussion will be needed to determine potential shared public consultations.
3. **ASAP Working Group:** To be established in the future, this Group will include the Project Steering Committee, plus external stakeholders such as representation from; developers, local municipal staff, non-profit group, lenders, etc. It is anticipated that this Working Group will be established as part of Component 2: Public & Stakeholder Engagement.

Financial and Resource Implications

Funds for this project have been allocated in the 2023 Operating Budget.

Relationship to Corporate Strategic Plan

Item CCW 2023-179 supports Council's strategic directions:

Strengthen Social, Health and Educational Opportunities: Establish partnerships to identify opportunities for strengthened Human Services and Education to support improved health and well-being of our residents

Growth Related Service Delivery: Create and strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders to support communities by delivering sustainable services.

Reference Documents

- CCW 2022-097 (April 12, 2022) Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force Report Review and a review of the Legislative Policies and Tools to Increase the Supply of Housing
- Barrie Housing Needs Assessment
- Collingwood Housing Needs Assessment

Attachments

Schedule 1 – Housing ASAP Sub-Regions

Prepared By Kristin Pechkovsky, Planning Programs Supervisor – Innovation and Acceleration

Approvals

Nathan Westendorp, Director of Planning/Chief Planner

Rob Elliott, General Manager Engineering, Planning and Environment

Trevor Wilcox, General Manager, Corporate Performance

Mark Aitken, Chief Administrative Officer

Date

June 9, 2023

June 9, 2023

June 18, 2023

June 20, 2023

COUNTY OF SIMCOE AND CITY OF ORILLIA**HOUSING, ATTAINABLE SUPPLY ACTION PLAN****SUB-REGIONS:**

Follow the Social Housing Average Market Rent and Gross Household Sub-Regions data:

1. North Sub-Region:
 - Midland
 - Penetanguishene
 - Tay
 - Tiny

2. South Sub-Region:
 - Bradford West Gwillimbury
 - New Tecumseth
 - Adjala-Tosorontio

3. Central Sub-Region:
 - Innisfil
 - Springwater
 - Essa

4. East Sub-Region:
 - Oro-Medonte
 - Severn
 - Ramara

5. West Sub-Region:
 - Collingwood
 - Wasaga Beach
 - Clearview

6. Orillia Sub-Region:
 - City of Orillia