



REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

REPORT FROM: Nicole Pal, Economic Development and Special Projects Coordinator

DATE: February 12, 2021

REPORT NO.: ADMIN-2021-0011

RE: 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard – Assisted Rental Opportunity

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. ADMIN-2021-0011, dated February 12, 2021, regarding an assisted rental opportunity at 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council endorse the creation of an assisted rental housing unit at 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard in order to provide an additional housing opportunity to a family in need;

AND FURTHER THAT The Town of Halton Hills continue to work with Halton Region to provide an assisted housing opportunity at 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard through Halton Region's Rent Supplement program;

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute the necessary agreements and documentation with the Region of Halton for the property at 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard;

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute a Residential Tenancy Agreement for the property at 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard.

BACKGROUND:

9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard is a municipally owned property containing a three-bedroom single detached housing unit that was acquired by the Town in 2016 as part of the assumption of the Hillcrest Cemetery. Refer to Attachment #1 for the site location and pictures.

Throughout the summer of 2020, Town staff undertook capital improvements to the housing unit in order to ensure compliance with applicable building codes and property standards. The scope of these works was considered to have a reasonable return on investment for the rental potential of the property. Upon completion of this work program the initial next steps were to list the unit for rent on the market. However, given Council's priority of affordable housing and the need for more affordable family-sized homes in Halton Hills, Town staff explored the possibility of providing this housing opportunity to a household in need of affordable housing.

The most efficient and effective method of providing the 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard housing unit to a household in need at an affordable price is to participate in Halton Region's Rent Supplement program. This program creates new housing opportunities by working with landlords to make units available for vulnerable residents. Participating landlords sign an agreement with Halton Region to provide housing units to the Rent Supplement program and Halton Region places eligible applicants from the Halton Access to Community Housing (HATCH) wait list in the rent supplement units.

In November 2020, the 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard housing opportunity was presented to the Halton Hills Affordable Housing Working Group who supported the idea in principle. Town staff subsequently started the application process to become a participating landlord with Halton Region through their Rent Supplement program.

In January 2021, Town staff and Halton Region staff attended a site visit at 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard. The purpose of the visit was for Halton Region to inspect the unit and determine its suitability for inclusion into their Rent Supplement program. In February 2021, Halton Region staff informed Town staff that the 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard unit has been approved and to expect a Rent Supplement agreement shortly.

COMMENTS:

Assisted housing plays an important role in helping low-to-moderate income households obtain housing that is stable and secure. As the Service Manager, Halton Region is responsible for the provision of assisted housing and have a variety of programs in place to support this role, one of which is their Rent Supplement program. As a lower-tier municipality, the Town's role in this capacity is to support and complement the Region in the provision of assisted housing where possible.

The rising cost of rental housing is a challenge for low-to-moderate income households to attain and maintain affordable housing. Partaking in Halton Region's Rent Supplement program will provide a three-bedroom unit for a family in need of affordable housing from the HATCH wait list. This unit will be funded by the Halton Rental Assistance Program (HRAP) delivery stream. Under the HRAP funding, in order to be eligible, applicants must meet all criteria set out in the Housing Services Act and Halton Region local directives in the Rent Geared-to-Income (RGI) Guide with the exception that applicants must currently reside in Halton for the past 12 months. Eligible applicants are sourced chronologically from the HATCH wait list.

As a landlord participating in the Rent Supplement program, the Town would enter into two agreements: 1) a Rent Supplement Agreement with Halton Region; and 2) a Residential Tenancy Agreement with the tenant. The Town would be responsible for the normal landlord/tenant relationship, such as rent collection, maintenance, formal notices, and repairs and services as per the Residential Tenancies Act.

Under the Rent Supplement program, the tenant's rent is geared-to-income and will be calculated based on the Housing Services Act. Halton Region determines a fair market price for the unit and pays the landlord the remaining rent to equal the market price. Landlords participating in the Rent Supplement program should expect two payments monthly: 1) from the tenant, and 2) from Halton Region.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Affordable housing is a key Strategic Plan priority. The recommendations of this report contribute to ensuring that housing is accessible to all residents at any age or stage of life.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

If approved, this report will result in leasing the 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard property to a residential tenant. Once a tenant is selected and the agreements are executed, the Town will receive monthly rent payments from the tenant and Halton Region equal to the market price of \$1,900. These monthly payments will be directed towards the Recreation and Parks Operating budget to offset cemetery and building operations as outlined in the Cemeteries Business Plan.

CONSULTATION:

Town staff from Recreation and Parks, Finance, and Corporate Communications were consulted in the writing of this report. Halton Region staff were also consulted in the writing of this report.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

The public was not engaged in the writing of 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 advances the Strategy's implementation.

This report supports the social well-being and economic prosperity pillar(s) of Sustainability and in summary the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is Good.

COMMUNICATIONS:

At the appropriate time, staff will update the Town's website to include a description of this project.

CONCLUSION:

Ensuring that housing is accessible to all residents at any age or stage in life is a key Town priority. Utilizing Town assets such as 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard to create additional housing opportunities for households in need of affordable housing contributes towards delivering on this priority. This report recommends that Council endorse the creation of assisted housing at 9985 Winston Churchill Boulevard by becoming a participating landlord with Halton Region through their Rent Supplement program, and to authorize the Mayor and Clerks to execute any necessary agreements.

Reviewed and Approved by,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Damian Szybalski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Damian Szybalski, Director of Economic Development, Innovation & Culture

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "C. Mills". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Mills, Acting Chief Administrative Officer