



OAKVILLE

REPORT

Planning and Development Council

Meeting Date: December 9, 2024

FROM: Planning and Development Department

DATE: November 26, 2024

SUBJECT: Housing Strategy and Action Plan

LOCATION: Town-wide

WARD: Town-wide

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Housing Strategy and Action Plan be approved.
2. That the Rental Housing Demolition or Conversion Protection Guidelines be endorsed.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

Housing Strategy and Action Plan

- On July 10, 2023, Planning and Development Council received a staff report titled [Housing Strategy and Action Plan including the Housing Accelerator Fund Application](#). Council received a draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan (HSAP) and directed staff to undertake public engagement on the HSAP, report back to Council on what was heard, and refine the HSAP, as necessary, in coordination with other ongoing initiatives, prior to approval.
- Public engagement on the HSAP took place in the summer and fall 2023.
- On October 15, 2024, Planning and Development Council received a staff report titled [Housing Strategy and Action Plan including Housing Updates](#). The report included a summary of what was heard from the public engagement events and provided a refined HSAP for council approval.

Council referred the HSAP back to staff to address further comments of Council.

- This report addresses Council's comments received at the October 15, 2024 Planning and Development Council Meeting, and brings forward an updated HSAP, attached as **Appendix A**, for approval.

Rental Housing Demolition or Conversion Guidelines

- On July 10, 2023, Planning and Development Council passed the Rental Housing Protection By-law 2023-102. The by-law was approved under the authority of Section 99.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, which provides municipalities with the authority to prohibit and regulate the demolition and conversion of residential rental properties.
- At the October 15, 2024, Planning and Development Council Meeting, staff brought forward the *Rental Housing Demolition or Conversion Guidelines* for Council endorsement. The guidelines are a user guide to understanding the Rental Housing Protection By-law already passed by Council. The guidelines were referred back to staff to address Council comments made at the meeting.
- This report addresses Council's comments received at the October 15, 2024 Planning and Development Council meeting, and brings forward updated guidelines, attached as **Appendix B**, for endorsement.

BACKGROUND:

At the Planning and Development Council meeting held October 15, 2024, Council referred the HSAP back to staff to address additional comments. The purpose of this report is to respond to Council's comments and provide an overview of updates to corresponding documents for Council approval / endorsement, including:

- a) Housing Strategy and Action Plan for approval (**Appendix A**)
- b) Rental Housing Demolition or Conversion Guidelines for endorsement (**Appendix B**).

TECHNICAL & PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Below is a list of Council comments/requests and staff response:

Community Planning Permit System

Council requested that an action item be added to the HSAP to direct staff to undertake a Community Planning Permit System (CPPS), including but not limited to the ability to explore a CPPS town-wide in the future. This is in alignment with the Council motion from the March 18, 2024 Planning and Development Council meeting which provided that:

“staff initiate and undertake work programs in an efficient, and where possible, concurrent manner to investigate, and if deemed appropriate, implement the following *Planning Act* tools:

- b. Community Planning Permit System within Midtown Oakville and with opportunity to do so in other parts of the Town.”

Staff Response

A CPPS provides a new framework to assess, process and approve development applications within a defined area. The intent of a CPPS is to simplify and expedite the processes for approving development, and it enables the town to issue development permits (with or without conditions) in a one-application, one-approval authority process that combines the traditional re-zoning, site-plan and minor variance processes into one. The single application process is intended to provide a more streamlined process, expedite development approvals, and create clearer outcomes. A benefit of a CPPS is that, under faster approval timelines it can accelerate the delivery of housing. It can also assist to facilitate affordable housing, among other matters related to development more broadly.

This tool is already being explored as part of the Midtown Oakville. Draft enabling CPPS policies, including policies specific to Midtown Oakville, have been released for consultation as part of the Midtown Oakville work program.

Accordingly, staff have added a new action item in the HSAP to include the initiation of a CPPS, reflecting Council’s motion from their Planning and Development Council meeting on March 18, 2024. The new action item 3.6 is provided under Goal 3, “Streamline Approvals”, and states:

“Initiate and undertake work programs in an efficient, and where possible, concurrent manner to investigate, and if deemed appropriate, implement a Community Planning Permit System within Midtown Oakville and with opportunity to do so in other parts of the Town.”

The action item has also been added to the HSAP as a priority item to reflect that the work program is already underway.

Sheridan College Housing Taskforce

Council requested changes to action item 6.5 regarding the Sheridan College Housing Taskforce. The action item states that staff “assemble a Sheridan College Taskforce to advance student housing opportunities and/or strategy”. Council requested the action item be amended to better reflect Council’s motion regarding the Sheridan College Housing Taskforce provided at Planning and Development Council meeting on May 6, 2024 which read:

“Staff be directed to create a Sheridan College Housing Taskforce with the objective to enable, advance, and accommodate the development of residential uses, including student housing, on the Sheridan College campus; and

Staff be directed to create a work program, in alignment with ongoing HAF initiatives, to bring forward any necessary recommendations, including programs, Official Plan and/or Zoning By-law Amendments, to achieve the findings of the Sheridan College Housing Taskforce to expedite the delivery of student housing on the Sheridan Campus.”

Council wanted to ensure that the focus of the taskforce was to remain on accommodating housing on Sheridan College campus, and not the surrounding area. Further, Council requested that the action item be prioritized.

Staff Response

Staff have amended action item 6.5 to reflect Council’s motion. The action item has also been highlighted within the HSAP to reflect its priority status to be implemented prior to other action items. HSAP Action Item 6.5 has been amended to read:

“Create a Sheridan College Housing Taskforce with the objective to enable, advance, and accommodate the development of residential uses, including student housing, on the Sheridan College campus and bring forward any necessary recommendations to achieve the findings of the Sheridan College Housing Taskforce to expedite the delivery of student housing on the Sheridan Campus.”

Notwithstanding the changes being made to the HSAP to address Council’s direction to focus solely on housing opportunities on the college campus, staff continue to highlight for Council’s consideration recent changes made to the *Planning Act* and the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, which encourage the exploration of student housing opportunities on and off campus.

The Province's Bill 185, Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024, received Royal Assent on June 6, 2024. It made changes to the Planning Act that extended exemptions that had previously applied to some colleges to exempt publicly funded universities and colleges affiliated with these universities from the provisions of the Planning Act. These exemptions restrict the ability of municipalities to compel these institutions from complying with official plan policies and zoning regulations and undergoing processes such as site plan approval. Essentially, publicly-funded colleges such as Sheridan College do not require planning approvals from the town to move forward with development (e.g. Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, Site Plan approval). They do, however, still require other development approvals to address matters such as water and sanitary servicing and may engage in partial processes on a voluntary basis.

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 came into effect on October 20, 2024. It consolidates and replaces the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019. The new PPS, 2024 contains policy direction on accommodating student housing, including that:

- 6.2.5 Planning authorities shall collaborate with publicly-assisted post-secondary institutions, where they exist, to facilitate early and integrated planning for student housing that considers the full range of *housing options* near existing and planned post-secondary institutions to meet current and future needs.
- 6.2.6 Further to policy 6.2.5, planning authorities should collaborate with publicly-assisted post-secondary institutions on the development of a student housing strategy that includes consideration of off-campus housing targeted to students.

Rental Housing Demolition or Conversion Guidelines

Council requested that as part of the *Rental Housing Demolition or Conversion Guidelines*, that the Tenant Assistance Package be clarified as to what assistance it includes, and to ensure it aligns with the Rental Protect By-law, which was already passed by Council.

Staff Response

The description of the Tenant Assistance Package within the guidelines document has been updated to clarify that under Section 52(1) of the *Residential Tenancies Act*, for rental units being converted or demolished within developments having five units or more, the affected tenants are entitled to three months rent or an alternative unit acceptable to the tenant as compensation.

The town's Rental Protection By-law 2023-102 provides for additional tenant assistance beyond what is prescribed by the *Residential Tenancies Act* (i.e. three months' rent or an alternative unit acceptable to the tenant as compensation), through a Tenant Assistance Package (TAP).

The purpose of the TAP is to further mitigate the negative financial and/or disruptive impacts on existing rental tenants/leaseholders from any proposed conversion or demolition of existing rental units. It is additional to the landlord's obligations under the *Residential Tenancies Act* and can be included as a condition of approval for the conversion or demolition of existing rental units. The conditions would be included within any agreement required to issue a Section 99.1 Permit, including any related applications. The TAP will specify the arrangements agreed to by the landowner and the Town and may include the provision of the items listed below, or other matters not listed:

- financial compensation for moving and disruption, such as first and last month's rent at affordable market rates;
- financial compensation for temporary relocation during development;
- maintenance of existing rental rates for a period of 10 years (subject to any annual increases permitted by the *Residential Tenancies Act*); and/or
- the provision of new units within a plan of condominium at affordable rental rates.

Broader Discussion Items

Council discussed other matters at the October 15, 2024 Planning and Development Council meeting, but did not request or require updates to the HSAP as a result. Below is a discussion of those items.

Affordability of Three Bedroom Units

Council referred to a recent memo received by Halton Regional Council, which provided [additional information on the 2023 State of Housing Report](#). The memo highlighted the challenges of providing affordable family-sized units containing three bedrooms or greater. The town's HSAP also makes reference to this memo to highlight the challenges and limitations of finding larger family sized units (3+ bedrooms) which are affordable.

Given Council's expressed concern, staff will investigate what could be done to encourage greater affordability for family-sized housing with three bedrooms or more.

Gentle Density Strategy

As part of the town's future Gentle Density Strategy, Council discussed the desire for staff to consider:

- a) reviewing the provisions of new, and retention of existing, small format retail spaces as part of complete communities, and their integration with housing.
- b) exploring housing opportunities as a component of municipal lands/buildings, such as fire stations or other community buildings.

Staff will consider the inclusion of these items as part of the Gentle Density Strategy.

Livable Oakville Plan Mission Statement and Guiding Principles

Council sought assurance that the HSAP would continue to uphold the mission statement and guiding principles of the Livable Oakville Plan, specifically the guiding principle to preserve and create a liveable community to “direct the majority of growth to identified locations where higher density, transit and pedestrian-oriented development can be accommodated.”

Staff note that the majority of growth is directed to the town's nodes and corridors, as directed by the town's urban structure. Nodes and corridors are key areas of the town identified as the focus for mixed use development and intensification. Each of the town's nodes and corridors have a unique existing and planned character, scale and potential to accommodate growth, commensurate with the town's transit and transportation systems and other design objectives. Each of the nodes and corridors are intended to contribute to the creation of a complete community.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The HSAP identifies many opportunities for the town, within its jurisdiction, to strengthen its policies, regulations, programs and by-laws regarding housing. The HSAP sets a framework to address housing in Oakville.

Many foundational studies which will inform future updates to housing and land use policy in the town's Official Plan are already underway, including a Housing Needs Assessment and a Community Improvement Plan background study.

A business case, with a capital cost of \$500,000, to begin implementing action items under the town's Housing Action Plan was submitted as part of the town's 2025 budget process.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

Public engagement opportunities to help refine the HSAP were provided in the summer and fall 2023, and included an online survey, public open houses and attendance at the Oakville Seniors Housing Symposium. A full summary of the community engagement events and feedback received was provided to Council at the Planning and Development Council meeting on October 15, 2024.

(B) FINANCIAL

A business case, with a capital cost of \$500,000, to begin implementing action items under the town's Housing Action Plan was submitted as part of the town's 2025 budget process.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

To implement the action items identified in the HSAP, various town departments will be required to assist and/or lead various studies and related programs.

(D) COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This report addresses Council's strategic priorities of Growth Management, Community Belonging, Environmental Sustainability and Accountable Government.

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

Enabling housing opportunities with outcomes intended to create livable, complete communities, work to create low-carbon and climate-resilient communities by ensuring new housing is provided in a manner that is less car dependant, reduces urban sprawl, and creates walkable and transit-supportive development patters.

CONCLUSION:

The town is committed to playing its part in meeting the need for housing and addressing the demands of Ontario's growing population. The town is also committed to ensuring that growth is contextually appropriate and environmentally and financially sustainable. The town recognizes the need for new housing includes a broad range of housing required by the public, including market-based, rental, attainable, affordable, social, and assisted housing. The town also recognizes its role within the housing system, as an approval authority with the ability to enable housing development and housing supply but does not build housing units directly.

The Housing Strategy provides an extension to the Livable Oakville Plan's mission statement and guiding principles and sets a path forward with goals and objectives

to guide decision making specific to housing. The Action Plan puts in place initiatives the town can undertake to further achieve the goals and objectives of the strategy, and ultimately the Livable Oakville Plan. Together, the HSAP is the town's guiding document to improve the housing landscape across Oakville and achieve positive housing outcomes.

The HSAP provides a comprehensive approach and identifies many opportunities for the town to strengthen its policies, regulations, programs and by-laws for such matters as inclusionary zoning, rental protection, and more affordable housing, among others that will improve housing across the housing continuum.

APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A Housing Strategy and Action Plan

APPENDIX B Rental Housing Demolition or Conversion Guidelines

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