

December 22, 2021

Housing Strategy Study

Pickering Housing Strategy
& Action Plan 2021-2031



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Executive Summary

The United Nations establishes that adequate housing is universally viewed as one of the most basic human needs and that it should be seen as the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity.¹

The right to adequate housing was recognized by the United Nations as part of the right to an adequate standard of living in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights².

In 2017, the Government of Canada released its first ever National Housing Strategy (NHS) which establishes that every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable home, and that affordable housing is a cornerstone of inclusive communities. This \$55 plus billion, 10-year plan aims to strengthen the middle class, cut chronic homelessness in half, fuel the economy, and give more Canadians across the country a place to call home.³

The Ontario Human Rights Commission reported that adequate housing is essential to one's sense of dignity, safety, inclusion and ability to contribute to the fabric of our neighbourhoods and societies. Without appropriate housing, it is often not possible to get and keep employment, to recover from mental illness or other disabilities, to integrate into the community, to escape physical or emotional violence or to keep custody of children.⁴

In the Durham Region Housing Plan 2014-2024 (At Home in Durham), the Regional Municipality of Durham acknowledged that affordable, accessible and suitable housing is essential for healthy communities, and strong and vibrant neighbourhoods and that it underpins the quality of life for people in Durham, at every stage of their lives.⁵ At Home in Durham is an integrated housing plan that lays out the Region's vision for housing to 2024, including an assessment of current and future housing needs; goals related to the identified needs; and realistic actions to meet the diverse range of these needs. It provides a description of anticipated outcomes and how progress is to be measured as Durham works to implement its plan.

¹ [The Right to Adequate Housing, United Nations Fact Sheet No. 21 \(Rev. 1\)](#)

² [The Right to Adequate Housing, United Nations Fact Sheet No. 21 \(Rev. 1\)](#)

³ [Canada's National Housing Strategy: A Place To Call Home, November 2017](#)

⁴ [Right At Home: Report on the Consultation on Human Rights and Rental Housing in Ontario, May 28, 2008](#)

⁵ [At Home in Durham, Durham Housing Plan 2014-2024](#)

In the summer of 2020 the City of Pickering undertook the Housing Strategy Study with the goal of establishing a strategy and action plan that addresses the need for delivering more lifecycle housing options, including affordable and accessible units, to support changing demographic conditions within the City over the next ten years (2021-2031). The Study resulted in the Research and Gap Analysis Report, March 2021 (Research Report), which concluded that the City’s current housing stock is not fully addressing the needs of City residents. Key findings of the Research Report indicated that there is an overall need for more housing options for low and moderate income earners, more affordable rental and ownership housing in a range of unit sizes, and accessible units. The Housing Strategy and Action Plan (2021-2031) provides a framework of policies and incentives to address the gaps, and a mechanism to monitor progress as the City works to implement its plan.



“The Housing Strategy and Action Plan provides a framework of policies and incentives to address the housing gaps and mechanisms to monitor progress as the City works to implement its Plan.”

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Study Background

All levels of government generally acknowledge that there is a housing crisis. There is a lack of affordable housing options, both rental and ownership, for many people in the City of Pickering.

In the Fall of 2018, the City of Pickering embarked on a process to develop its first ever Age Friendly Community Plan (AFCP). Over 650 people participated in an extensive community consultation program. The resulting AFCP identifies four priority areas and 68 actions that are intended to help ensure that local policies, community programs and services, and municipal infrastructure meet the existing and future needs of older adults in Pickering. Housing was identified as the highest priority of the four priority areas.

The City of Pickering is projected to be a driving force for residential and economic growth in Durham Region and the Greater Toronto Area over the next two decades. This, in combination with recent amendments to Provincial policy regarding urban area boundary expansion and intensification targets, the Region's current municipal comprehensive review which includes a review of the Region's settlement areas, a land needs assessment, and a review of housing policy planning, also contributed to Council recognizing the need for a Housing Strategy Study.

On June 15, 2020, following the consideration of Report PLN 05-20, Council directed City Development staff to undertake a comprehensive housing strategy study.

The provision of housing, affordable housing, and age-friendly housing, is influenced by all levels of government, the private and not-for-profit sectors, and a variety of community groups and organizations. The Province of Ontario (the Province) and the Regional Municipality of Durham (Durham Region), play key roles in the development, funding, and administration of affordable housing.

1.2 Study Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the Housing Strategy Study is to establish the City’s role and priorities with regard to facilitating opportunities for developing housing, affordable housing and age-friendly housing in Pickering over the next 10 years (2021 – 2031); assist Council with decision making; provide a framework for staff in implementing its responsibilities, including those that relate to the coordination of actions with other agencies, organizations and governments; assist in guiding residential growth within the City; aid in the education and creation of general public awareness of what the City is doing on this issue; and provide a mechanism to monitor progress as the City works to implement its plan.

The key objective of the Housing Strategy Study is to provide a framework so that the City can ensure that there is a supply of suitable (as it relates to the size of the household), adequate (as it relates to physical condition) and affordable (as it relates to household income) housing for all ages and abilities within its jurisdiction. This will help to ensure that the City meets the housing needs in support of a diverse community and workforce.



1.3 Study Methodology

The Housing Strategy Study consists of three phases:

- Phase 1: Research and Gap Analysis;
- Phase 2: Draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan; and
- Phase 3: Recommended Housing Strategy and Action Plan.

There were engagement opportunities for the public and stakeholders throughout the Study.



1.4 Engagement

The successful completion of the Study relied on meaningful public and stakeholder engagement and consultation. The engagement process was supported by a communications plan that included media releases, social media messages, and a project page on the City’s website (<https://www.pickering.ca/en/city-hall/housing-strategy-study.aspx#>) which went live on January 6, 2021. Feedback from the various engagement opportunities was considered in preparing the Housing Strategy and Action Plan, and is summarized in Chapter 3.0 of this report.



“The provision of housing, affordable housing, and age-friendly housing, is influenced by all levels of government, the private and not-for-profit sectors, and a variety of community groups and organizations.”

2.0 Key Housing Gaps

The Research and Gap Analysis Report, March 31, 2021, (the Research Report) concluded that the City's current housing stock is not fully addressing the needs of City residents. Key findings of the Research Report indicated that there is an overall need for more housing options for low and moderate income earners, more affordable rental and ownership housing in a range of unit sizes, and additional accessible units.

The primary rental market refers to units purposely built for the rental market. In particular, the Research Report identified the need for additional primary rental market units of all sizes, the protection of existing rental units, and the need for additional accessible rental units. In addition, the Research Report identified the need for home ownership housing options for moderate income earners in a range of unit sizes as well as accessible units.

The Province of Ontario has completed several significant policy initiatives that have an impact on facilitating the provision and/or protection of affordable housing. They include: the adoption of the *Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016*; the adoption of the *More Homes More Choices Act, 2019*; the 2019 update to A Place to Grow, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe; the 2020 update to the Provincial Policy Statement; and the adoption of the *COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020*. The City has an opportunity to address these Provincial policy directions through the Housing Strategy and Action Plan.



“There is a need for housing options for low and moderate income earners, more affordable rental and ownership housing in a range of unit sizes, and additional accessible units.”

3.0 What We Heard

Engagement opportunities included two electronic public open houses, a Stakeholder Meeting, and presentations to the Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee. At the January 21, 2021 electronic public open house staff launched the Study, provided an overview of the purpose, objectives and work program of the Study, and listened to feedback from delegates. On April 29, 2021, staff hosted the second electronic public open house, provided an update on the status of the Study, a summary of the gaps in housing in the City identified in the Phase 1: Research and Gap Analysis Report, March 2021, and an overview of Draft Actions that the City may consider in addressing the gaps.

On February 25, 2021 staff hosted the Stakeholder Meeting which was facilitated by WSP and held electronically on the GoToMeeting platform. The purpose of the meeting was to engage key stakeholders and provide an opportunity for the City to receive solution-oriented feedback from a range of relevant perspectives and interests in affordable housing within Pickering.

On March 17, 2021 and May 19, 2021 staff attended the electronic meetings of the Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee (ACC) and provided an update on the status of the Study, preliminary findings to date, a review of the work plan and next steps. At the May 19, 2021 AAC meeting, staff also presented an overview of the Draft Action Plan. Most importantly, staff listened to the feedback and answered questions from the Committee.

Furthermore, staff provided study updates to Council in March 2021 (PLN 11-21) and June 2021 (PLN 28-21). The Draft Action Plan was contained in the June 7, 2021 Report PLN 28-21.

Engagement for Phase 2 of the Study included circulating the Phase 2: Draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan Report (Phase 2 Report) to internal departments, agencies and interested stakeholders for review and comment.

The Phase 3: Recommended Housing Strategy & Action Plan, December 22, 2021, was modified from the Phase 2 Report to include consideration for feedback received from the circulation of the Phase 2 Report .

3.1 Phase 1 Engagement

3.1.1 Phase 1 Public Open House

Electronic Public Open House 1, the first public engagement opportunity for the Study, took place on January 21, 2021 and was advertised on the Community Page of the News Advertiser on January 7 and 14, 2021, as well as on the City's website. In addition, a news release was issued on January 14, 2021, followed by social media messages. City staff also sent notice of the Electronic Public Open House directly to members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, Seniors Community Services Council, and the Age Friendly Steering Committee.

Three delegates, in addition to Maurice Brenner, City Councillor, Ward 1 and Shaheen Butt, City Councillor, Ward 3, participated in the discussion. As of September 9, 2021 a total of 178 members of the public viewed the Public Open House 1 on the City's YouTube channel.

A complete summary of comments/questions and staff responses associated with the January 21, 2021 Electronic Public Open House 1 were reported to Council in Report PLN 11-21 and is contained in Appendix 1 to this report.

3.1.2 Phase 1 Stakeholder Meeting

Representatives from the development industry, consultants, agencies, and other relevant organizations were invited to attend a Stakeholder Meeting on February 25, 2021. Nineteen individuals participated and were provided nine discussion questions in advance of the meeting. The questions were developed based on the findings of the Research Report, and largely focused on exploring the various issues and opportunities that were identified through the Research Report.

A summary of comments/questions associated with the February 25, 2021 Stakeholder Meeting is contained in Appendix 2 to this report.

3.1.3 Phase 1 Accessibility Advisory Committee

Staff attended the March 17, 2021 electronic meeting of the Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee and provided an overview of the Study, including the background, purpose, objectives, and work plan. More specifically, the housing continuum was presented and the definition of "affordable" was explained. The roles of Federal, Provincial and Regional governments in housing was also explored. The presentation concluded with confirming preliminary findings to date and the next steps of the Study. Comments from the Committee are detailed in Appendix 3, Housing Strategy Study, Engagement Summary Report, July 2021.

3.2 Phase 2 Engagement

3.2.1 Phase 2 Public Open House

Electronic Public Open House 2 took place on April 29, 2021 and was advertised on the Community Page of the News Advertiser on April 15 and 22, 2021, as well as on the City's website. City staff also sent notice of the Electronic Public Open House 2 directly to members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, Seniors Community Services Council, the Age Friendly Steering Committee, and participants at the February 25, 2021 Stakeholder Meeting.

As of September 9, 2021 a total of 72 members of the public viewed Public Open House 2 on the City's YouTube channel. Staff heard from two delegates during the Open House, and received a few emailed comments prior to, and during the Open House.

A summary of comments/questions associated with the April 29, 2021 Electronic Public Open House 2 were reported to Council in Report PLN 28-21 and is contained in Appendix 4 to this report.

3.2.2 Phase 2 Accessibility Advisory Committee

Staff attended the May 19, 2021 electronic meeting of the Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee and provided an update on the status of the Study, including a review of the work plan to confirm next steps. Information regarding housing gaps were identified, while tools identified in the Draft Action Plan were reviewed. These tools included planning policy, financial incentives, partnership, education, advocacy and other actions. Comments from the Committee are detailed in Appendix 3, Housing Strategy Study, Engagement Summary Report, July 2021.

3.2.2 Phase 2 Report Comments Received

Comments received on the Phase 2 Report are summarized below.

3.2.2.1 Region of Durham

The Region of Durham has submitted comments in support of all of the draft actions contained in Section 4 and summarized in Section 5 of the Phase 2 Report. In addition, the Region of Durham acknowledges and offers its support in the role it can play in assisting the City of Pickering in connecting interested developers with experts or consultants in the field of management and operation of affordable, rental housing (Action Items 3.2 and 3.4). Further, the Region of Durham offers its assistance in developing key performance indicators and sharing housing data for the purpose of reporting on housing measures in the City of Pickering (Action Item 3.7).

3.2.2.2 City of Pickering Finance Department

The City of Pickering Finance Department provided the following comments:

In the fall of this year, Council approved Report FIN 15-21 that included the “5 Year Capital & Operating Plan” (5YCOP). The 5YCOP was developed by Watson & Associates and was based on Council approved inputs consisting of: 2022 Preliminary Draft Capital Budget & Four Year Forecast (FIN 13-21) and the City’s Asset Management Plan (FIN 14-21). Excluding the City Centre project, the draft capital plan and forecast for the five years has an estimated cost of \$410.7 million. To fund this plan, the City is relying on Development Charge (DC) funding as a critical source of funds and the DC funding represents 43.58 per cent of the revenue source.

The City Centre is a key Council initiative with a total estimated cost of \$207.7 million with DC funding providing approximately \$110.5 million as a revenue source. If you add the City Centre DC funding requirements with the Capital forecast, the City is relying on DC funding to provide \$289.5 million as a source of capital funding. At this current time and as outlined above, it is recommended that the City not waive its fees and or Development Charge fees on a short term basis, however, this decision should be reviewed post 2026 (Action Item 2.2).

Letters of Credit (LC) should be viewed as financial insurance. The LC protects the City and by default, the existing taxpayers from funding project costs that are the responsibility of the “Developer.” It is recommended that the LC requirement not be waived (waiving LCs has been removed from the Phase 3 Report).

The 5YCOP and the Council approved Asset Management Plan highlighted the need to invest in the City’s existing infrastructure through additional special levies. At this current time, the City does not have the financial flexibility to fund a Housing Reserve Fund (Action Item 2.4). However, this decision should be revisited and the City could consider a contribution and/or special levy as a medium term strategy post 2026.

There is an administration component associated with the implementation of a Vacant Home Tax. Before proceeding with implementing this new “tax,” the administration component has to be thoroughly investigated to determine if the benefits are greater than the cost (Action Item 2.5).

3.2.2.3 North East Pickering Landowners Group

Malone Given Parsons Ltd. (MGP), planning and land economic consultant, submitted comments on behalf of the North-East Pickering Landowners Group (NEPLOG) expressing general support of the goals and objectives identified within the Phase 2 Report. The NEPLOG consists of a number of established and experienced community

and home builders who own multiple properties in North-East Pickering, and, through the Region of Durham’s municipal comprehensive review (Envision Durham), has formally requested that its lands be brought into the urban boundary to accommodate residential and employment growth to 2051.

The NEPLOG commented that:

- There is an important difference between subsidized housing and affordable housing that is available on the free market. The latter may contain a number of building and unit types (stacked townhouses, back-to-back townhouses, etc.) that are considered affordable but not commonly considered in government programming and subsidizing, but which still contribute to providing a range of housing options for various income levels.
- The development approvals process for new communities should be streamlined and expedited to bring housing into the market sooner to address supply.
- Bringing the North-East Pickering lands into the urban boundary will allow for the City to increase its residential land supply, which will contribute to increasing the overall housing stock within the City over the planning horizon.
- The NEPLOG is supportive of collaboration and partnerships, between the development sector and the City, throughout the process of developing each of the draft actions.



“Engagement with key stakeholders provide an opportunity for the City to receive solution-oriented feedback from a range of relevant perspectives and interests in affordable housing within Pickering”

4.0 Options to Support Affordable Housing

Key findings of the Research Report indicated that there is an overall need for more housing options including a mix of types, tenure and affordability levels to meet the needs of the City's residents. This section outlines Policy Directions (subsection 4.1) and Financial Incentives (subsection 4.2) that the City could consider to facilitate opportunities for developing housing, affordable housing and age-friendly housing in Pickering over the next 10 years.



Policy Directions

- Define Affordable Housing
- Define Housing Options
- Land Supply
- Protect Primary Rental Housing
- Affordable Housing Targets
- Inclusionary Zoning
- Additional Dwelling Units
- Accessible Housing
- Reduce Parking Requirement
- Down Zoning

Financial Incentives

- Provide Land
- Waive Fees
- Prioritize and Facilitate Approvals
- Housing Reserve Fund
- Vacant Home Tax

Other Actions

- Provide Guidance
- Partnerships
- Monitoring Plan

4.1 Policy Directions

4.1.1 What is “Affordable” Housing?

The City of Pickering Official Plan does not formally define “affordable housing”. It does, however describe it as meaning annual housing costs (rent or mortgage payments) that do not exceed 30 percent of gross household income.

CMHC defines affordable housing as generally meaning a housing unit that can be owned or rented by a household with shelter costs (rent or mortgage, utilities, etc.) that are less than 30 percent of its gross income⁶.

The Province, in the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS)⁷ and Durham Region, in its official plan⁸, provide the following definition for Affordable Housing:

“Affordable: means

- a) in the case of ownership housing, the least expensive of:
 - 1. housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for *low and moderate income households*; or
 - 2. housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 percent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the *regional market area*;
- b) in the case of rental housing, the least expensive of:
 - 1. a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for *low and moderate income households*; or
 - 2. a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the *regional market area*.”

Durham Region, in its Housing Policy Planning Discussion Paper prepared as part of its municipal comprehensive review of its Official Plan, Envision Durham, presents, and discusses, other affordability measures that may be considered for rental housing, such as using a higher ratio of 35 per cent of income spent on rent, measuring income at the 50th percentile to reflect the median, or measuring income at the 40th percentile to reflect a lower range of low and moderate incomes. In considering affordable homeownership,

⁶ National Housing Strategy Glossary of Common Terms (2018), <https://eppdscrmssa01.blob.core.windows.net/cmhcprodcontainer/files/pdf/glossary/nhs-glossary-en.pdf?sv=2018-03-28&ss=b&srt=sco&sp=r&se=2021-05-07T03:55:04Z&st=2019-05-06T19:55:04Z&spr=https,http&sig=bFocHM6noLjK8rlhy11dy%2BkQJUBX%2BCDKzkjLHfhUIU0%3D>

⁷ Provincial Policy Statement, 2020, <https://files.ontario.ca/mmah-provincial-policy-statement-2020-accessible-final-en-2020-02-14.pdf>

⁸ Durham Regional Official Plan, Consolidation May 26, 2020, <https://www.durham.ca/en/doing-business/resources/Documents/PlanningandDevelopment/Official-Plan/2020-Durham-Regional-Official-Plan-Consolidation---Revised-1.pdf>

Durham Region presents other measures that could be used to calculate affordability including CMHC's Gross Debt Service ratio, which is 35 per cent of income spent on mortgage, property taxes, and heat, or measuring income at the 50th percentile to reflect the mid-range for low and moderate incomes.

In the City's response to Durham Region's question about redefining "affordable housing", Council recommended that the Region maintain its definition of affordable housing to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and other municipalities in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, and for the purpose of monitoring and comparability.

Currently, the municipalities of Oshawa and Clarington have embedded definitions of "affordable housing" in their official plans, that are consistent with the definition in the PPS. The Town of Ajax and the Town of Whitby do not currently have a definition of "affordable housing" in their official plans. Whitby is currently undertaking an official plan review and may consider including a definition of "affordable housing" in its official plan.

Increasingly the term "attainable housing" is being used. There is no universally accepted definition of "attainable housing". However, it generally refers to non-subsidized, for-sale housing that is affordable to households with workforce incomes⁹. This type of housing is meant to fill the gaps between government subsidized housing (community housing) and the free market, to provide for workers who earn enough income to be disqualified from government assistance, but not enough to afford what is available in the market.

Action

Add a definition of "affordable housing" to the City's Official Plan which includes reference to the average purchase price and average market rent in accordance with the definition in the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020.

⁹ "workforce incomes" generally refers to gainfully employed members of the workforce earning between generally 80 and 120% of median income. In some market areas the upper end of the range may be greater than 120%.

4.1.2 Housing Options

In 2020, the Province updated the Provincial Policy Statement and introduced a definition for the term: “housing options” as follows:

“Housing options: means a range of housing types such as, but not limited to single-detached, semi-detached, rowhouses, townhouses, stacked townhouses, multiplexes, additional residential units, tiny homes, multi-residential buildings. The term can also refer to a variety of housing arrangements and forms such as, but not limited to life lease housing, co-ownership housing, co-operative housing, community land trusts, land lease community homes, affordable housing, housing for people with special needs, and housing related to employment, institutional or educational uses.”

The policies of the Durham Regional Official Plan (ROP) provide direction for a wide diversity of residential dwellings by type, size and tenure in Urban Areas to satisfy the social and economic needs of present and future residents of the Region (ROP Section 4). Specifically, there are policies that require at least 25% of all new residential units to be affordable to low and moderate income households (4.2.4), and that require a 3-year supply of residential units that are in draft approved and registered plans of subdivision/condominium (4.2.5). There are also policies which support opportunities to increase the supply of housing through intensification, such as second units in single detached dwellings, conversion of industrial/commercial buildings, and infill housing (4.3.2). Through the Region of Durham’s municipal comprehensive review, Envision Durham, the Region is proposing to add a definition, based on the PPS, for the term “housing options”.

Completed in the Fall of 2019, the Pickering Age Friendly Community Plan (AFCP) is a five year plan that establishes a vision, and guiding principles to help ensure that local policies, community programs and services, and municipal infrastructure meet the existing and future needs of older adults in Pickering. There are 68 actions identified in the AFCP and each are categorized by a World Health Organization (WHO) theme. Housing is identified as the highest priority of the eight identified themes in the AFCP and Action Item 1.1 identifies the need for delivering more lifecycle housing options, including affordable and accessible units to support changing demographic conditions.

In 2016, the majority of dwellings in Pickering were single detached dwellings (60.8%). Since then, the number and proportion of building permits for townhouses and apartment units have grown, and single detached and semi-detached dwellings combined have declined. In 2020, apartment units accounted for the greatest proportion of building permits issued. This is largely due to the approval of a 12-storey

rental apartment building. Recently approved plans of subdivision and condominium indicated that while single detached homes accounted for a little over half the dwelling units, the remaining units were townhouses. Since 2016, the proportion of townhouses approved through plans of subdivision and condominium has slowly increased, while the proportion of single detached dwellings has fluctuated.

Pickering continues to increase its diversity of housing types from a majority of single detached dwellings since 2016, to townhouse and apartment units combined. Over the last five years, the combined total number of townhouses and apartment units in approved building permits and approved plans of subdivision and condominium, has contributed to the larger proportion of newly constructed dwelling units compared to the proportion of single detached dwellings.

The City's Official Plan already contains a number of policies which support a diverse range of housing options. However, the POP does not have a definition for "housing options". Adding a definition for the term "housing options" that is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, to the POP would be helpful to provide clarity.

Action

Add a definition of "Housing Options" to the City's Official Plan.

4.1.3 Land Supply

Currently, the POP policy states that a minimum 10 year supply of residentially designated lands must be maintained to meet anticipated long-term housing demands (POP Policy 6.3 (a)) and a minimum 3 year supply of residential land in the form of draft approved plan and/or registered plans, to meet anticipated short-term housing demands (POP Policy 6.3 (b)). The POP should be updated to reflect the recent changes to the PPS in terms of an increase from 10 to 15 year supply of residentially designated lands to meet anticipated long-term housing demands.

Action

Amend the City's Official Plan to reflect the Provincial Policy Statement 2020 requirement for the municipality to maintain the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years (as opposed to 10 years as currently written).

In addition, recent amendments to the PPS enable the Region of Durham to update its policy to increase from 3 to 5 years the minimum number of years to accommodate a short-term supply of residential lands. Based on the Proposed Housing Policy Directions Report of Envision Durham, the Region appears to be satisfied with its minimum three year requirement, and has not proposed any associated change to its ROP. The Land Needs Assessment currently being undertaken as part of the Growth Management Study of Envision Durham, will determine the supply and mix of housing that is appropriate to satisfy forecasted market demand for housing in Durham, including the City of Pickering. The City's policy in this regard will ultimately be determined by the outcome of the Envision Durham exercise.

Action

Consider amending the City's Official Plan to reflect the Provincial Policy Statement 2020 option to increase from 3 to 5 years the minimum number of years to accommodate a short-term supply of residential lands, subject to the outcome of Durham Region's Envision Durham exercise.

4.1.4 Protection of Primary Rental Housing

The Research Report identified the need for additional primary rental market units of all sizes and the importance of protecting existing rental units.

The private rental market consists of the primary or purpose-built rental market and the secondary rental market. The primary rental market includes all self-contained rental units where the purpose of the structure is to house tenants. The secondary rental market represents self-contained units, which were not purposely built for the rental market, but are currently being rented out.

In Pickering the number of primary rental units has remained consistent since 2007 and the overall vacancy rate has been declining to below 2% for all units and below 1% for three bedroom units.

Average market rents for purpose-built rental units in 2015 were not affordable to low and moderate income earners (renter households with incomes within the 1st to 4th income deciles) and only a high income earner would be able to afford the average market rent (all apartment types) in the secondary market in Pickering in 2015 without having to spend more than 30% of their income on rent. Further, a single person who was working full time in 2015 and earning the minimum wage would not be able to

afford any apartment unit type in Pickering, in either the primary or secondary rental market, without having to spend much more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs.

In 2015, 25.2% of all households in Pickering were facing housing affordability issues (i.e., spending more than 30% of household income on housing costs) and of those, almost half were renters.

In addition to promoting and incentivizing the provision of additional primary rental units, especially one and two bedroom units, the City should consider ways of protecting its existing primary rental housing stock.

The *Ontario Municipal Act, 2001* establishes when and how municipalities may prohibit and regulate the demolition and/or conversion of rental housing.

Currently the City does not have any official plan policies to protect rental housing from conversion to condominium tenure or from demolition.

Although Durham Region official plan policies currently protect purpose-built rental housing by discouraging condominium conversions when vacancy rates are at or below 3 percent, Durham Region, through Envision Durham, is considering adding policies that would permit conversions subject to certain conditions. Through the Envision Durham consultation process, the City has requested clarification of these conditions and has recommended that a Regional Official Plan Amendment continue to be required for requests for rental housing conversions.

The ROP does not currently have policies to protect rental housing from demolition. However, it is considering adding policies that encourage area municipalities to protect rental housing from demolition.

It is recommended that policies be added to the POP to protect existing rental housing from demolition and conversion in order to help address the deficit of primary rental market units in the City.

Action

Add new Official Plan policy to protect existing rental housing stock from conversion to condominium.

Action

Add new Official Plan policy which prohibits the demolition of existing rental housing units unless the proposed redevelopment meets specified conditions.

4.1.5 Affordable Housing Targets

The Phase 1: Research and Gap Analysis Report established that:

- There is a limited supply of affordable housing, particularly for households with low incomes, and a very limited supply of purpose-built rental housing, especially one and two bedroom units.
- Affordable homeownership is severely lacking in the City of Pickering, evidenced by the fact that only the highest income earners are able to afford a resale home of any type within the City.
- The aging population suggests a need for more accessible housing options.
- While the City is experiencing a shift to smaller households, the majority of households have three or more members, suggesting a need for two or more bedroom units.

Currently the POP contains policies that encourage and support the supply of affordable housing. In particular, policy 6.4(a) requires that a minimum 25 percent of new residential construction, on a City-wide basis, be of forms that would be affordable to households of low or moderate income. In addition, the POP, Appendix 1, was established to provide potential targets for a number of Livability Indicators, including several under the heading for Housing. Within the Housing section, “affordable production as a total of production” identifies a minimum of 25 percent. However, there is no indication of the equivalent numerical value of that minimum 25 percent, or the numerical value associated with the breakdown according to housing type.

In its Proposed Policy Directions Report of Envision Durham, March 2021, the Region is proposing to maintain a minimum affordable housing target of 25 percent to apply to the Region as a whole, and to establish a new affordable housing target for at least 35 percent of new housing within Strategic Growth Areas.

As previously noted, the City’s Official Plan already includes the requirement for a minimum of 25 percent of all new construction, across the city, to be affordable. It may be worthwhile for the City to consider a higher affordable housing target of a minimum of 35 percent of new housing within Strategic Growth Areas. This could assist the City in

reaching its overall target of 25 percent affordable housing City-wide. In order to appropriately address the matter of affordable housing targets, additional detailed information and analysis, that is typically investigated through an “Assessment Report” would be necessary. As discussed in subsection 4.1.6 of this report, Inclusionary Zoning, the Region will be undertaking an Assessment Report for its regional market area. This work, when completed, will assist Pickering in the discussion regarding the numerical values of affordable housing targets, and the merit in targeting specific areas within the City, such as Strategic Growth Areas, for affordable housing targets.

In order to implement and monitor affordable housing targets, the City may require the submission of an Affordability Analysis as part of a complete application for residential or mixed-use development. An Affordability Analysis may include information such as the lot area, type and size of the proposal, number of residential units and affordable residential units, period of time that the units will remain affordable, an analysis of how the affordable residential component, types and sizes of units, addresses the current and anticipated affordable housing demand and an analysis of the current average market price and/or the current average market rent for each housing type taking into account the location. The content of an Affordability Analysis, and the associated professional(s) deemed qualified to complete the analysis, will be determined through the policy implementation process.

Action

Add new Official Plan policy requiring the submission of a Housing Affordability and Accessibility Analysis as part of a complete application for residential development.

4.1.6 Inclusionary Zoning

Introduced by the Province in 2016 through the *Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016*, “inclusionary zoning” is a land-use planning tool that may be used by municipalities to require affordable housing units to be included in proposed developments. In 2019 the *More Homes More Choices Act, 2019* (former Bill 108) limited the use of inclusionary zoning by municipalities to Protected Major Transit Station Areas, or where a development permit system/community planning permit system is in place.

In order for a municipality to utilize the “inclusionary zoning” provisions enabled through the *Planning Act*, it must undertake an “assessment report” to inform the development of appropriate official plan policies and zoning by-law provisions. In accordance with Ontario Regulation 232/18, this assessment report must include an analysis of municipal demographics and population, household incomes, housing supply by type (current and planned), housing types and sizes that might be needed to meet anticipated demand for affordable housing, current average market price/rent by housing type across the municipality, and a written opinion on this analysis from a person independent of the municipality and who is qualified to review the analysis. The assessment report must be updated every five years to determine whether the official plan policies require amending. A report detailing the performance of the inclusionary zoning by-law is required to be prepared every 2 years and address prescribed matters. In addition, provincial regulation prohibits the application of Section 37 Density Bonus on developments where inclusionary zoning is applied.

The adoption of by-laws to implement inclusionary zoning cannot be appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal, except by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Currently, there are no policies in the Pickering Official Plan that enable the use of inclusionary zoning. The Region of Durham has indicated that they will be preparing an assessment report for their jurisdiction. This work, when completed, will enable the local municipalities, including the City of Pickering, to establish official plan policies and zoning by-law provisions related to inclusionary zoning.

Action

Consider adding new Official Plan polices to implement “inclusionary zoning” in Major Transit Station Areas, following Durham Region’s completion of the “Assessment Report”.

4.1.7 Additional Dwelling Units

Additional Dwelling Units (“ADUs”) are self-contained residential units with a private kitchen, bathroom facilities and sleeping areas within dwellings or within detached structures ancillary to a dwelling.

ADUs may be in the form of basement apartments, coach houses, garden suites, granny flats, in-law apartments, or nanny suites. ADUs are sometimes referred to as Secondary Suites, and the *Planning Act* refers to these units as “additional residential

units” Since the City’s Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review Study, calls these units “Additional Dwelling Units”, we have used this term for the purpose of the Housing Strategy Study.

ADUs can provide an affordable rental option to increase the housing supply, as well as allow homeowners to earn additional income; provide more housing options for extended families, elderly parents, or live-in caregivers; help create mixed-income communities; gently intensify within existing communities; and make more efficient use of existing municipal services and public transit.

Currently the City’s official plan refers to ADUs as “accessory apartments” or “accessory dwellings”, and establishes policy that enables Council to appropriately zone to permit this type of use.

Currently the City’s zoning by-laws permit ADUs within single detached, semi-detached, or townhouse units. In addition, in accordance with By-law 7579/17, all ADUs are required to be registered to officially recognize the property as a legal “two-dwelling unit property”. The registration ensures the two-dwelling unit property meets required safety standards, ensures the ADU can be provided with emergency response and community services, and assists in housing monitoring and real estate transactions.

The Two-Dwelling Unit By-law 7579/17 can be found here:

<https://corporate.pickering.ca/WebLink/DocView.aspx?dbid=1&id=175243&page=1&cr=1>

Changes to the *Planning Act*, introduced through the *More Homes, More Choice Act* in 2019, permit a total of three residential units on one property. Some of the changes introduced include:

- requiring municipalities to permit additional units in detached, semi-detached, and townhouses in primary dwellings and within ancillary buildings or structures;
- prohibiting municipalities from applying a development charge for second units above garages or in laneways, or built in new homes (subject to restrictions); and
- requiring municipalities to permit an additional unit in the primary dwelling unit and another in any ancillary building, effectively allowing up to three residential units on a single lot.

Current City zoning regulations permit an additional dwelling unit within a detached, or semi-detached dwelling provided:

- (a) a total of three (3) parking spaces are provided on the property where the accessory dwelling unit is located;

- (b) the maximum floor area of an accessory dwelling unit shall be one hundred (100) square metres; and
- (c) a home-based business is prohibited in either dwelling unit of a dwelling containing an accessory dwelling unit.

Some, or all, of the conditions associated with the zoning provision for additional dwelling units in the City's zoning by-laws may present barriers to creating additional dwelling units within the City, and as a result prevent the creation of additional affordable housing units. In addition, ADUs are currently not permitted in the City's agricultural zone.

There is merit in reviewing the City's zoning by-laws and Two-Dwelling Unit By-law to ensure that it reflects the *More Homes, More Choice Act* changes to permit ADUs in a detached, semi-detached or townhouse, as well as in a building or structure ancillary to a detached house, semi-detached or townhouse. There is also merit in considering allowing ADUs in rural areas subject to the capacity of well and septic systems, and considering reducing the City's parking requirement for ADUs located in areas well served by transit, and to examine other existing zoning requirements that may present barriers to increasing ADUs within the City.

Action

Additional Dwelling Units:

- (a) Review and update the City zoning by-laws and Two-Dwelling Unit By-law to reflect the *More Homes, More Choice Act* changes to permit Additional Dwelling Units in a detached, semi-detached or townhouse as well as in a building or structure ancillary to a detached house, semi-detached or townhouse.
- (b) Consider allowing Additional Dwelling Units in rural areas subject to the capacity of well and septic systems.
- (c) Consider reducing or removing the City's parking requirement for Additional Dwelling Units located in areas well served by transit.
- (d) Examine other existing zoning requirements that may present barriers to increasing Additional Dwelling Units within the City.

4.1.8 Shared Housing

Housing has increasingly become more expensive and at the same time the number of single person households is increasing. Shared living is an option to address high housing costs and loneliness, which can be a by-product of living alone. Shared living can take different forms, such as shared ownership, multi-tenant, or multi-generational.

4.1.8.1 Co-ownership Housing

New models of shared ownership have emerged in response to housing affordability involving third party lenders. In Canada, there are two forms of shared equity programs. A third party can invest in a share of a property, or they can provide the homeowner with a second mortgage.

For shared equity mortgage programs, the second mortgage often requires no payments until the home is sold, refinanced or at the end of a fixed term. If the home price appreciates over time, both parties share in the profit.

The federal First-Time Home Buyer Incentive is an example of shared equity housing that will allow the CMHC to lend a homeowner money for a shared stake in the equity of a home. Options for Homes and Trillium Housing are two organizations that have helped create affordable housing in the GTA with shared equity financing models.

The Province defines “co-ownership housing” as a shared living arrangement where two or more people own and live in a home together. Co-owners may share living spaces like kitchens and living rooms, or the home may be divided into separate units.

The *Golden Girls Act* was passed in 2019, which prevents municipalities from using local by-laws to prohibit unrelated seniors from cohabitating. A senior, for the purpose of the *Golden Girls Act*, means an individual who is 55 or older. The *Golden Girls Act* was inspired by the obstacles faced by a group of four women planning to renovate a shared home that would enable them to age in place. The home was to have private rooms for each of the homeowners, shared common areas, such as living and kitchen, and include building two caregiver suites in the basement.

Recently, the Province created the “Co-owning A Home” guide which contains practical information about co-owning a home as well as outlining the various forms of co-ownership. The guide was developed partly in response to the Province’s More Homes, More Choice: Ontario’s Housing Supply Action Plan, in recognition that fresh approaches will give people more options and access to housing that is affordable.

4.1.8.2 Multi-generational Living

Multi-generational homes have members of more than two generations living under the same roof. Historically, multi-generational living was common. Currently, in Ontario, multi-generational living appears to be more common among immigrants. Research shows that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 20 percent of Canadians were living in multi-generational housing.¹⁰ Further, the pandemic has highlighted a desire for flexible spaces to also accommodate aging family members so that they may be cared for at home as opposed to living in a long-term care facility.

There are both benefits and challenges to living with family. Economic, health and support are three key reasons for generations to live together. Some of the challenges include: division of chores or responsibilities can cause issues among family members, meeting privacy needs of various family members, financial constraints of all family members, accommodating living spaces for different age ranges, such as the elderly or very young children.

In 2018, a developer in Pickering started offering a multi-generational home with a design that incorporates a bungalow for grandparents or adult children that sits inside a two-storey house and operates independently. The original design was suitable for a lot with a 50 foot frontage. The developer is now working on a design that would fit on a 37 foot lot frontage.

Supporting multi-generational living facilitates a form of gentle intensification, while addressing the needs of large and multi-generational families and creating complete communities.

Action

Encourage developers to consider designing flexible spaces that can accommodate shared living or multi-generational living.

4.1.8.3 Multi-tenant Living (Rooming Houses)

Singles and/or couples of a variety of age groups are increasingly exploring or choosing housing options where they can share rented accommodation. This is usually due to financial constraints. Shared living for unrelated persons in rental accommodation, or multi-tenant living, is sometimes referred to as “rooming houses”. Rooming houses have traditionally been associated with vulnerable populations such as individuals living with an addiction or a mental health challenge, a physical disability, and/or racialized

¹⁰ <https://www.thestar.com/life/homes/2020/06/17/multi-generational-housing-is-a-growing-trend-thats-back-with-a-new-twist.html?rf>

individuals. In addition, the term “rooming house” is sometimes confused with “group home”. The distinction between “rooming house” and “group home” is that group homes have supervised care for the occupants and are licensed and approved by the Province. As affordable housing has become more and more scarce, there are a wider variety of individuals opting to share rental accommodation, including young adults newly in the workforce, seniors, and students.

Some municipalities regulate shared rental accommodation using municipal by-laws, zoning by-laws and/or licensing programs. This has resulted in serious concern from the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Municipal by-laws, including zoning by-laws, cannot conflict with the Ontario Human Rights Code. The Ontario Human Rights Commission has identified “that zoning by-laws should be deemed invalid if their purpose is to regulate the user, as opposed to the use of the land”¹¹. In addition, the Ontario Human Rights Commission identified a number of concerns regarding regulations that impacted rooming houses (as well as group homes, residential care homes, senior’s community houses, and lodging houses among other shared rental accommodation), namely regulations that:

- are not based on a legitimate urban planning rationale and have the effect of people zoning as opposed to zoning the use of land;
- result in barriers to the location of affordable housing, lodging houses, emergency shelters, care facilities and retirement homes; and
- place onerous zoning restrictions on housing serving people from Ontario Human Rights Code protected groups, which may prevent people from living in the neighbourhoods of their choice.

Through the City’s engagement, staff heard first hand from a landlord specializing in shared rental accommodation about the challenges associated with this form of rental housing including an outdated perception and stigma associated with it. He detailed what he sees as systemic obstacles to multi-tenant living such as:

- the lack of tenancy rights for a tenant if they are sharing a bathroom or kitchen with the owner, or the owner’s immediate family members;
- the lack of tenancy rights for a tenant paying his/her rent to a housemate who is the a tenant signatory under a lease (i.e. a subletter). A tenant not listed as a signatory under a lease has no tenancy protection because there is no landlord/tenant relationship;

¹¹ Ontario Human Rights Commission’s comments on the City of Toronto’s proposed Zoning By-law dated September 25, 2009, <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/es/node/2545>

- the difficulty in meeting the Ontario Building Code requirements when converting an existing house to a multi-tenant shared accommodation;
- the reluctance of financial institutions to lend money to owner/operators of rooming houses; and
- the reluctance of insurance companies to insure rooming houses.

From his perspective as a private landlord and operator of multi-tenant housing, he sees the need for an all-government (municipal, regional, provincial, federal) approach to overcome these structural barriers to shared living.

Also through engagement, staff heard that there is interest in an affordable housing arrangement whereby seniors and younger single individuals co-habitate. The arrangement is such that the senior provides accommodation to the singleton for a reduced rent in return for some assistance to the senior, such as lawn mowing, snow removal etc.

The Pickering Official Plan policies encourage the provision of a wide variety of housing types and tenure to meet the needs of existing and future populations of the City, which includes shared living accommodation. The City does not have any zoning by-laws that prohibit rooming houses.

Through the City's Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review Study, the following definitions are being proposed for Group Home and Rooming Home:

“Group Home: means a **dwelling** occupied by not more than 10 persons exclusive of staff, who live as a **single housekeeping unit** because they require a supervised group living arrangement, in a facility licensed, approved and supervised in accordance with the requirements of the Province.”

“Rooming Home: means a **dwelling** containing no less than three (3) but no more than 10 individual rooms rented for accommodation and includes communal but not individual cooking facilities, and where the occupants do not constitute a **single housekeeping unit**. The **use** shall not provide respite care or provide accommodation to the traveling public and does not include a **group home, long-term care home, retirement home, hotel, or short-term rental**.”

The City does not have a registration or licensing program related to rooming houses, and does not prohibit people from sharing housing accommodation. As with the construction of all types of housing in the City of Pickering, rooming houses, must meet the requirements of the Ontario Building Code (OBC) with respect to building and fire safety.

To further support shared living, regardless of tenure, the City could amend its housing policies to openly recognize multi-tenant living. This may also be achieved through the inclusion of the definition of “housing options” as discussed in subsection 4.1.2 of this report.

Action

Ensure that the City’s Official Plan policies and zoning regulations do not present barriers to shared living (co-housing, co-living) arrangements in appropriate areas as-of-right.

4.1.9 Accessible Housing

Accessible design refers to accommodating individuals with disabilities, whereas universal design is accommodating all people regardless of age, gender, stature, ability/disability, etc. Barrier-free design is part of accessible design and include such things as: wheelchair lifts, curb ramps, handrails, roll-in showers, and wheelchair accessible hallways. Inclusive design is generally synonymous with universal design but can cater to very specific users and their experience. These terms are very much interrelated and overlap in definition but with some nuances.

Through the engagement we heard that every adult has a period disability or impaired mobility in their lifetime. As a result of illness, accident or disease, one can temporarily lose full physical function and can benefit from universally designed spaces.

As noted in subsection 4.1.2, Action Item 1.1 of the Pickering AFCP identifies, among other things, the need for delivering more accessible housing units to support changing demographic conditions, specifically a growing seniors population in Pickering that is forecast to be approximately 43% of the total population in Pickering by 2032.¹²

The POP includes policies that encourages the provision of housing for people with special needs including seniors. The terms “special needs housing” and “seniors housing” are not formally defined in the POP. However, the PPS defines special needs as it relates to housing and it includes “adaptable and accessible housing, and housing for persons with disabilities such as physical, sensory or mental health disabilities, and housing for older persons”.

¹² Pickering Age Friendly Community Plan, Final Report, September 12, 2019, <https://www.pickering.ca/en/living/resources/Programs/55/City-of-Pickering-Age-Friendly-Community-Plan---FINAL-acc.pdf>

As noted earlier, Appendix 1 of the POP was established to provide potential targets for a number of Livability Indicators, including several under the heading for Housing. There is no numerical value provided for the Livability Indicator of “special needs housing production as a percent of total production”.

Through the engagement for the Study, we heard:

- that there was concern regarding a need to consider accessibility and affordability as separate issues to mitigate the segregation of communities;
- that the City should encourage developers to add accessible/universally designed and constructed units to projects; and
- that the Province should require a minimum number, or a minimum percentage, of accessible units for major residential development.

In response to the matter of considering accessibility and affordability as separate issues, these are often highlighted as areas of study together because of the scarcity of both. That does not mean that they are always linked. For example, you can have an accessible dwelling that is not affordable and similarly, you can have an affordable dwelling that is not accessible.

Given the forecast seniors population as a percentage of the total population in Pickering in the next ten years, it would be worthwhile collecting data, and monitoring the availability and provision of accessible housing. Part of this data collection and monitoring could be enhanced by requiring the submission of an Accessibility Analysis as part of a complete application for residential development, similar to the requirement for the submission of an Affordability Analysis as discussed in subsection 4.1.5. The content of an Accessibility Analysis, and the associated professional(s) deemed qualified to complete the analysis, will be determined through the policy implementation process.

The results of an Accessibility Analysis would provide the City with a basis for the amount of accessible units that should be included in a residential proposal.

Action

Add an Official Plan policy requiring the submission of an Affordability and Accessibility Analysis as part of a complete application for residential development, subject to criteria.

The Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee expressed the desire to have the Province establish a required minimum number of accessible units within a residential development. This also reflects views expressed through the consultation undertaken and documented in the 2019 Report of The Third Review of The Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2005 prepared by the Honourable David C. Onley¹³. Through Onley's work, some individuals felt that basic accessibility should be required in all newly constructed housing and especially housing built with public funds. This could include provision for future installation of elevators and other accessibility features, as well as easy access to the main floor for visitability.

Currently the Ontario Building Code (OBC) requires that at least 15 per cent of suites in multi-unit residential buildings be visitable. There is no similar OBC requirement for single detached, semi-detached or townhouse dwelling units.

Should the City decide that there is merit in including a required minimum number of accessible units in residential developments, the City could request that the Province establish these minimum requirements.

Action

Consider advocating for the Province to establish a minimum number of accessible units or a percentage of accessible units for major residential development.

Through the engagement process, staff heard the suggestion that the City should encourage developers to build accessible units as part of a project, and that these units also be affordable.

Action

Encourage developers to plan for and build accessible or universally designed units in projects.

¹³ Report of The Third Review of The Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2005, The Honourable David C. Onley; <https://files.ontario.ca/seniors-accessibility-third-review-of-aoda-en-2019.pdf>

4.1.10 Remove or Reduce Minimum Parking Requirement

There are numerous factors and processes leading to the provision of affordable housing. Through the engagement process staff heard that including the required parking in a development proposal can sometimes make the project impossible. The discussion included the comment that “It’s more affordable to do surface parking even if the land value is higher. You could do underground parking, but it will impact the affordability of housing units.”

The Transportation policies in the City’s official plan, encourage a well connected network of corridors (roads, rails, sidewalks, trails and bikeways), designed as desirable places to be, with Kingston Road as the City’s mainstreet. A variety of modes of travel are accommodated, including driving, walking, cycling and using transit. The transportation policies also promote optimization of the City’s transportation infrastructure by, among other things, promoting ways to shift modes away from single occupancy vehicles and supporting improved transit infrastructure and service. In addition, the POP (section 4.13) establishes the opportunity for Council to consider the preparation of a comprehensive parking strategy for the urban area to determine and provide recommendations on current and future parking supply and demand, recognizing the opportunity to reduce parking supply in areas well-served by public transit. Currently the City’s by-laws establish parking standards to help manage the parking supply/demand needs of the community.

The City Centre Neighbourhood policies in Chapter 12 of the POP address the potential for a reduction in the number of required car parking spaces where bicycle parking facilities or Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures are provided and in recognition of the proximity to high frequency transit. TDM is a suite of policies, programs, services and initiatives that aim to reduce travel demand by single-occupant vehicles by influencing how, how much, when, where, and why people travel. One of the many potential outcomes of TDM is the reduced need for parking.

The City recently completed its Integrated Transportation Management Plan (ITMP)¹⁴ which provides recommendations related to parking management (section 6.3) and TDM (section 6.2). The ITMP does not specifically address parking requirements for affordable housing.

The policies within the City’s official plan encourage an increased focus on the pedestrian experience and a diversification of travel modes away from single car trips, which contemplates a possible reduction in the required provision of car parking spaces.

¹⁴ City Of Pickering Integrated Transportation Master Plan, August 2021, <https://www.pickering.ca/en/city-hall/resources/ENG/ITMP/Pickering-ITMP-Final-Report-2021-08-18.pdf>

It's possible that a transition period will occur prior to achieving high-frequency public transit, when the demand will exceed the provision for car parking spaces.

The City could consider removing or reducing the minimum requirement for parking spaces and allowing developers to propose alternative parking space options for affordable housing and/or supportive housing on a site-specific basis. The City may also consider looking at other innovative approaches for reducing and optimizing parking for housing, especially in areas with high frequency transit as was done in the City Centre.

Action

Consider removing or reducing the minimum requirement for parking spaces for affordable housing and/or supportive housing and allowing developers to propose alternative parking space options.

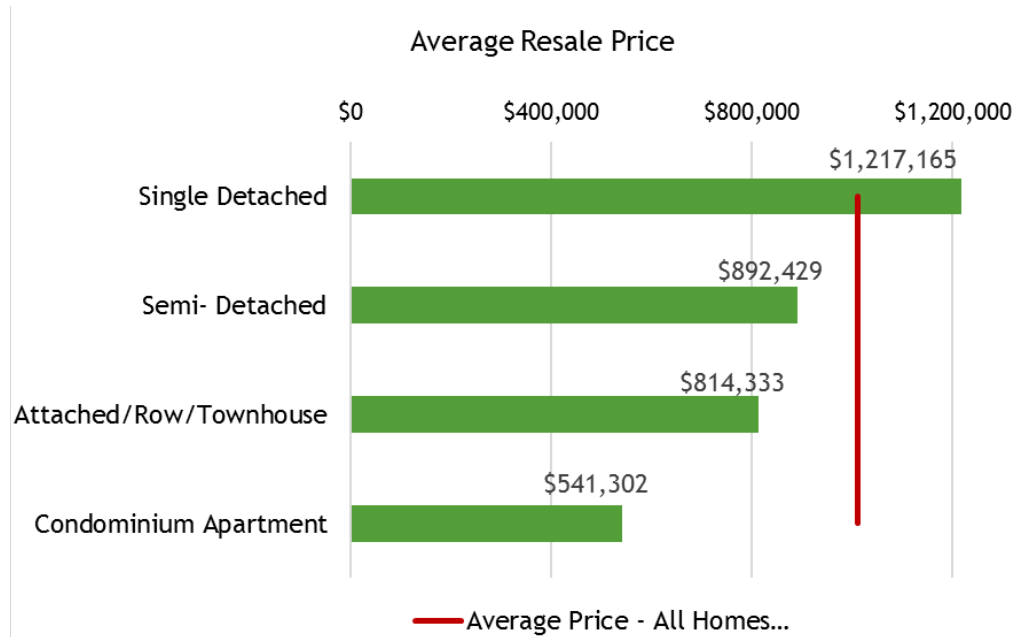
4.1.11 Down Zoning

When people talk about more housing density or more intense commercial or industrial development, it usually means "up" in the sense of what the real estate industry calls the highest and best use of land. Then, when density or intensity of land use is being lowered, that's a decrease in how many housing units can be built or how intensely non-residential land can be used. Professionals in the field of planning and development refer to this as "down zoning".

There are some jurisdictions in the United States that have prohibited down zoning residential areas from higher to lower density zone classifications. The goal in prohibiting down zoning is to address the need for affordable housing. Empirical evidence provides that housing affordability is more often achieved in smaller dwelling units, such as apartments and townhouses, as compared to single detached dwellings. Higher density residential zone classifications enable more dwelling units to be built in the same amount of land area as compared to medium- or low-density residential zone classifications.

Figure 1 below shows recent data from the Toronto Real Estate Board for Average Resale Home Prices in Pickering for July 2021. Although Figure 1 does not address affordability according to income, it shows that the average resale home price is lower based on dwelling type associated with higher density housing.

Figure 1: July 2021 Average Resale Home Price – Pickering



Source: Toronto Real Estate Board, Market Watch, July 2021

The POP establishes a land use strategy that provides for a compact urban area, and large rural and open space areas. The land use strategy includes land use categories and subcategories. The subcategories are distinguished primarily on the basis of the level of intensity. The category of Mixed Use Areas are areas and corridors of development having the highest concentration of activity in the City and the broadest diversity of community services and facilities. Mixed Use Areas permit a wide variety of uses including, among others, residential. Urban Residential Areas are to be used primarily for housing and related uses, including home occupations and group homes. Further, Urban Residential Areas are differentiated on the basis of net residential density (the number of residential dwellings per net residential hectare). Low, medium and high density areas are distinguished.

The Pickering Official Plan lays the foundation for building a good community. It provides a vision for the City and identifies how the vision can be reached. The vision is comprehensive, and strategies and tools provided in the POP are intended to assist the City as it grows. In particular, as noted above, and through careful consideration for a complete and thriving community, the POP establishes categories of land use and subcategories based on intensity of land use. High and medium density residential areas are generally more affordable and therefore warrant protection against “down zoning”.

To support the creation of more affordable housing units, the City could consider discouraging “down zoning” high and medium density residential designations to lower density residential designations.

Action

Consider discouraging “down zoning” high and medium density residential designations to lower density residential designations.

4.2 Financial Incentives

A municipality may direct funds and implement policy initiatives toward a specifically defined project area through the adoption of a Community Improvement Plan (CIP). Section 28 of the *Planning Act* gives municipalities that have enabling policies in their official plans, the ability to prepare Community Improvement Plans (the City's official plan contains such policies). Community improvement, as defined in the *Planning Act*, includes the provision of affordable housing. The financial incentives discussed in this section, may be enabled through a CIP. The Region is currently undertaking an investigation of a Regional CIP that could be used to support the delivery of affordable housing.

4.2.1 Provide Land

The cost of land is often a significant contributor to the cost of the development of affordable housing. Some municipalities have established corporate policy that supports the production of affordable housing through a "housing first" policy for surplus municipally-owned property. The principle of the housing first policy is that the first priority in the decision-making process respecting surplus or potentially surplus City-owned real property should be affordable housing development. If the City was to make land available, it would be through an open request for proposals to ensure a fair and transparent process.

A housing first policy would provide reduced, or no, land costs for developers of affordable housing. The benefits of doing this are:

- efficient use of government-owned surplus land;
- relatively low investment for the City with the potential of high returns in terms of affordable housing;
- provides the City with a direct influence in facilitating the supply of affordable housing through public land;
- contributes to creating new mixed income communities;
- creates an opportunity for the net proceeds from the disposal of the surplus lands for affordable housing purposes to be deposited into a municipal reserve fund for affordable housing (i.e. a Housing Reserve Fund);
- creates an opportunity to share a City "surplus property list" with interested affordable housing providers; and
- creates opportunities for ensuring appropriate affordable housing is available to an employee base that serves the employers within the city.

Some of the constraints associated with a “housing first” policy include:

- potential loss of revenue by selling (or donating) municipal surplus land at a lower rate than the market could provide;
- surplus land may not be in ideal or appropriate locations for affordable housing (i.e. close to transit and amenities);
- other City departments may require the lands;
- other neighbourhood needs, such as parkland, may go unmet; and
- potential loss of permit fees, development charges, future property tax potential.

Action

Consider establishing a corporate policy whereby surplus or underutilized City-owned lands or buildings that are not required for municipal purposes, such as for parkland, are first considered for development of affordable rental housing.

4.2.2 Waive Fees

Development costs including application (such as Site Plan Approval, Rezoning, Minor Variance) and building permit fees, development charges, parkland dedication fees, letters of credit, and post development increased property taxes, which all contribute to a project’s financial burden. Reducing, waiving or deferring some or all of these fees can mean the difference between the construction of a project or not.

The Region introduced a new residential development charge (DC) service category for “Housing Services”, to support the creation of affordable rental and seniors’ housing. Funds collected through the new DC category will be used to support the development of new, growth-related social and government-assisted affordable housing projects/units. DC revenue may fund capital costs for new housing development for:

- Community housing provided by the Durham Regional Local Housing Corporation (DRLHC), or by a non-profit housing provider that receives ongoing subsidy from the Region of Durham; and
- Affordable Housing that are rental units, provided by private or non-profit housing providers that receive funding through a federal or provincial government affordable housing program.

Eligible projects must be for new construction only, including additions and extensions resulting in additional rental units, and are approved by Regional Council on a case-by-case basis.

Currently the Region can also provide direct financial assistance to development projects that are within area municipal Community Improvement Plan areas through the Regional Revitalization Program.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is an incentive mechanism that can be used to encourage property development or redevelopment, usually within designated areas. Tax increment financing is generally used to encourage development in situations where, due to environmental conditions or other economic factors, development would be unlikely to proceed in the absence of financial incentives.

Tax increment financing is a method of using future incremental property tax revenues generated by the redevelopment of a property to offset the upfront costs of redevelopment. In other words, as a property or area is redeveloped, the increase in the assessed value of the property raises the amount of taxes payable by that property. The difference between the taxes paid by the property prior to redevelopment and the taxes paid following redevelopment is referred to as the “tax increment”. TIF is established under the Community Improvement Plan provisions of the *Planning Act*.

The City could consider waiving fees or providing a grant equivalent to certain development application fees, development charges, property taxes, and/or parkland dedication requirements, for affordable rental, affordable ownership, and/or supportive housing developments.

Action

Consider waiving fees or providing a grant equivalent to certain development application fees, development charges, property taxes, and/or parkland dedication requirements, for affordable rental, affordable ownership, and/or supportive housing developments on a case-by-case basis.

Education Development Charges (EDCs) are funds that school boards collect and which can be spent to purchase land for future school sites. The regulations under the *Education Act* establish that certain properties may be exempt from education development charges. The City may consider advocating that the Province to amend the EDC regulations to enable school boards to reduce, waive or defer their portion of Development Charges for affordable rental housing.

Action

Consider advocating for the school boards to reduce, waive and/or defer their portion of Development Charges for affordable rental housing.

4.2.3 Prioritize and Facilitate Approvals

In “Fixing the Housing Affordability Crisis: Municipal Recommendations for Housing in Ontario”¹⁵ (staff reviewed and reported on this document in [Report PLN 05-20](#)), the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) highlights speed as an important factor in bringing new housing supply to the market. The provincial government also addressed timelines for the review of development applications in *More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019* by shortening the amount of time a municipality can take to review and approve development applications, plans of subdivision, by-law amendments and holding provisions.

The City of Pickering has an established, efficient process to review development applications while maintaining due diligence to safeguard the public interest, ensure local standards are met, and to make sure that communities are designed using sound planning principles. In addition, City staff facilitates coordination and communication between internal departments and business owners and/or project proponents. City staff endeavours to identify gaps in communication and comprehension between the City and the proponent, in order to keep the approval process on track and assist in achieving the most beneficial outcome for all parties. In many cases this has led to improved results and timelines. In addition, the City does fast-track priority projects. Staff notes, however, that timely responses from the development community on comments are critical to the expected timeline. Furthermore, adequate municipal staffing levels are also essential.

The benefit of an expedited approvals process is that it can reduce the cost of holding undeveloped land, reduce development risk, and allow construction to begin sooner, thus lowering financing costs to the developer.

To facilitate affordable rental, affordable ownership, supportive housing, and purpose-built rental housing, the City could formally establish an initiative to prioritize the review

¹⁵ Fixing the Housing Affordability Crisis, Municipal Recommendations for Housing in Ontario, August 14, 2019, <https://www.amo.on.ca/sites/default/files/assets/DOCUMENTS/Reports/2019/FixingHousingAffordabilityCrisis20190814.pdf#:~:text=Fixing%20the%20Housing%20Affordability%20Crisis%20Municipal%20Recommendations%20for,the%20municipal%20order%20of%20government%20can%20achieve%20shared>

and approvals process. Projects such as Durham Region led housing developments, not-for-profit sector affordable housing projects and private sector ownership or purpose-built rental projects that qualify for federal and/or provincial funding, could be targeted through this initiative.

Action

Prioritize and facilitate approvals for projects which provide affordable rental, affordable ownership, supportive housing, and purpose-built rental housing units.

4.2.4 Establish a Housing Reserve Fund

Municipalities can assist in providing funding for various affordable housing developments and initiatives by establishing an affordable housing reserve fund targeted to meet the housing needs of low income individuals or families determined to be in core housing need. Several Ontario municipalities, such as Brampton, Cambridge, Guelph and London have established housing reserve funds with various objectives to assist in the development and/or maintenance of existing or future affordable housing.

The implementation of a Community Benefits Charge¹⁶ could direct funds collected through the planning application process to a reserve fund specifically for the development of affordable housing. Alternatively, an annual contribution could be directed to the housing reserve fund through a special levy as part of the annual budget process. The reserve fund could provide grants on a per-unit basis to eligible non-profit organizations or partnerships of non-profit organizations and the private sector to leverage the development of more affordable rental housing options. The reserve fund is intended to supplement or match funding from other levels of government, businesses, private donors, or community groups.

To facilitate grants from an affordable housing reserve fund, eligible housing developments would be evaluated based on criteria that fulfills the purpose and objectives of the reserve fund. Selected proposals would be recommended to Council

¹⁶ Community Benefits Charges (CBCs) are intended to fund municipal infrastructure for community services, such as land for parks, affordable housing and child care facilities, that are needed to support new residents and businesses associated with new development. CBCs will work with development charges and parkland dedication to ensure that municipalities have the tools and resources they need to build complete communities (i.e. While CBCs will effectively replace Section 37 benefits, development charges and parkland dedication, or cash in lieu of parkland dedication, will continue to remain separate requirements). A municipality may not levy both a development charge and a CBC for the same service.

for approval subject to the adoption of a funding agreement with the proponent to use the contribution towards municipal fees or charges and for capital costs.

Action

Consider establishing a Housing Reserve Fund which can be funded through a special levy and/or a Community Benefit Charge .

4.2.5 Vacant Home Tax

In 2017, Bill 127 – *Stronger, Healthier Ontario Act* (Budget Measures) implemented the 2017 Ontario Budget measures, including the Fair Housing Plan which empowers interested municipalities to introduce a vacant home property tax. A vacant home tax is a policy tool to address the housing disparities between the lack of rental housing and readily available unoccupied homes, by encouraging the release of units that are being held vacant into units that are occupied. Residential units that are available and capable of being occupied but the owner has decided to maintain vacant and unavailable for occupation is an indication of housing stock and supply that is important to people in need of housing, and not as a buy-hold speculative commodity which is not currently regulated. In recent years municipalities, especially in large urban centres, have increasingly shown interest in implementing a vacant home tax. Municipalities such as the City of Vancouver implemented the tax in 2017, whereas the City of Toronto will be implementing the tax in 2022, and the City of Ottawa has recently initiated a feasibility study to potentially introduce the tax.

A vacant home tax could potentially create more rental homes if the desired effect of the tax incentivizes homeowners to occupy their homes by a permitted occupier or tenant in order to avoid incurring the tax. For example, the City of Vancouver reported a 25% reduction in the number of vacant properties recorded from 2017 to 2019, including a 41% conversion rate of vacant properties to occupied status in 2019.¹⁷ A secondary outcome is that the tax could also provide a revenue stream to the City that could fund additional affordable housing initiatives. According to Vancouver’s Empty Home Tax Annual Report, since launching the tax, \$61.3 million of revenue has been generated to support local affordable housing initiatives.¹⁸

The vacant home tax could apply only to residential units that are not the homeowner’s principal residence, or occupied by a permitted occupier or tenant, and chosen to

¹⁷ City of Vancouver; <https://vancouver.ca/news-calendar/empty-homes-tax-enters-fourth-year-with-25-per-cent-fewer-vacant-properties-since-launch.aspx>

¹⁸ Ibid.

purposely be maintained as vacant and unavailable for occupation. A homeowner may be compelled to convert an unoccupied unit led by the determined tax rate that optimizes a cost high enough for a homeowner to choose to either sell or rent the residential unit, while not creating an undue burden on owners who have to pay the tax, or increase the likelihood of unintended non-compliance with the tax. The City of Vancouver has implemented a 3% tax rate, whereas the City of Toronto is proposing to implement a 1% tax based on the property's assessment value of the year in which the home is declared vacant. Exemptions to the tax could be applied to non-principal residences, such as properties undergoing redevelopment or major renovation, the owner is undergoing medical care, or the ownership of the property is transferred during the tax year. To facilitate a vacant home tax program the City would undertake a feasibility study, beginning with a determination of the number and percentage of vacant homes within the city, and whether or not there is merit in establishing the administrative structure, system, and programming to collect the tax as well as on-going public communication efforts and costs to ensure compliance.

Action

Consider undertaking a feasibility study for Vacant Home Tax.

4.3 Other Actions to Support Affordable Housing

It can sometimes be overwhelming to those not familiar with affordable housing and/or the development process in general, to navigate the various municipal and provincial requirements to provide affordable housing, and in particular affordable primary rental accommodation. For example, the City has a requirement that a “complete application” must be submitted prior to undertaking the development review process. Also, there may be developers willing to develop and construct rental housing, however, not being in the business of operating rental housing, these developers would need a partner, once the project is constructed, to continue in the role of operating the rental housing.

The City facilitates coordination and communication between internal departments and business owners and/or project proponents. City staff endeavours to influence the proponent experience with the City to be seamless and efficient for all parties involved. In many cases this has led to improved results and timelines. The City could consider connecting interested developers with experts or consultants in the field of management and operation of affordable, rental housing.

Action

Consider connecting interested developers with experts or consultants in the field of management and operation of affordable, rental housing.

The City has professional staff who are experts in planning, development and building. As noted in subsection 4.2.3, the City staff facilitates coordination and communication between internal departments and business owners and/or project proponents. Offering guidance to affordable housing project proponents, on the planning and building approvals processes, is an action that the City has already undertaken, albeit to a more general audience.

Action

Provide guidance to developers, not-for-profits and other proponents of affordable rental, affordable ownership and/or supportive housing, on the planning and building approvals processes.

The Region, Province and Federal governments have certain funding opportunities available for providing affordable primary rental accommodation. The various programs, requirements, milestones and deadlines, vary from program to program. All of this information is specialized and can be unknown or confusing to a developer unfamiliar with providing affordable rental housing. The Region, through its Housing Services Division, manages, plans and administers the community housing system, develops affordable housing stock and delivers homelessness prevention programs. In the Region's role of Service System Manager, the Region works in partnership with co-operative and non-profit community housing providers. The City, through regular and continued communication with the appropriate parties at the Region, can remain abreast of funding opportunities and rental housing providers and operators, in order to be able to share this information with interested developers.

Action

Share information with developers about funding and other incentives available to address the City's housing needs.

4.4 Monitoring Progress

The Research and Gap Analysis Report, March 31, 2021, established a baseline data set related to the status of housing in Pickering. In order to appropriately address affordable housing within the city, housing stock (ownership and rental), type and mix, stock by type across income deciles, density, and the matter of affordable housing targets, active monitoring of these data sets must be undertaken. Part of implementing a housing monitoring plan in the city will be to actively engage with the Region and utilize the results of their Assessment Report, as well as requiring the submission of an Affordability and Accessibility Analysis as part of a complete application for residential or mixed-use development proposals (discussed in subsections 4.1.5 and 4.1.9). The goal of a housing monitoring plan is to identify whether or not the goals and objectives of the Housing Strategy are being met, and if any modifications to the Action Plan are necessary.

Action

Establish a Monitoring Plan that will annually update and review the baseline data set established in the Research and Gap Analysis Report, March 31, 2021, to ensure goals and objectives of the Housing Strategy are being met.

5.0 Action Plan

The Action Plan is shown in the table below. It contains minor textual changes from the draft presented in the Phase 2: Draft Housing Strategy & Action Plan. It also adds a new Action Item 3.8 as follows “To consider adding a dedicated function, similar to an Office of Affordability, within the City, the scope of work which would include being responsible for implementing the Pickering Housing Strategy & Action Plan 2021-2031, December 22, 2021”, in accordance with the January 24, 2022 Council decision.

Each action is categorized according to the following themes: policy, financial incentives, and other. A timeframe and estimated cost of implementation has been identified for each action and is shown in the table below. In addition, the table identifies the gap from the Phase 1: Research and Gap Analysis Report, March 31, 2021, that the action addresses and the City department to lead the initiative.

The following provides information on each of the gaps identified in the Phase 1 Report:

- Gap 1 relates to the need for housing options for:
 - Low and moderate income earners;
 - Rental and ownership housing;
 - Range of unit sizes; and
 - Accessible units;
- Gap 2 relates to the need for:
 - Primary rental market units of all sizes
 - Protection of units in the primary rental market;
 - Accessible units in the primary rental market;
- Gap 3 relates to the need for:
 - Home ownership housing options for moderate income earners;
 - Range of unit sizes; and
 - Accessible units;
- Gap 4 are policy gaps related to housing in the City’s Official Plan that are the result of new or recent changes to provincial legislation.

Timeframe	
Short-term ■□□	1-5 years
Medium-term □■□	5 -10 years
Long-term □□■	10 or more years

Cost Estimate	
Low \$	Under \$10,000
Medium \$\$	\$10,000 - \$25,000
High \$\$\$	Over \$25,000

	Action	Gap # Addressed	Lead Department	Time Frame	Cost
1.0	Policy				
1.1	Add a definition of “affordable housing” to the City’s Official Plan which includes reference to the average purchase price and average market rent in accordance with the definition in the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020.	Gap 4	City Development	■□□	\$
1.2	Add a definition of “Housing Options” to the City’s Official Plan.	Gap 4	City Development	■□□	\$
1.3	Amend the City’s Official Plan to reflect the Provincial Policy Statement 2020 requirement for the municipality to maintain the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years (as opposed to 10 years as currently written).	Gap 4	City Development	■□□	\$

	Action	Gap # Addressed	Lead Department	Time Frame	Cost
1.4	Consider amending the City's Official Plan to reflect the Provincial Policy Statement 2020 option to increase from 3 to 5 years the minimum number of years to accommodate a short-term supply of residential lands, subject to the outcome of Durham Region's Envision Durham exercise.	Gap 4	City Development	■□□	\$
1.5	Add new official plan policy to protect existing rental housing stock from conversion.	Gap 4	City Development	■□□	\$
1.6	Add new Official Plan policy which prohibits the demolition of existing rental housing units unless the proposed redevelopment meets specified conditions.	Gap 4	City Development	■□□	\$
1.7	Consider adding new Official Plan polices to implement "inclusionary zoning" in Major Transit Station Areas, following Durham Region's completion of the "Assessment Report".	Gap 4	City Development	■ ■ □	\$

	Action	Gap # Addressed	Lead Department	Time Frame	Cost
1.8	<p>Additional Dwelling Units:</p> <p>(a) Review and update the City zoning by-laws and Two-Dwelling Unit By-law to reflect the More Homes, More Choice Act changes to permit Additional Dwelling Units in a detached, semi-detached or townhouse as well as in a building or structure ancillary to a detached house, semi-detached or townhouse.</p> <p>(b) Consider allowing Additional Dwelling Units in rural areas subject to the capacity of well and septic systems.</p> <p>(c) Consider reducing or removing the City's parking requirement for Additional Dwelling Units located in areas well served by transit.</p> <p>(d) Examine other existing zoning requirements that may present barriers to increasing Additional Dwelling Units within the City.</p>	Gaps 2, 4	City Development, Corporate Services (Municipal Law Enforcement)	■ ■ □	\$
1.9	Ensure that the City's Official Plan policies and zoning regulations do not present barriers to shared living (co-housing, co-living) arrangements in appropriate areas as-of-right.	Gaps 1-3	City Development	■ □ □	\$

	Action	Gap # Addressed	Lead Department	Time Frame	Cost
1.10	Consider removing or reducing the minimum requirement for parking spaces for affordable housing and/or supportive housing and allowing developers to propose alternative parking space options.	Gap 4	City Development	■□□	\$
1.11	Consider discouraging “down zoning” high and medium density residential designations to lower density residential designations.	Gap 4	City Development	■□□	\$
1.12	Add an Official Plan policy requiring the submission of an Affordability and Accessibility Analysis as part of a complete application for residential development, subject to criteria.	Gaps 1-3	City Development	■□□	\$
2.0	Financial Incentives				
2.1	Consider establishing a corporate policy whereby surplus or underutilized City-owned lands or buildings that are not required for municipal purposes, such as for parkland, are first considered for development of affordable rental housing.	Gaps 1-3	Corporate Services, Finance	■■□	\$\$ - \$\$\$
2.2	Consider waiving fees or providing a grant equivalent to certain development application fees, development charges, property taxes, and/or parkland dedication requirements, for affordable rental, affordable ownership, and/or supportive housing developments on a case-by-case basis.	Gaps 1-3	Finance Department	□■□	\$\$ - \$\$\$

	Action	Gap # Addressed	Lead Department	Time Frame	Cost
2.3	Prioritize and facilitate approvals for projects which provide affordable rental, affordable ownership, supportive housing, and purpose-built rental housing units.	Gaps 1-3	City Development, Engineering, Fire	■□□	\$
2.4	Consider establishing a Housing Reserve Fund which can be funded through a special levy and/or Community Benefit Charge.	Gaps 1-3	Finance	□■ ■	\$
2.5	Consider undertaking a feasibility study for a Vacant Home Tax.	Gaps 1-3	Finance	□■□	\$
3.0	Other				
3.1	Encourage developers to consider designing flexible spaces that can accommodate shared living or multi-generational living.	Gaps 1, 3	City Development	■□□	\$
3.2	Consider connecting interested developers with experts or consultants in the field of management and operation of affordable, rental housing.	Gaps 2	Economic Development, City Development	■□□	\$
3.3	Provide guidance to developers, not-for-profits and other proponents of affordable rental, affordable ownership and/or supportive housing, on the planning and building approvals processes.	Gaps 1-3	City Development	■□□	\$
3.4	Share information with developers about funding and other incentives available to address the City's housing needs.	Gaps 1-3	City Development	■□□	\$

	Action	Gap # Addressed	Lead Department	Time Frame	Cost
3.5	Consider advocating for the Province to establish a minimum number of accessible units or a percentage of accessible units for major residential development.	Gaps 1-3	Corporate Communications	■□□	\$
3.6	Consider advocating for the school boards to reduce, waive and/or defer their portion of Development Charges for affordable rental housing.	Gaps 1, 2	Corporate Communications	■□□	\$
3.7	Establish a Monitoring Plan that will annually update and review the baseline data set established in the Research and Gap Analysis Report, March 31, 2021, to ensure goals and objectives of the Housing Strategy are being met.	Gaps 1-4	City Development	■□□	\$
3.8	To consider adding a dedicated function, similar to an Office of Affordability, within the City, the scope of work which would include being responsible for implementing the Pickering Housing Strategy & Action Plan 2021-2031, December 22, 2021.	Gaps 1-4			



“The Action Plan consists of themed actions – policy, financial incentives, and other.”

6.0 Next Steps

On January 24, 2022, Council approved the following recommendations:

1. That Council approve the Phase 3: Recommended Housing Strategy & Action Plan, December 22, 2021, as the Pickering Housing Strategy & Action Plan 2021-2031, December 22, 2021, save and except that a new Action Item 3.8 be added as follows “To consider adding a dedicated function, similar to an Office of Affordability, within the City, the scope of work which would include being responsible for implementing the Pickering Housing Strategy & Action Plan 2021-2031, December 22, 2021”; and,
2. That the appropriate officials of the City of Pickering be authorized to take the necessary actions as indicated in the Pickering Housing Strategy & Action Plan 2021-2031, December 22, 2021

“Cities have the capacity of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

Jane Jacobs



Appendix 1

January 21, 2021 Electronic Open House 1:
Comments/Questions and Staff Response

Housing Strategy Study
 January 21, 2021 Electronic Public Open House 1
 Summary of Comments/Questions and Staff Responses

Item Number	Comments/Questions	Staff Response
1.	<p>We would like to own a home. Rent-to-own/lease-to-own options would be great to include as part of the Study. These housing options would be great to have locations near transit, shops, other amenities.</p>	<p>The Housing Strategy Study will be looking at how the City can facilitate a variety of options for housing type and tenure, including rent-to-own/lease-to-own options. City staff will be hosting stakeholder meetings with the development and building industry, as well as not-for-profit and government agencies, to hear what they have to say about the provision for this, and other housing options.</p>
2.	<p>Why does Pickering not have more senior housing similar to Amica Swan Lake in Markham, Eastern Gate and Northern Gate Retirement Community in Stouffville, or Wilmont Creek Retirement Community in Newcastle?</p>	<p>Amica Swan Lake in Markham is a seniors' living complex (3-4 storey building, wide range of amenities). Eastern Gate & Northern Gate are attached bungalows using a form of life-lease (e.g., right-to-occupy agreement). Wilmont Creek in Newcastle are bungalows, residents do not own them but lease the land on which the bungalows sit. These examples provide a variety of ownership styles and tenures. In addition to City policy, market conditions and fluctuations drive what type of housing can be made available. The City encourages the widest range of typologies. Through the Study, we will identify additional role(s) the City can take in providing a range of housing typologies.</p> <p>Viva Retirement Home provides independent and assisted living opportunities for seniors in Pickering and is located at Kingston Road and Glengrove Road.</p> <p>Amica Pickering is a seniors lifestyle building currently under construction at the northeast corner of Glenanna Road and Pickering Parkway. In addition, City staff is reviewing a seniors residence application from Chartwell proposed to be located at Kingston Road and Valley Farm Road.</p>

Housing Strategy Study
 January 21, 2021 Electronic Public Open House 1
 Summary of Comments/Questions and Staff Responses

Item Number	Comments/Questions	Staff Response
3.	What is Pickering's plan for senior development including detached bungalows with garages?	<p>Pickering's land value has dramatically increased in the last few years and this has impacted whether this option would be affordable for seniors downsizing.</p> <p>City staff will be hosting stakeholder meetings with the development and building industry, as well as not-for-profit and government agencies, to hear what they have to say about the provision for this, and other, housing options.</p>
4.	<p>The current cost of housing in Pickering does not offer affordable options for a variety of residents ranging from Registered Nurses to individuals on Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). Because of this, some people require shared living quarters with others or they will face potential homelessness. Many tenants in this form of housing are considered vulnerable populations (e.g., essential workers, seniors, co-op students, individuals living with a disability, racialized individuals). Surrounding municipalities have made rooming/lodging house licenses difficult and seem to be discouraging them. This can lead to increased levels of homelessness. I do not want Pickering to discourage this type of housing. Discouraging this type of housing violates guidelines set out by the Ontario Human Rights Commission (Room for everyone: Human rights and rental housing licensing). This Study should look into encouraging rooming/lodging house licenses and basement units as it provides essential affordable housing options.</p>	<p>The City of Pickering Official Plan policies encourage the provision of a wide variety of housing types and tenure to meet the needs of existing and future populations of the City, including shared living accommodation.</p> <p>As with the construction of all types of housing, shared accommodation must meet the requirements of the Ontario Building Code (OBC) for building and fire safety. Other concerns that arise with shared accommodation include the amount of parking provided.</p> <p>The City does not prohibit people from sharing housing accommodation, and there is no zoning by-law prohibition on rooming/lodging houses in Pickering.</p>

Housing Strategy Study
 January 21, 2021 Electronic Public Open House 1
 Summary of Comments/Questions and Staff Responses

Item Number	Comments/Questions	Staff Response
5.	When looking at new affordable housing, the City should ensure that “corners do not get cut” during construction that could result in substandard housing.	All construction is required to meet the Ontario Building Code (OBC). The City of Pickering Building Services staff review plans and inspect construction to ensure that the OBC requirements are met. There are no reductions in performance standards for affordable housing construction within the OBC.
6.	The Province enables municipalities, like Pickering, to mandate affordable housing through Inclusionary Zoning policies and zoning by-laws. I encourage the City to implement this.	Inclusionary Zoning is a relatively new “tool” introduced by the Province to enable municipalities to require a certain amount of affordable housing as part of new developments. Through the Housing Strategy Study, the City will be examining how this tool can be implemented, and the merits to its implementation.
7.	Will the Study be looking at transitional housing?	<p>Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation’s National Housing Strategy Glossary of Terms defines “Transitional Housing” as housing that is intended to offer a supportive living environment for its residents, including offering them the experience, tools, knowledge and opportunities for social and skill development to become more independent. It is considered an intermediate step between emergency shelter and supportive housing, and has limits on how long an individual or family can stay. Stays are typically between 3 months and 3 years.</p> <p>The Study will also be considering Transitional Housing.</p>

Housing Strategy Study
 January 21, 2021 Electronic Public Open House 1
 Summary of Comments/Questions and Staff Responses

Item Number	Comments/Questions	Staff Response
8.	<p>We are part of the aging population of Pickering. We own our home and we would love to get old in it. It seems that property taxes are a big part of the housing cost. They increased 60 percent in the last 15 years and it seems that the trend is growing. At this rate ever increasing taxes are eroding house affordability. When the minimum wage is 15-16 CAD and old age security is around 1,000 how do you see retirees afford the property bill on their home?</p>	<p>The concern over increased property taxes and its impact on housing affordability will be reviewed in consultation with the City's Finance Department, through the subsequent phases of the study.</p>
9.	<p>We need to see more broad housing types also with other types of development. Such as mixed-use development. For example a site that contains not only owned units but also affordable housing and rental units alongside commercial/retail space all built together on the same site. So I would like the City to look more at encouraging mixed-use development moving forward in the housing strategy.</p>	<p>The City, through the Study, will examine opportunities to strengthen and expand its housing policies and zoning by-law provisions to facilitate more housing types and affordable housing as part of mixed-use developments.</p>
10.	<p>There are a lot of working class people who are not able to purchase a home. Is there a plan for any new co-op housing to be built to reduce the number of people on current waiting lists [for subsidized housing]?</p>	<p>Currently there are no development applications for co-op housing in Pickering. This Study will examine different types of housing and how the City can help to facilitate affordable housing including co-op housing.</p>
11.	<p>What are Pickering's policies with respect to basement apartments?</p>	<p>Currently the City of Pickering's zoning by-laws refer to basement apartments as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and permit a total of two residential units on one property, subject to meeting certain conditions.</p>

Housing Strategy Study
 January 21, 2021 Electronic Public Open House 1
 Summary of Comments/Questions and Staff Responses

Item Number	Comments/Questions	Staff Response
		<p>These conditions include that the property have a minimum of 3 parking spaces, the ADU occupy no more than 100 square metres, and that a home-based business is prohibited in either dwelling unit of a dwelling containing an accessory dwelling unit.</p> <p>ADUs in the City of Pickering are governed by the Two-Dwelling Unit By-law No. 7579/17 and must be registered in order to ensure that the two-dwelling unit property meets required safety standards and can be located for providing emergency response.</p> <p>Changes to the <i>Planning Act</i>, introduced through the <i>More Homes, More Choice Act</i> in 2019, permit a total of three residential units on one property. Some of the changes introduced include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requiring municipalities to permit second units in detached, semi-detached, and row houses in primary dwellings and within ancillary buildings or structures; • prohibiting municipalities from applying a development charge for second units above garages or in laneways, or built in new homes (subject to restrictions); and • requiring municipalities to permit two units in either the primary dwelling unit or in any ancillary building, effectively allowing up to three residential units on a single lot. <p>The Housing Strategy Study will review the new provincial requirements and how they impact existing policy and regulations.</p>



Appendix 2

February 25, 2021 Stakeholder Meeting:
Comments/Questions

February 25, 2021 Stakeholder Meeting Comments/Questions

The following highlights some of the comments and questions discussed at the February 25, 2021 Stakeholder Meeting:

- It's important to clearly define what is "affordable housing";
- The City should consider a robust suite of incentives to encourage the construction of affordable housing, including deferring Development Charges, and/or tax breaks;
- An option to consider is encouraging affordable units through smaller and secondary units;
- Consider reduced parking requirements for developments that include affordable housing;
- Inclusionary Zoning should be targeted to areas of the City that have a strong housing market, it should be financially viable, it should be focused in Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs), there should be continued consultation with BILD on this matter;
- Consideration should be given to "Laneway Housing";
- Consideration should be made for providing tax breaks (there is a potential tax increase associated with converting or renovating basements to a secondary suite) and an easier building/permit process for secondary suites;
- Pickering should look at innovative ways for people to renovate their homes to provide accessible housing options;
- One of the challenges of affordable housing and purpose-built rental housing is public opposition to these projects. There needs to be a unified front (City and developer) and education to challenge the stigma associated with these forms of housing. Affordable housing requires support and endorsement from Council to educate the community and counter opposition;
- Demolishing rental housing stock will exacerbate the problem of affordability. Consider balancing the impacts of redeveloping rental properties with providing additional housing units, including replacing the existing rental units and adding affordable units;
- There is support for the provision of a range of housing options, including Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing;
- Consider an Empty Home Tax, where owners of vacant homes are charged a one percent (1%) tax on the assessed value of the home;
- There is support for the City to consider regulating short-term rental housing. A distinction should be made between renting a room and renting an entire dwelling unit, since the latter could lead to a decline in the supply of rental housing;

February 25, 2021 Stakeholder Meeting
Comments/Questions

- Consider expediting site plan approval to encourage modular and mid-rise developments. As it relates to the cost of parking, surface or underground, depending on the value of the land, it may be more affordable to implement surface parking for mid-rise housing;
- The City should consider small, self-contained units to be built in backyards (“granny flats”) where space permits. This can be considered as part of the “missing middle” and is suitable for seniors looking to downsize but not wanting to be in an apartment building;
- Affordable housing will only be possible with funding, grants, and incentives from all levels of government;
- Encourage integrated and inclusive housing options, especially as it relates to equity-seeking populations. We don’t want to see segregated buildings designated for vulnerable populations, isolated from neighbourhood amenities;
- Encourage opportunities for the Region to increase the number of portable housing benefits for individuals with disabilities or on fixed incomes;
- Make low-cost renovation dollars available to families who wish to modify their existing home to include a secondary suite for a family member;
- Ensure homeowners are not penalized with increased property taxes when they renovate and create secondary suites for a family member with a disability;
- Support or approve only the most inclusive and vibrant housing developments, where only up to ten percent of the total units of any new build would be considered for vulnerable people, including those with disabilities, so that disability “ghettos” do not become the norm.



Appendix 3

Engagement Summary Report



City of Pickering

Housing Strategy Study

Engagement Summary Report

July 2021





INTRODUCTION

The City of Pickering (the “City”) is currently undertaking a Housing Strategy Study (the “Study”). The Study will ultimately provide a framework to ensure the City can support a supply of suitable, adequate and affordable housing for all ages and abilities within its jurisdiction.

The Study has a total of nine objectives:

- 1 Identify housing priorities, policy alternatives, including recommendations for official plan policies and zoning regulations, and allocation of City resources;
- 2 Develop a baseline database of the City’s demographic profile, socio-economic characteristics of households and housing stock;
- 3 Develop a protocol for regular updating of the database;
- 4 Identify expected population and employment growth over the next ten years that will influence future housing needs;
- 5 Analyze the data and trends to identify the City’s housing needs and gaps;
- 6 Identify and examine the current policy and legislative context that influences the provision of housing, affordable housing and age friendly housing in the City;
- 7 Identify and examine the roles, responsibilities, and interrelationships between the City, the Regional

Municipality of Durham and other levels of government, and the private and not-for-profit sector;

- 8 Recommend an action plan that identifies actions that the City may undertake to ensure an appropriate balance of housing types and tenure that meet the needs of a complete, prosperous community; and
- 9 Recommend a Monitoring Plan that will regularly update and review the baseline data set with the goal of identifying whether or not the goals and objectives of the Housing Strategy are being met, and if any modifications to the action plan are necessary to ensure that the goals and objectives of the Housing Strategy are met.

The Study is being completed in three phases. Phase 1: Research and Gap Analysis, included launching the Study, undertaking background research to determine housing gaps within the City, and public engagement. Phase 1 concluded with the Research and Gap Analysis Report.

Phase 2: Draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan considered input received through Phase 1 engagement, and the preparation and circulation of the Draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan to stakeholders, agencies and the public.

The Study will conclude with Phase 3, where the Recommended Housing Strategy and Action Plan will be



presented to Planning & Development Committee for consideration for Council adoption.

The Study is currently in Phase 2.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Engagement Summary Report (“Summary”) is to provide an overview of the initiatives undertaken and a summary of the input received from the public and key stakeholders during Phases 1 and 2 of the Study. The Summary will conclude by highlighting key themes that were identified through engagement. These themes may be considered by the City as it enters Phase 3 of the Study and prepares the Recommended Housing Strategy and Action Plan.

OBJECTIVES

The engagement objectives for Phases 1 and 2 were to:

- Introduce the public, stakeholders and agencies to the Study, including the background, purpose, objectives, work plan and study timeline;
- Create an opportunity for communication and education between the public, stakeholders, agencies and City staff about the role of housing within the City

and the significance of the Study given the current housing context within Pickering;

- Receive input and feedback from a broad audience of interested members of the public, key stakeholders and relevant agencies, as well as City departments and committees, such as the Accessibility Advisory Committee; and
- Identify key themes and inputs as they relate to housing needs, challenges and opportunities within the City that may be taken into consideration as the Recommended Housing Strategy and Action Plan is developed.

PROJECT TEAM

The City’s Project Team for this Study included the following staff members:

- Margaret Kish, Principal Planner, Policy, the Study’s Project Manager;
- Catherine Rose, Chief Planner;
- Déan Jacobs, Manager, Policy & Geomatics; and
- Doris Ho, Planner 1.

TIMELINE OVERVIEW



THE LAUNCH OF THE STUDY

In June 2020 Council authorized staff to undertake a study for the purpose of developing a housing strategy.

In Summer 2020, City staff began the research and data collection that would inform the Research and Gap Analysis Report of Phase 1 of the Study. City staff formally launched the Study's engagement process in Winter 2021 and held the first Public Open House on January 21, 2021.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROJECT TEAM

In January 2021, the City retained WSP to facilitate consultation and engagement for the Study. As part of this role, WSP has been responsible for facilitating stakeholder meetings and public open houses, as well as providing engagement summaries during Phases 1 and 2 of the Study.

PHASE 1 ENGAGEMENT

During Phase 1 of the Study, the following engagement events were held to gather valuable feedback from members of the public, agencies and key stakeholders:

- 1 Public Open House #1, held on January 21, 2021;
- 2 Stakeholders Meeting, held on February 25, 2021; and
- 3 Presentation to the Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee on March 17, 2021.

PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT

During Phase 2 of the Study, the following engagement events were held to gather valuable feedback from members of the public, agencies and key stakeholders:

- 1 Public Open House #2, held on April 29, 2021; and
- 2 Presentation to the Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee on May 19, 2021.

Circulation of the Draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan to internal departments, agencies and interested stakeholders is also being undertaken in Phase 2.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT TACTICS

The following section provides an overview of the approach and methodology used and an analysis of feedback received.

DEDICATED PROJECT WEBPAGE

The City is administering a dedicated project [webpage](#) that offers a central location for project resources. The project [webpage](#) details the Study background, key objectives, status, reports, engagement activities, and information on how to be involved. Members of the public could also sign-up to receive email notifications and a dedicated email address was also administered to receive correspondence.



PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #1

The first electronic Public Open House was held on January 21, 2021, from 7:00PM to 8:30PM. The Public Open House was held on the Cisco Webex platform and live streamed to the City's YouTube channel. The event was advertised through the project [webpage](#) and a Notice of Electronic Public Open House. The Public Open House required pre-registration in order for members of the public to be connected to the meeting and actively participate. Alternatively, the Public Open House could be viewed live through the City's YouTube channel, where no pre-registration was required. A total of 24 members of the public viewed the Public Open House on YouTube.

The purpose of Public Open House #1 was to introduce the Study to the public, provide context on why the Study was being undertaken, and to provide an opportunity to gather feedback to inform the Research and Gap Analysis Report. The Public Open House also provided an opportunity for pre-registered participants to interact directly with the City's project team by asking questions and providing feedback.

The Public Open House was facilitated by WSP with members of the City's project team in attendance. The City's project manager, Margaret Kish, delivered a PowerPoint presentation providing the Study context and purpose of the Public Open

House. Following the presentation, delegations from pre-registered participants were delivered to the City, with follow-up questions being directed to the City's project team. Delegates at the meeting included the following individuals:

- Editha & Rolando de Guzman;
- Royce Baker;
- John Armstrong;
- Councillor Brenner; and
- Councillor Butt.

The Public Open House concluded with an open discussion, followed by a review of the Study's next steps delivered by the City's project manager. Comments were received by the project team subsequent to Public Open House #1 until January 20, 2021. Several comments were received during this period and documented as part of the Study's record.

STAKEHOLDER MEETING

A stakeholder meeting was held electronically on February 25, 2021, from 2:30PM to 4:30PM. The meeting was held on the GoToMeeting platform. Participants were also pre-registered for this event, and included representatives from the development industry, consultants, agencies, and relevant organizations. A total of 19 participants attended the meeting.



The purpose of the Meeting was to engage key stakeholders and provide an opportunity to receive solution-oriented feedback from a range of relevant perspectives and interests in affordable housing within the City.

The format of the Stakeholder Meeting included a total of nine questions that were posed to participants by the project team. The meeting was facilitated by WSP with members of the City's project team in attendance to engage with attendees and answer questions. The nine questions were developed within the context of the Research and Gap Analysis Report (the Report). The questions largely focused on exploring the various issues and opportunities that were identified through the Report, including:

- 1 How the City may facilitate affordable housing, purpose-built rental housing and community housing;
- 2 Challenges to the supply, construction and access of affordable rental housing and affordable home ownership;
- 3 The protection of rental housing from conversion and/or demolition;
- 4 Solutions to create emergency shelters or transitional housing;
- 5 Whether short-term rental housing within the City should be regulated;

- 6 Incentives and tools to facilitate or support affordable housing;
- 7 What could be done to encourage more mid-rise (6-8 storey) buildings; and
- 8 What can be done to encourage more at-grade bungalow dwellings.

The Meeting concluded with a review of next steps, provided by Margaret Kish. Follow-up comments from participants of the Meeting were accepted until midnight on March 10th, 2021. Several comments were received and documented by the City's project team.

PICKERING ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE DELEGATION #1

On March 17, 2021, Margaret Kish attended an electronic meeting of the Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) as a delegate. The AAC was provided an overview of the Study, including the background, purpose, objectives, and work plan. More specifically, the housing continuum was presented and the definition of "affordable" was explained. The roles of Federal, Provincial and Regional governments in housing was also explored. The delegation was concluded with confirming preliminary findings to date and the next steps of the Study.



Several comments were offered by the AAC or those in attendance, as follows:

- A former member of the AAC, who joined via audio connection, confirmed that comments had been issued to Margaret Kish via email. Concern regarding the inaccessibility of stacked housing was also noted.
- A member of the AAC noted that site plans presented to the Committee often have limited consideration for accessibility. It was also noted by this individual that it is important to ensure a mix of housing options is available for the aging population.
- There was concern regarding a need to consider accessibility and affordability as separate issues to mitigate the segregation of communities;
- Observations were offered that the senior population is relocating outside of Pickering due to the lack of affordable and accessible housing;
- It was suggested that the City explore the concept of “prefabricated” housing for members of the community who may require affordable housing;
- A need to ensure that specific goals and objectives are established through the Study;
- Ensuring that the AAC are circulated as stakeholders throughout the Study;
- That other factors be considered through the Study, including proximity to everyday amenities;
- That consideration be given to horizon greater than 10 years;
- That opportunities be considered to address deficiencies with respect to the Ontario Building Code be explored;
- Opportunities to implement and enforce the Accessibility for Ontario with Disabilities Act (AODA) be considered; and
- The AAC encouraged the Study’s project team to reach out to the Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #2

The second electronic Public Open House was held on April 29, 2021, from 7:00PM to 8:30PM, as part of Phase 2 of the Study. The second Public Open House was held on the Cisco Webex platform and live streamed to the City’s YouTube channel. The event was also advertised through the project [webpage](#) and a Notice of Electronic Public Open House. The Public Open House required pre-registration in order for



members of the public to be connected to the Open House meeting and actively participate. Alternatively, the Public Open House could be viewed live through the City's YouTube channel, where no pre-registration was required. A total of 12 members of the public viewed the Public Open House on YouTube.

The purpose of Public Open House #2 was to present Phase 2 of the Study, being the Draft Action Plan, to the public. The Public Open House offered an opportunity for feedback and input to be received by the project team. The Public Open House also enabled pre-registered participants to interact directly with the City's project team by asking questions and providing feedback.

The Public Open House was facilitated by WSP with members of the City's project team in attendance. The City's project manager, Margaret Kish, delivered a PowerPoint presentation which included a review of the Study's progress and a presentation of the Draft Action Plan. Following the presentation, pre-registered participants delivered delegations to the City, with follow-up questions being directed to the City's project team. Delegates at the meeting included the following individuals:

- Royce Baker; and
- Jennifer Jaruczek, representing BILD.

Also, in attendance were Michael Blake and Erin Valant from the Region of Durham.

The Public Open House included considerable discussion between registered participants and the project team, through which a range of topics, issues and opportunities were explored. This discussion included a follow-up on items proposed by the City through the Draft Action Plan. The Public Open House concluded with an open discussion followed by a review of the Study's next steps delivered by the City's project manager. Additional comments were received until May 6, 2021.

PICKERING ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE DELEGATION #2

On May 19, 2021, Margaret Kish attended an electronic meeting of the Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) as a delegate. The AAC was provided with an update on the status of the Study, including a review of the work plan to confirm next steps. Information regarding housing gaps were identified, while tools identified in the Draft Action Plan were reviewed. These tools included planning policy, financial incentives, partnership, education, advocacy and other actions.



The AAC was then provided additional information on several follow-up items, as discussed through a question and answer period:

- Request to provide the AAC with an update regarding components of the Draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan concerning affordability and accessibility prior to launching the Strategy;
- Increasing the City's standards for accessibility and affordability;
- Actions to encourage developers to pursue accessibility and affordability; and
- The complexity of housing issues and concerns regarding the various interested and affected parties involved.

WHAT WE HEARD

Feedback received during Phase 1 and 2 of the Study ranged in topic and focus. Several key themes emerged that may inform the Recommended Housing Strategy and Action Plan, which will be developed in Phase 3 of the Study. The following subsections provide a summary of these key themes.

PRELIMINARY KEY THEMES

The following key themes were identified following a review of the feedback received through Phase 1 and 2 engagement activities:

- **Encourage a Range of Housing Options:** Participants in Phases 1 and 2 of the Study communicated that a range of housing options are required to advance the City's affordable housing objectives. Housing options in this context refer to tenure (e.g., rental, ownership, rent-to-own, lease-to-own, co-operative housing, "rooming or lodging house" etc.), housing types (e.g., detached, semi-detached, accessory dwelling units (i.e. basement apartments), mid-rise apartment, high-rise apartment, bungalow and "modular" housing), as well as housing typologies, such as housing that is better suited towards the needs of seniors (e.g., bungalows). The role of basement apartments and accessory dwelling units were also highlighted as a potential opportunity to provide additional affordable housing within the City.
- **Implement an Updated Policy Framework:** Many participants noted a desire for the City to develop and implement an updated policy framework in regard to affordable housing. First, there was recognition that the Region is currently undertaking a review of its official

plan, and that a modified policy framework, providing direction to local municipalities regarding affordable housing matters, is being considered through that process. Second, it was communicated that the City may need to consider a definition of “affordable” that is responsive to the local context and takes into consideration the City’s specific housing market and affordable housing needs. Lastly, input was received regarding policies that would provide direction to the provision and protection of affordable housing within the City. Policy considerations in this regard included, for example, enabling policies to offer financial incentives, protection from the conversion of purpose-built rental units, and a framework for inclusionary zoning that is predicated on close consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders, including the development industry.

- **Provide Financial and Other Incentives:** Implementing incentives to encourage and facilitate the development of affordable housing emerged as a key theme through Phases 1 and 2. Where financial incentives may be considered, it was noted that the City should explore opportunities to fund these incentives through support from all levels of government. Participants also noted the important role that financial

incentives can play in making affordable housing development feasible, especially in the form of grants, loans and/or deferrals of certain charges. The intent of financial incentives should focus on mitigating costs and fees associated with development of affordable housing. For example, this may include the deferral of development charges, or grants that are offered to offset certain fees for applications made under the *Planning Act*, or fees required for building permits, specifically as it relates to proposals that have an affordable housing component.

Non-financial incentives to encourage and facilitate the development of affordable housing could include relief from certain tools administered by the City under the *Planning Act*, such as minimum parking requirements regulated by a zoning by-law. The planning and development process was also highlighted as a potential opportunity to incentivize affordable housing, whereby an expedited process may be facilitated by the City where affordable housing is proposed.

Lastly, participants expressed support for utilizing Community Benefit Charges to fund certain incentives, where feasible or permitted under the Provincial regulations. Support for other tools and instruments, such as a Community Improvement Plan (under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*), inclusionary



zoning, and a more permissive regulatory framework for secondary suites, were also observed to be desirable options to advance the City's affordable housing objectives.

- **Foster Collaboration and Partnerships:** Participants noted that collaboration and partnership is a critical consideration in developing and implementing a Recommended Housing Strategy and Action Plan. Input received through Phases 1 and 2 encouraged the City to work collaboratively with a range of stakeholders, including local organizations, agencies, consultants and the development industry, when exploring and evaluating options to advance the City's affordable housing objectives. This may include, for example, consultation and collaboration when preparing implementing policies, developing incentive programs, or preparing City-led affordable housing initiatives. Understanding who the key stakeholders are and their role in affordable housing was also observed to be a key consideration for the City with regards to implementing the Recommended Housing Strategy and Action Plan. Importantly, participants were appreciative of the opportunity to be consulted and heard as the City develops the Recommended Housing Strategy and Action Plan.

- **Public Consultation and Education:** Many participants noted that community opposition is often a barrier to the development of affordable housing. This opposition was largely articulated as a stigma towards individuals who may rely on various forms of affordable housing from government assistance or other publicly funded support systems. Here, participants highlighted the critical role the City has in offering enhanced communication, education and awareness about the value of integrating affordable housing within the community and the broader benefits this offers through a socioeconomic lens. Discussions in this context included a potential need to implement a robust public education and awareness campaign as the City seeks to implement the Recommended Housing Strategy and Action Plan over its intended horizon.

NEXT STEPS

Following the presentation of an update on the Study and the Draft Action Plan to the Planning and Development Committee in June 2021, the City will circulate the Draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan to internal departments, agencies and interested stakeholders for review and comment. Phase 3 will consider feedback from the circulation and culminate in the Recommended Housing Strategy and Action Plan, to be



presented to Council for consideration for adoption. This is anticipated to occur in late-2021.



Appendix 4

April 29, 2021 Electronic Open House 2:
Summary of Comments/Questions

Housing Strategy Study
 April 29, 2021 Electronic Public Open House 2
 Summary of Comments/Questions

Item Number	Comments/Questions
1.	The cost of insuring shared housing (sometimes referred to as “rooming houses”), may impact a home owner. For seniors who may have the space and may welcome the company, the extra costs of these issues could outweigh their desire to assist someone with their housing situation.
2.	The City’s 55+ Advisory Committee, has been considering the option of accommodating younger single individuals co-habiting with a senior, thus providing the singleton with affordable housing options in return for some assistance to the senior, such as lawn mowing, snow removal etc.
3.	The City should ensure that a Shared Living form of housing is encouraged. Sharing accommodations is the most common way for minimum waged workers to obtain affordable housing. Some municipalities regulate shared living accommodation (“rooming houses”). There needs to be municipal, regional, and provincial initiatives to overcome structural barriers to shared living.
4.	How will Pickering resolve issues of multiple cars parked in driveways and on the street that may result from affordable housing such as rental apartments and rooming houses? Does the Planning Committee have a method to deal with a potential lack of upkeep of the area surrounding these units. In Toronto we hear about used drug needles left outside and liquor bottles being left about as well as transients loitering. Has the City developed a plan to deal with these negative issues in the planning process? How will the Planning Department ensure the overall look of Pickering will not be diminished?
5.	If low cost housing is a priority, why not include studio apartments or condos that will be more affordable?
6.	As a senior I was happy to hear consideration concerning the accessibility of housing. I would like to see more bungalow condos similar to the ones beside the Pickering City Hall. The bungalows there are always in very high demand. Coupled with that, smaller detached bungalows should also be a considered.
7.	Pickering seems to focus its energy on creating more high density housing such as condos, apartments and town houses. Why is there no focus on single family homes for young families or bungalows with a garage for seniors. I feel there is too much emphasis on high density and not enough on the younger families and older seniors.

Housing Strategy Study
 April 29, 2021 Electronic Public Open House 2
 Summary of Comments/Questions

Item Number	Comments/Questions
8.	Pickering Council entertained the request to build a high condo building at the waterfront at the bottom of Liverpool Road. Why is Pickering not focusing its efforts to create as much parkland as possible along the waterfront for all Pickering residents to enjoy? The waterfront trail should incorporate as much greenspace as possible for residents. Ajax was very forward thinking in doing just that. As a result there are miles of waterfront trail to walk and enjoy.
9.	Is Pickering interested in designing a seniors shared living house design? Have you studied the Golden Girls of Port Perry?
10.	BILD spoke about the importance of partnerships in addressing the declining affordability in housing in the Greater Toronto Area, including the organization's support for funding and grants from all levels of government. In particular, they expressed that they are encouraged by the wording in the Draft Action Plan and an approach which includes a suite of incentives that seeks to provide affordable housing units. In addition, BILD expressed an interest in ensuring that any future Inclusionary Zoning policies or requirements are applied in such a way to not unintentionally undermine future housing stock or choice, as well as the City's overall growth objectives. BILD suggested that a working group be established between the City and BILD.
11.	BILD stated that it's fairly common when the industry is proposing new development that they are faced with community opposition and that community education is necessary to combat the stigma of the word "affordable". BILD expressed that they believe that the success of implementing affordable housing begins early on with Council, and requires their support and endorsement to be the champions for these policy directions, and ends with residents who need to understand the social implications of opposing these types of initiatives.

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