

REPORT

REPORT TO: Chair and Members of Planning, Public Works and Transportation Committee

REPORT FROM: John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning and Sustainability

DATE: January 15, 2019

REPORT NO.: PLS-2019-0010

RE: Provincial Housing Supply Action Plan – HAPP Joint Submission

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PLS-2019-0010 dated January 15, 2019 regarding the Halton Area Planning Partnership comments on the Province's Housing Supply Action Plan be received;

AND FURTHER that the comments contained in the Joint Submission be endorsed and submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the Region of Halton, the City of Burlington and the Towns of Milton and Oakville.

BACKGROUND:

On November 28, 2018, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing released "Increasing Housing Supply in Ontario, Consultation Document" under Environmental Registry Number 013-4190. A copy of the document is attached to this report as Schedule One.

The Increasing Housing Supply Consultation Document indicates that "a strong demand for housing and a limited supply in Ontario has resulted in rapidly rising housing costs over the last few years. In high-growth urban areas, high prices and rents have made it too hard for people to afford the housing they need". To increase the supply of housing, the Province advises that it "is developing a Housing Supply Action Plan that will address the barriers getting in the way of new ownership and rental housing".

The document identifies the following five barriers to new housing supply, along with a brief commentary and a series of questions:

Speed: It takes too long for development projects to get approved.

Mix: There are too many restrictions on what can be built to get the right mix of housing where it is needed.

Cost: Development costs are too high because of high land prices and government-imposed fees and charges.

Rent: It is too hard to be a landlord in Ontario, and tenants need to be protected.

Innovation: Other concerns, opportunities and innovations to increase housing supply.

COMMENTS:

The Halton Area Planning partnership has reviewed the Increasing Housing Supply Consultation Document and developed a Joint Submission to be submitted to the Province. The Joint Submission identifies general observations on the five concerns identified by the Province along with more specific comments on the questions contained in the Consultation Document. Key points raised in the Joint Submission include the following:

- An integral analysis of the various factors defining and impacting housing supply and affordability is missing. Housing issues are complex and tied to economic and market conditions.
- There is lack of clarity regarding next steps toward the development and implementation of the Plan. As such, there should be a commitment from the Province to share the findings from this consultation and profile how the Action Plan can address some of the key issues raised. Clarity on how the Action Plan dovetails with other Provincial initiatives, including the review of Provincial Plans is required. Changes to address housing supply and affordability issues should be coordinated with reviews of the Provincial Plans.
- There remain questions on the degree to which the lack of supply is the driver of affordability issues. The Region advises that it has been successful in allocating at least a three year supply of residential units to meet forecasted demand in accordance with the requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement.
- A number of suggestions have been made for streamlining the approval process that focus on appeals, pre-consultation, commenting timelines, the Municipal Class EA process among other matters. Although these suggestions are being advanced, the Joint Submission suggests that there is no evidence to suggest that amending the process would result in more supply.
- The Growth Plan already provides considerable direction on housing, growth management and complete communities that should be recognized.

- There needs to be flexibility in introducing new housing supply in underutilized and strategically located lands, such as Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs). In some cases, lands within MTSAs are designated employment lands which preclude residential uses without proceeding through a municipal comprehensive review.
- Major investments in transit service and infrastructure improvements at the Provincial level should guide where additional housing is planned.
- Halton and the local municipalities do not agree that government fees and charges are barriers to the provision of an adequate supply of housing. Fees and development charges are required to support growth related infrastructure.
- Preferential tax treatment by the Province for dedicated new affordable rental housing would increase rental supply.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Town's Strategic Plan contains nine Strategic Directions complemented by Goals and a number of Strategic Objectives. Some of the more pertinent Strategic Objectives that relate to this topic area are as follows:

- A.1 To promote an adequate supply of housing and a range of housing choices to meet the needs of present and future residents, including affordable, accessible and seniors housing.
- G.1 To provide for a moderate scale of growth that is in keeping with the Town's urban structure and protects its rural character.
- G.4 To promote a 'growth pays for itself' philosophy.
- G.10 To promote intensification and affordable housing in appropriate locations within the Town.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no immediate financial impact associated with this report.

CONSULTATION:

Consultation with the Region of Halton and the local municipalities of Burlington, Milton and Oakville occurred through the preparation of the HAPP Joint Submission.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

There is no public engagement associated with this report.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life.

The recommendation outlined in this report is generally linked to the Social Pillar of the Sustainability and in summary the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is: Good.

COMMUNICATIONS:

This report and the attached HAPP Joint Submission are to be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing as well as the Region of Halton and the local municipalities of Burlington, Milton, and Oakville.

CONCLUSION:

On November 28, 2018, the Province released "Increasing Housing Supply in Ontario, Consultation Document" under Environmental Registry Number 013-4190. A Joint Submission on the Consultation Document has been prepared by the Halton Area Planning Partnership (HAPP). It is recommended that the comments contained in the Joint Submission be endorsed and forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Reviewed and Approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brent Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brent Marshall, CAO