



Special Council Meeting Agenda

Monday, December 11, 2023, 4:30 p.m.

Council Chambers

Whitby Town Hall

This meeting will be available for viewing through the Town's **live stream feed** while the meeting is in progress. Please visit whitby.ca/CouncilCalendar for more information about the live stream and archived videos.

This meeting will be held in a hybrid in-person and virtual format. In accordance with Section 7 of Procedure By-law # 7462-18, Members of Council may choose to attend in-person or participate virtually.

Should you wish to provide comments regarding a matter being considered below, please submit written correspondence and/or a Delegation Request Form.

- **To submit written correspondence**, please email your correspondence to the Office of the Town Clerk at clerk@whitby.ca by noon on the day of the meeting. Correspondence must include your full name, address, and the item on the agenda that your correspondence is related to.
- **To speak during the Council meeting either in-person or virtually**, please submit a Delegation Request Form online to the Office of the Town Clerk by noon on the business day prior to the date of the meeting. Should you be unable to access a computer, please call 905.430.4315 to speak with a Staff Member in the Office of the Town Clerk.

A Revised Agenda may be published on a later date. Late items added or a change to an item will appear with an asterisk beside them.

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1. **Call To Order: The Mayor**
 2. **Call of the Roll: The Clerk**
 3. **Declarations of Conflict of Interest**
 4. **Items for Consideration**
 - 4.1 CAO 30-23, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer Report
Re: Housing Accelerator Fund Application Update

Recommendation:

That Report CAO 30-23 be received for information.

5. Confirmatory By-law

Recommendation:

That leave be granted to introduce a by-law and to dispense with the reading of the by-law by the Clerk to confirm the proceedings of the Council of the Town of Whitby at its special meeting held on December 11, 2023 and the same be considered read and passed and that the Mayor and the Clerk sign the same and the Seal of the Corporation be thereto affixed.

6. Adjournment

Recommendation:

That the meeting adjourn.

Town of Whitby

Staff Report

whitby.ca/CouncilCalendar



Report Title: Housing Accelerator Fund Application Update

Report to: Council

Date of meeting: December 11, 2023

Report Number: CAO 30-23

Department(s) Responsible:

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Submitted by:

Matt Gaskell, Chief Administrative Officer

**Acknowledged by M. Gaskell,
Chief Administrative Officer**

For additional information, contact:

Melissa Weatherbie, Manager,
Information & Content Services, ext.
2855

1. Recommendation:

1. That Report CAO 30-23 be received for information.

2. Highlights:

- On August 3, 2023, the Town of Whitby applied to the Federal Government's Housing Accelerator Fund, operated by Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).
- While Whitby's application is competitive, the Federal Government is seeking further commitment to address the housing crisis in Canada and are requesting enhancements be made to the original application.
- The Town of Whitby is enhancing its proposed initiatives inline with the [10 Housing Accelerator Fund Best Practices](#) to strengthen the application in several areas.
- CMHC advised Whitby on December 5, 2023, that it has been shortlisted, and commitment by the Town and its Council to the proposed initiatives is a key element to success of the application at this time.

3. Background:

There is a known housing shortage in Canada. Durham Region is one of the fastest growing areas in the country and the Province has asked, and Whitby has pledged to increase our housing supply by 18,000 units by 2031. To support housing in our community, the Town is seeking funding under the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF). This will help support the creation of housing units in addition to the 18,000 already pledged.

The Housing Accelerator Fund is a 4-billion-dollar incentive funding program operated by the Federal Government targeting municipalities across the nation to create 100,000 new residential units. The goal is to encourage local initiatives that remove barriers to housing supply, accelerate growth of supply and support the development of complete communities.

In June 2023, through Report CAO 19-23, staff shared a draft proposed Action Plan for the Town of Whitby's application with Council. At this time, Council delegated authority to the Chief Administrative Officer to approve any changes and make the final application on behalf of the Town of Whitby. The Town's application was submitted on August 3, 2023, outlining eight initiatives to meet the objectives of the Housing Accelerator Fund.

The calculation of how much funding a municipality can request is based on overall growth commitments and projected units with permits issued over 3 years that align with the HAF's program priority areas. The Town of Whitby's initial submission focused on 8 initiatives yielding 1,614 incented units and resulted in a \$56M funding request. CMHC has advised to expect that if funding is less than initially requested than the unit creation requirements will also decrease. The 8 initiatives were as follows:

1. Increase Height & Density
2. Inclusionary Zoning
3. Urban Area Expansion
4. Surplus Land Inventory & Disposition Strategy
5. E-permitting Expansion
6. Legal Additional Dwelling Unit Program
7. Building Innovative Greatness
8. Low-Carbon & Climate-Resilient Whitby

4. Discussion:

The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) contacted staff on November 29, 2023, requesting further commitments to enhance our already competitive application. These enhancements do not modify our eligible grant amount, but rather demonstrate our commitment to the HAF objectives and willingness to collaborate with the Federal Government to address the housing crisis. The Town has responded to that request by enhancing three of our initiatives and adding a new ninth initiative to drive housing growth in our community. The enhanced initiatives include Increase Height & Density, Legal Additional Dwelling Unit Program and Building Innovative Greatness. The new initiative adds the reintroduction of downtown Whitby's Community Improvement Program (CIP) for the development charge exemption for high density residential and mixed-use residential developments. An outline of all nine of the

initiatives, inclusive of the additional commitments, has been provided in Appendix A. CMHC advised Whitby on December 5, 2023, that it is has been shortlisted, and commitment by the Town and its Council to the proposed initiatives is a key element to success of the application at this time.

With relation to the Legal Additional Dwelling Unit Program initiative, the Federal Government is seeking municipalities to exceed the permission of Bill 23 which would permit three (3) units as-a-right, where zoning regulations were met. The Federal Government is requesting that municipalities strengthen their housing commitment by increasing that number to four (4) units. This change would also substantially strengthen our Housing Accelerator Fund application. The enhancement to the application to respond to this request goes beyond current legislated requirements of Bill 23.

This increase from three (3) to four (4) as-a-right units has also been requested and approved by the majority of municipalities who have received funding under the HAF. The following is a list of municipalities who have already endorsed the four residential units in response to the housing crisis and have also achieved successful partnership for funding by the Federal Government under the Housing Accelerator Fund. The amount of funding received is indicated, which may be less than the amount they were eligible for under the HAF application process.

Brampton, Ontario (\$114M Funding)
Halifax, Nova Scotia (\$79.3M Funding)
Hamilton, Ontario (\$93.5M Funding)
Kelowna, BC (\$31.5M Funding)
Kitchener, Ontario (\$42.4M Funding)
London, Ontario (\$74M Funding)
Moncton, New Brunswick (\$15.5M Funding)
Richmond Hill, Ontario (\$31M Funding)
Vaughan, Ontario (\$59M Funding)

In addition, the following municipalities have all approved four (4) or more units and are awaiting Housing Accelerator funding decisions; Guelph (ON), Burlington (ON), Ajax (ON), Edmonton (AB), Charlottetown (PEI), Winnipeg (MB), Regina (SK).

HAF is seeking approval of this Policy change and it would be up to staff to determine how this would be implemented and where it would be permissible across the community. In order to implement the suggested increase from three (3) units to four (4) units as-of-right, an Official Plan Amendment to enable, and Zoning By-law Amendments to regulate such permissions would be required. The process would include public consultation, including a Statutory Public Meeting in accordance with the Planning Act. Once in place, this would allow creation of up to four (4) units on a lot, subject to compliance with Zoning regulations (e.g. parking; setbacks; height; lot coverage) and the Ontario Building Code.

5. Financial Considerations:

The HAF funding would allow for advancement of projects that support increased housing supply, diversity, and affordability that will not be able to proceed at this time without the funding. Staff submitted a funding request of \$56M. CMHC has commented to staff that most municipalities who have been successful have received a portion of the funding request they were eligible for. This is a competitive funding opportunity and urgency is of utmost importance in remaining competitive in the application process as the Federal Government seeks to allocate funding promptly to address the housing crisis. If successful in all or a portion of this funding, it would be used to support the initiatives included in the HAF proposal, affordable housing, housing related infrastructure and community related infrastructure. Funding would be advanced to the successful applicants in four annual phases, with 25% of funding made available upon finalization of the contribution agreement then during each phase aligning to reporting and target requirements.

6. Communication and Public Engagement:

Not applicable at this time, however programs that support affordability and access to housing options were identified as a top priority in the feedback received when developing the Community Strategic Plan.

Certain initiatives in the action plan will require public consultation at a later date (e.g., Surplus Land Inventory and Disposition; OPAs/ZBLAs; Inclusionary Zoning; etc.), which would be undertaken in accordance with relevant legislation as each initiative is advanced.

7. Input from Departments/Sources:

Input from Finance, Strategic Initiatives, and Planning and Development Departments was provided in the preparation of this report.

8. Strategic Priorities:

The objectives of the Housing Accelerator Fund align with the priorities identified by the community in the Community Strategic Plan. Under Pillar 1: Whitby's Neighbourhoods, this supports Action 1.3.4: In collaboration with partners, support the implementation of Durham Region's Housing Plan regarding affordability and diversity of housing. This report also supports Pillar 4: Whitby's Government through Action 4.1.1 Advocate for funding from upper levels of government and other partners to support and advance current and anticipated community priorities.

The Housing Accelerator Fund also aligns with the Town's priorities of accessibility and sustainability as the program focuses on accessible housing that supports the development of complete, low-carbon, and climate-resilient communities.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A – Housing Accelerator Fund Initiatives

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Initiative 1 - Increase Height & Density

- Official Plan Review (to begin in January 2024) and Comprehensive Zoning by-law review (currently underway) the Town will:
 - Increase height allowance of high-rise buildings near the identified Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA).
 - Allow 4-storey buildings in other strategic areas beyond the identified Major Transit Station, targeting transit corridors and the identified Rapid Transit areas.
- Initiate and approve OPA/ZBLA to permit Increased Height & Density.
- Expanding the PMTSA boundary area to implement Envision Durham.
- Town wide parking reduction study to inform comprehensive zoning review.

Initiative 2 – Inclusionary Zoning

- Compile necessary Housing Needs Assessment for PMTSA Inclusionary Zoning.
- Initiate and approve ZBLA for PMTSA Inclusionary Zoning.
- Prepare Implementation Strategy.
- External communications promoting diverse housing within Whitby.

Initiative 3 – Urban Area Expansion

- Undertake background work.
- Conduct public consultation for expansion areas.
- Initiate and approve OPA/ZBLA - 20,000 units available sooner.
- Partnering with Region, Elexicon, landowners and developers for background work and/or infrastructure projects.
- 5 Million Dollars allocated to support infrastructure in the expansion area.

Initiative 4 - Surplus Land Inventory and Disposition Strategy

- Complete surplus land inventory and disposition strategy for publicly owned lands within Whitby. Strategy to include ongoing review.
- Initiate discussions and potential partnerships with for-profit and non-profit developers for affordable housing on surplus lands.
- Approval process and zoning expedited.
- Pilot with 3-4 properties in Whitby during the HAF funding period.

- Ensure strategy promotes long term system and supply impacts.

Initiative 5 – E-permitting Expansion

- Expand services available online for Planning, Engineering and Building Permit applications.
- Prioritize applications resulting in unit permitting.
- Communications – Promotion new tools and reasons to use them.
- BlueBeam, Municipal Permit 511 (Transnomis One Window), Trax Codes, Builterra and the AMANDA Mobile App will be reviewed for expansion and the creation of further streamlined efficiencies.

Initiative 6 – Legal Additional Dwelling Unit Program

- Review Official Plan policies and Zoning provisions to allow 4 residential units as-a-right.
- Initiate and approve OPA/ZBLA to allow 4 units as-a-right.
- Streamline ADU Application process, permits and payments.
- Promotion through communications to advertise program & benefits to legalizing and how to add an ADU to a property in Whitby.
- Legalization of existing illegal units.
- Create Directory of Legal Registered Accessory Apartments in Whitby.
- Taskforce/Expert teams for ADU permit Types.
- 4 Million Dollar fund to support incentivizing unit creation.

Initiative 7 – Build Innovative Greatness (BIG)

- Consist of smaller projects related to housing permit approvals that will create long term systemic change and have a BIG impact.
- Undertake 4-6 projects a year, with a focus on:
 - Business process optimization in Building and Planning with a focus on lean process review related to development applications.
 - Explore concierge type services for those who meet certain criteria/or have certain conditions exclude them from the program. For any housing type (profit/not for profit/affordable/green housing). Case coordinator type functionality offering advice and guidance.
 - Explore use of Specialists/Expert teams to address back log of incomplete Building Permit Applications
 - Formalize a process that allows early review/assistance while waiting on finalized items.
 - Build out guides and resources and make available online. Aim to eliminate/minimize common permit/drawing/planning errors.

- Explore Further incentives – Different types, Including Green Building and Affordable housing.
- The first-year projects will focus on:
 - The review and optimization of delegated authority for development related approvals.
 - The exploration of pre-approved designs for Additional Dwelling Units, prefabricated homes, and modular homes.
 - Promotion of alternate construction materials such as mass timber to have positive green development standard impact and decrease construction costs which would improve affordability.
 - Pursuing purpose-built rental supports including policy development and consideration of financial incentives, including, but not limited to grant programs.
- Train staff in Lean methodologies, innovation, and customer service.

Initiative 8 - Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Whitby

- Climate Emergency Response Plan Project Items.
- Whitby Green Standard Project Items.
- Zero Carbon Whitby Project items.
- Retrofit Fire Halls.
- 1 Million Dollar WGS incentive program through partnership with the Region.

Initiative 9 – Community Improvement Plan

- Reactivate financial incentive programs to support additional housing development under the Downtown Whitby Community Improvement Plan.
- Support new residential and mixed use residential developments as part of the Development Charge Partial Exemption for High Density Residential and Mixed Use Residential.
- Expand applicable area for funding to encompass entire CIP area.
- Extend CIP program to run until the end of the HAF funding, currently anticipated to complete, in 2027.
- Allocate 5 Million dollars to support the CIP program in creating higher density housing opportunities within walkable neighbourhoods and close to rapid transit.