



100 John West Way  
Aurora, Ontario  
L4G 6J1  
(905) 727-3123  
aurora.ca

Town of Aurora  
**Committee of the Whole Report**  
No. PDS24-133

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**Subject:** Endorsement of the Affordable Housing Action Plan

**Prepared by:** Dania Asahi Ogie, Policy Planner  
Adam Robb, MPL, MCIP, RPP, CAHP, PLE,  
Manager, Policy Planning and Heritage

**Department:** Planning and Development Services

**Date:** December 2, 2024

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## Recommendation

1. That Report No. PDS24-133 be received; and
2. That Council endorse the finalized Affordable Housing Action Plan as attached to this report.

## Executive Summary

This report seeks Council's endorsement of the Affordable Housing Action Plan, which has been finalized based on the public consultation and stakeholder feedback received.

- The initial draft of the Affordable Housing Action Plan was brought forward to Council in June 2024
- Since the release of the draft, several consultation opportunities have been held to inform the finalization of the Affordable Housing Action Plan
- The finalized Affordable Housing Action Plan has made key updates in response to the input received by the public and stakeholders

## Background

**The initial draft of the Affordable Housing Action Plan was brought forward to Council in June 2024**

On June 4, 2024, the draft Affordable Housing Action Plan was presented to Council for initial review through report PDS24-061. The Affordable Housing Action Plan is intended to serve as a tool to guide local decision-making on affordable housing, and the Plan has been framed around six key objectives:

- Increase Housing Supply
- Promote Housing Affordability and Stability
- Ensure Complete Community Growth
- Streamline Approvals
- Enhance Partnerships
- Continually Monitor, Assess and Educate

When the draft was presented, a recommendation was included to have the draft Action Plan be consulted upon with the public and other stakeholders prior to a finalized version being brought back to Council for endorsement.

## Analysis

**Since the release of the draft, several consultation opportunities have been held to inform the finalization of the Affordable Housing Action Plan**

Following the presentation of the draft Affordable Housing Action Plan to Council in June 2024, staff engaged in consultation sessions with the public and other stakeholders and received comments through the following:

Date	Stakeholder/Event	Summary and Key Comments Received
July 2024	Creation of Engage Aurora project page and physical distribution through the Access Aurora customer service counter	Over 485 visitors engaged with the project through the dedicated Engage Aurora page and over 40 physical copies of the Action Plan were handed out through the Access Aurora customer service counter. Overall feedback was supportive of the Action Plan. General questions were raised regarding the Town's growth and development context. Comments were also provided on showing data related to

		housing unit breakdowns/deficits and clarifying/enhancing language.
July 2024	Email outreach to local and regional housing organizations seeking comments	General comments were provided in support of the Action Plan. Comments were also provided regarding support for consideration of a variety of housing forms and tenures, including co-op housing.
July 10, 2024, and September 18, 2024	Meeting with York Region Housing Services staff	York Region Housing Services staff expressed general support for the Action Plan as a document that aligns with their Region-wide operations and mandates, as well as supporting policy objectives of both the Town and Regional Official Plan.
August 13, 2024	In-person meeting with members of the Aurora Cares residents' group	Productive discussion with key comments received on matters including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to also include income and ownership statistics for one-person households as opposed to just economic families</li> <li>• The need to broaden the housing continuum figure</li> <li>• Recognizing that private market ownership is not always obtainable or the main goal, and that more recognition needs to be given to rental and all other housing opportunities</li> <li>• Identifying difficulties faced by seniors and single persons</li> <li>• Identifying opportunities for congregate living and support for hospice care</li> <li>• Emphasizing the need to overcome public prejudices related to housing</li> </ul>
September 9, 2024	In-person Public Open House held at Town Hall	There were approximately 45 attendees, and comments were largely supportive of the Action Plan, with feedback also provided on matters including:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarifying language for certain action items, including streetscape improvements and modular housing</li> <li>• Noting that there are no extra impacts expected on the taxpayer</li> <li>• Providing a priority/timeline matrix to track the action items</li> </ul>
September 11, 2024	In-person presentation to the Town’s Accessibility Advisory Committee	<p>Comments received in support of adding three additional action items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide incentive opportunities for accessible housing</li> <li>• ensure universal design standards are implemented in new developments, and</li> <li>• provide support for a range of care-based housing options</li> </ul>

**The finalized Affordable Housing Action Plan has made key updates in response to the input received by the public and stakeholders**

Based on the comments that were received, the following updates have been incorporated into the finalized version of the Action Plan:

**1) Three New Accessibility-focused Action Items have been added**

From consultation with the Town’s Accessibility Advisory Committee, three new action items have been added to the Action Plan to specifically support the development of more affordable, accessible housing opportunities. These Action Items are:

- Action Item #7 – Provide Incentive Opportunities for Accessible Housing Initiatives
- Action Item #9 – Ensure Universal Design Standards are Implemented in Developments
- Action Item #20 – Support the Development of a Range of Care-Based Housing

**2) The Housing Continuum Figure has been expanded**

Stakeholders expressed that the housing continuum figure needed to be expanded to highlight the experiences of all individuals within the community. The Housing Continuum figure in the finalized Action Plan has been expanded to also include:

- Homelessness;
- Supportive Housing; and
- Long Term Care Housing.

### **3) New Statistics have been added for One-Person and One-Parent Households:**

The initial draft Action Plan utilized economic family income statistics exclusively. Stakeholders expressed that the economic family income metric did not best represent the economic realities of all residents in the Town as an economic family is a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related by blood, marriage, common-law, or adoption. Non-related households, residents who live alone or one-parent households were not appropriately represented in the draft Action Plan. The finalized Action Plan now contains income statistics of the median economic family, median household, and median one person and one parent households to best capture the broader economic situations of residents.

### **4) Clarification and Enhancement of Language**

Terminology has specifically been added to the Action Plan to account for a broader array of living arrangements and care-based housing. Further, language around certain action items and objectives have been clarified and enhanced based on the comments received. Examples include:

- Greater recognition for congregate living arrangements, care-based and hospice housing
- Language improvements to extend support for modular and prefabricated housing (as opposed to just solely evaluating the feasibility)
- Additional clarity around streetscape improvements and infrastructure assisting with housing affordability
- Recognizing that private market ownership is not necessarily the primary/final outcome or goal for residents, and that residents have choice through the housing continuum
- Addition of 2016 Census population for further growth context setting
- Language improvements added for the protection of affordable rental units
- Other general administrative/housekeeping updates, including the new addition of a “How to Read This Plan” section for ease of readability

### **5) Inclusion of New Housing Deficit and Unit Breakdown Data**

Data has now been added to help define housing unit deficits and unit demands within Town based on number of bedrooms. This data has been extrapolated from Census and CMHC level statistics to help provide further context setting for housing and unit demands and deficits within Town.

#### **6) Creation of Priority/Timeline Matrix Table as an accompanying Appendix**

As part of the finalization of the Action Plan, an accompanying Appendix has been developed, which is intended to assist with the priority tracking and monitoring of the action items within the Plan.

Overall, the finalized Affordable Housing Action Plan builds upon the public and stakeholder comments that were received to deliver a refined and robust final document to guide positive decision-making moving forward. This is the Town's first Affordable Housing Action Plan, and it is expected that this document will continue to evolve and respond to the changing needs of the community over time, with scheduled updates to occur approximately every 5 years moving forward. This best practice is engrained in the Action Plan itself, with an Action Item dedicated to the continual updating of the document.

### **Advisory Committee Review**

The Affordable Housing Action Plan was presented to the Town's Accessibility Advisory Committee for review on September 11, 2024. Comments received by the Accessibility Advisory Committee have informed the updates made to the finalized Affordable Housing Action Plan, including the addition of three new accessibility related action items, as previously described above.

### **Legal Considerations**

None.

### **Financial Implications**

As presented under FIN24-019, any exempted development fees and charges for affordable housing opportunities result in a revenue loss to the Town which will need to be replaced through alternative revenue sources. The Town is hopeful that the province will offer replacement funding to make up for the revenue loss.

## **Communications Considerations**

The development of the Affordable Housing Action Plan has been informed by extensive public consultation and outreach. Upon Council's endorsement, the finalized Affordable Housing Action Plan will be posted publicly on the Town's website and Engage Aurora page, and physical copies will be printed for distribution.

## **Climate Change Considerations**

The Affordable Housing Action Plan provides significant opportunities for the Town to continue to expand on its climate change and environmental objectives, by promoting more compact forms of affordable housing that are more sustainable for the long-term.

## **Link to Strategic Plan**

The Affordable Housing Action Plan supports the Strategic Plan goal of Strengthening the Fabric of our Community by ensuring growth includes housing opportunities for everyone.

## **Alternative to the Recommendation**

1. That Council provide direction.

## **Conclusions**

The Affordable Housing Action Plan has received positive acknowledgement within the community and housing sector, and the finalized version presented through this report incorporates the necessary updates as received through the extensive public consultation and outreach that has occurred.

## **Attachments**

Attachment 1 – Finalized Affordable Housing Action Plan for Endorsement

Attachment 2 – Affordable Housing Action Plan Appendix A Monitoring and Priority Table

## **Previous Reports**

PDS24-061, Draft Affordable Housing Action Plan, June 4, 2024.

## **Pre-submission Review**

Agenda Management Team review on November 14, 2024

## **Approvals**

Approved by Marco Ramunno, Director, Planning and Development Services

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer