

# Mayor's Task Force on Affordable Housing

## Interim Recommendations in Full

Addendum to Presentation to Council - September 17, 2019

### Recommendation #1 – Determining Affordable Home Ownership

That Council direct staff to adopt the definition of affordable home ownership as defined in the 2014 Ontario Provincial Policy Statement, using the definition to calculate the affordable housing threshold for North Grenville (NG) on an annual basis. The definition states that affordable houses are the least expensive of:

- Housing with a purchase price which results in annual accommodation costs<sup>1</sup> not exceeding 30% of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households (households with incomes in the lowest 60% for the regional market area<sup>2</sup>);  
or
- Housing for which the purchase price is at least 10% below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the regional market area.

In 2019, the figure for the first calculation works out to \$405,531, while the second is \$346,946, with the latter being the “least expensive” and therefore the threshold for affordable home ownership in North Grenville.

**Timeline:** Immediate

**Rationale:**

- Utilizes best practice affordable housing calculations used in Ontario
- Allows for annual calculations for NG using available data from the Canadian Mortgage & Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing

### Recommendation #2 – Determining Affordable Rental Housing

That Council direct staff to adopt the calculation of affordable rental housing (by unit type) as proposed by the Mayor's Task Force in order to determine the affordable rentals threshold for NG on an annual basis. Calculation details:

1. utilize the most recent census figure on average shelter cost for rent which is produced every 4 years and includes all rentals in NG (e.g. in the 2016 census this was \$1,155 based on data gathered in 2015)
2. gross this figure up (step 1) using the consumer price index unadjusted “all items” basket for Ontario (e.g. for 2018 the CPI factor since 2015 is 1.0597, resulting in an average shelter cost of \$1,224)
3. establish a ratio of how much rents by bedroom types differ off the average rents in Eastern Ontario using CMHC's annual market survey (e.g. in 2018 CMHC determined the average market rent in eastern Ontario was \$1,114; the average market rent for a bachelor was .757 of the average, a one bedroom .929, two bedroom 1.061, three bedroom 1.287 and four bedroom 2.344);

<sup>1</sup> For 2018, CMHC includes in annual accommodation cost property taxes (1.25% of house value), CMHC loan insurance (4% of loan), and mortgage (using a 25 year amortization, 5% down payment and 5.27 mortgage rate).

<sup>2</sup> The regional market area in this instance is North Grenville.

4. multiply this ratio (step 3) by the 2018 avg. shelter costs for NG (step 2) to produce an average market rent for NG for various bedroom types (e.g. bachelor \$926, one bedroom \$1,134, two bedroom \$1,299, three bedroom \$1,576, four bedroom \$2,869); and
5. apply an 80% affordability threshold (which is what UCLG uses to establish affordable rents) to the result of step 4 to establish NG affordable rents (e.g. for 2018 bachelor \$741, one bedroom \$907, two bedroom \$1,039, three bedroom \$1,260, four bedroom \$2,295).

**Timeline:** Immediate

**Rationale:**

- Addresses challenges in defining affordable rentals in NG (lack of published data for different size rental units and sample sizes that prevent a reliable average rent)
- Utilizes a modified calculation utilizing available data and supported by UCLG and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing staff
- Allows for annual calculations for NG using available census, CMHC and Ontario Government data

### **Recommendation #3 – Secondary Dwelling Units**

That Council request staff to prepare purpose specific concurrent Official Plan and Zoning By-Law amendments regarding secondary dwelling units to implement the requirements of the *Planning Act* as revised by the *More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019 (Bill 108)*. Specific actions may include:

- amending subsections c), d) and e) of Section 11.3.3.2 Second Units of the NG Official Plan to permit a second unit within a single detached dwelling, a dwelling unit of a semi-detached dwelling and a dwelling unit of a townhouse and in all or part of one accessory building subsidiary to a single detached dwelling, a dwelling unit of a semi-detached dwelling and a dwelling unit of a townhouse;
- deleting Zoning By-law Section 5.88 c) in its entirety and replacing it with a new section 5.88 c) to define a Secondary Dwelling Unit as a separate dwelling unit subsidiary to a single detached dwelling, a dwelling unit of a semi-detached dwelling or a dwelling unit of a townhouse and that the secondary dwelling unit be allowed within the permitted dwelling unit and or all or part of an accessory building; and
- deleting Zoning By-law Section 6.9 in its entirety and replacing it with a new Section 6.9 that recognizes where a secondary dwelling unit is a permitted use: the secondary dwelling unit shall not be serviced separate from the permitted dwelling unit; a maximum of two secondary dwelling units shall be allowed per permitted dwelling unit; any secondary dwelling unit gross floor area shall not exceed 40 % of the permitted dwelling unit except when a basement may be utilized; no additional driveway being allowed; and a maximum of one additional parking space shall be allowed for each secondary dwelling unit and that the parking space may be a tandem parking space.

**Timeline:** Immediate

**Rationale:**

- Single most effective means to increase the number of affordable rental units
- Increases extended family accommodations
- Assists homeowners with additional income
- Maximizes density and efficient use of infrastructure

#### **Recommendation #4 – Secondary Dwelling Information Guide**

That Council request staff to develop and advertise (e.g. Via web page and brochure) an information guide for secondary dwelling units that includes the provision of information such as:

- what a secondary dwelling unit actually is and what the benefits of such units generally are and also what benefits there are typically for the homeowner;
- where secondary dwelling units are permitted and the typical municipal zoning provisions that may apply (e.g. permitted zones, dwellings, unit size, yards, parking, etc.);
- what municipal permits are needed and what fees are applicable – e.g. building permit, plumbing permit, occupancy permit;
- how and what do you need to apply for permits;
- summarize some of the applicable *Ontario Building Code* and *Fire Code* Requirements – minimum room size, minimum ceiling height, minimum door width, minimum window/natural light, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, fire separations between and within units, HVAC, plumbing, egress and electrical safety and inspections; and
- contact information - planning, building, and engineering (address, phone and email).

**Timeline:** Short Term

**Rationale:**

- Promotes secondary dwelling units
- Enhances the affordable rental housing supply, increases extended family accommodation and assists homeowners with additional income
- Assists residents to understand land use planning, building and other associated processes and requirements

#### **Recommendation #5 – Minimum Dwelling Unit Floor Area Provisions**

That Council request staff to amend the NG Zoning By-law to delete the dwelling unit minimum floor area zoning provisions (e.g. minimum dwelling unit area and minimum floor area) from the zoning by-law provisions of the R1, R2, R3, R4 and the specialized RR residential zones thereby potentially providing more affordable housing through the reduction of potential building costs and allowing more flexible, energy efficient and innovative designs while maintaining quality and safety through compliance with the *Ontario Building Code* and *Fire Code* and associated requirements, including those affecting dwelling unit minimum floor areas.

**Timeline:** Medium Term

**Rationale:**

- Enhances housing choice flexibility including affordable housing
- Decreases the need for rezoning and approval timelines
- Reduces dwelling unit costs
- Promotes community inclusivity
- Reduces staff workload
- More Inclusive Zones/Mixed Housing

### **Recommendation #6 – Inclusive Zones/Mixed Housing**

That Council request staff to review and recommend options to increase the variety of dwelling types permitted in each residential zone (e.g. add semi-detached and duplex dwellings as permitted uses in the R1 zone which currently only permits single detached dwellings and/or expand the area zoned R2 which currently permits single detached, semi-detached, duplex, double duplex and converted dwellings) or expanding and/or pre-zoning (i.e. possibly using holding zone provisions) the areas zoned for medium or higher density residential uses (e.g. R3, R4 and R5) as a means to reduce the number of site specific zoning by-law amendments associated with the current zoning by-law urban service area residential zones (e.g. R1, R2, R3, R4, and R5 zones) thereby potentially enhancing housing choice flexibility, creating more affordable and rental housing, decreasing the residential development approvals timeline, reducing dwelling unit costs, and reducing staff work load, especially as they may pertain to affordable housing.

**Timeline:** Medium Term

**Rationale:**

- Enhances housing choice and promotes community vibrancy
- Reduces dwelling unit costs
- Decreases the need for rezoning and approval timelines
- Reduces staff workload

### **Recommendation #7 – Building Charges and Fees**

That Council request staff to prepare the appropriate by-laws and or resolutions to assist providing more affordable housing through the reduction of potential development and building related costs by waiving and or reducing applicable user fees and charges for affordable housing and secondary dwelling units including:

- Waiving all applicable Development Charges By-law No. 72-14, as amended fees for all affordable housing and secondary dwelling units;
- Waiving all *Planning Act* related land use planning fees, not limited to but including official plan amendments, zoning by-law amendments, site plan control approval, Committee of Adjustment approvals, and subdivision of land or ownership (e.g. severance, subdivision and condominium) approvals; or alternatively waiving all of the afore referenced except for associated exceptional municipal technical consulting, legal and administration fees;
- Waiving all *Ontario Building Code* related fees; or alternatively all of the afore referenced except any exceptional associated technical consulting fees;
- Waiving all water, waste water, storm water related fees, road access/culvert fees and other Public Works development related fees;
- Waiving cash in lieu of parkland fees; and
- Waiving property taxes possibly in an incremental method and for an agreed to period of time (e.g. 10-20 years)

**Timeline:** Immediate

**Rationale:**

- Creates financial incentives to increase the development of affordable housing

### **Recommendation #8 – Surplus Lands**

That Council direct staff to list, evaluate and promote all potential lands that could be “surplused” and repurposed for affordable housing. Specific actions:

- Compile a list of all municipal land holdings and advise Council of those lands that may be potentially surplus to municipal needs and suitable for affordable housing and to advertise and offer those lands for affordable housing purposes prior to any other uses
- advise Council of lands appropriate for affordable housing that may be available through municipal tax sales (i.e. at the bid and vesting stages) to determine whether it may be appropriate for the municipality to obtain such lands to offer for affordable housing purposes;
- compile a list of and review all public (e.g. Federal, Provincial, County and school board), institutional and private buildings and lands in the municipality that may be suitable and have a strong potential or likelihood for re-purposing/renovation for affordable housing purposes as a result of being made surplus and/or available for purchase, to develop concepts for the subject lands for affordable housing purposes, and give notice to Council, in a timely manner, of any affordable housing opportunities that may arise.

**Timeline:** Short Term

**Rationale:**

- Proactively identify potential affordable housing sites
- Increases ability to respond in a timely manner to affordable housing opportunities

### **Recommendation #9 – Habitat For Humanity**

That Council direct staff to review the land holdings across the municipality (i.e. urban, hamlet and rural areas) to identify and report to Council on those sites that may be potentially suitable to be donated to Habitat for Humanity for affordable housing purposes.

**Timeline:** Short Term

**Rationale:**

- Support and partner with a proven affordable housing supplier to increase available affordable housing in the rural and/or urban areas

### **Recommendation #10 – Proactive Planning**

That Council request that staff promote and reflect a proactive and progressive Municipal land use planning approach to meet the residential and housing policies of the NGville Official Plan by undertaking pre-development conceptual neighbourhood plans for “greenfield” and or larger predominantly undeveloped tracks of residentially designated lands within the Kemptville urban service area, including identifying the potential location and mix of residential housing types and density, thereby assisting in enhancing the likelihood of achieving the Official Plan’s targeted mix of residential housing (e.g. housing mix of low density 69%, medium density 21% and high density 11% and 30% of new residential units be in forms other than single detached and semi-detached dwelling) and densities (e.g. up to 45 units per ha) and enhancing the potential for more affordable housing (e.g. average 25% of annual new residential construction be affordable) and rental housing .

**Timeline:** Medium Term

**Rationale:**

- Reflects commitments to affordable housing targets and objectives found in the Municipality's Official Plan
- Promotes opportunity for dialog with landowners and the public
- Minimizes the need for reactive planning, less effective

**Recommendation #11 – Residential Development Information Guide**

That Council request staff prepare and promote a residential “development information guide”, that would accompany land use planning development related applications, be discussed with proponents at the preliminary development review stage, and be placed on the municipal website in the Planning and Development section, identifying Council's expectations for housing and affordable housing related development applications and requiring as part of the development application process the proponent to identify how the subject application furthers assists in achieving the Official Plan's applicable urban service area and other goals for housing and affordable housing, including but not limited to:

- residential housing mix of low density 69%, medium density 21% and high density 11%
- thirty (30) % of new residential dwelling units be other than single detached and semi-detached dwellings
- residential densities of generally 45 units per hectare
- average twenty-five (25) % of new residential dwelling units to be affordable
- encouraging secondary dwelling units
- encouraging new affordable rental residential dwellings and meet the rental dwelling unit target still to be set by Council (i.e. see Section 11.3.1 k) of the Official Plan)

**Timeline:** Short Term

**Rationale:**

- Proactively identifies Council's expectations for housing, including affordable housing
- Enhances the likelihood of NG meeting its affordable housing targets

**Recommendation #12 – Monitoring and Reporting**

That staff be requested to develop an annual housing and affordable housing monitoring and reporting system to Council, with an annual report to be placed before the Committee of the Whole and on the municipal website in the Planning and Development section, identifying such factors of the previous years new residential development (i.e. building permits and land use planning applications) as:

- annual number, type and location of residential building permits issued;
- annual residential housing mix (as compared to low density 69%, medium density 21% and high density 11%);
- annual residential dwelling by type (as compared to 30% of new residential dwelling types be in forms other than single detached and semi-detached);
- annual residential density (as compared to 45 units per hectare);
- annual number and average of affordable residential dwelling units (as compared to 25% of new residential dwellings being affordable);

- annual number secondary dwelling units (built within an eligible dwelling unit and/or in an accessory building);
- annual number and average affordable rental dwelling units and by type of dwelling
- Municipal, County, Provincial and Federal housing and affordable incentives utilized (how, what, where and why);
- location of affordable housing and rental housing;
- other applicable information potentially including some as set out in the Official Plan's Section 11.3.5; and
- identifiable trends and emerging issues and possible new options and alternative strategies to assist with enhancing affordable housing opportunities.

**Timeline:** Short

**Rationale:**

- Allows for a timely evaluation of municipal housing and affordable housing policies and programs
- Identifies trends and emerging issues and opportunities
- Provides context for appropriate changes

### **Recommendation #13 – Affordable Housing Targets**

That Council request that staff develop, for Council's consideration, targets for affordable housing ownership and rental dwelling units in accordance with Section 11.3.1 k) of the Official Plan.

**Timeline:** Medium Term

**Rationale:**

- Ensures compliance with Section 11.3.1 k) of the Official Plan
- Assists in monitoring and analysing affordable housing trends and supply

### **Recommendation #14 – Water and Sewage Treatment Allocation**

That Council direct that any growth management and development allocation system by-law implemented by Council (under the *Municipal Act* or any other applicable legislation) for water distribution and sewage treatment systems in the urban serviced area give priority to affordable housing, especially multiple dwelling unit development and secondary dwelling units.

**Timeline:** As applicable

**Rationale:**

- Ensures affordable housing is a priority even when there may be limited servicing capacity
- Multiple dwelling units and secondary dwelling units generally require less water and sewer service demand per unit than lower residential density units

### **Recommendation #15 – Collaboration with United Counties**

That the Municipality of North Grenville establish the practice of meeting annually with the Community and Social Services Division of the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville to address and plan for affordable housing priorities within the municipality.

**Timeline:** Short Term

**Rationale:**

- Recognizes and leverages the Counties' key role in administering social housing and homelessness programs
- Highlights the municipality's role in promoting and advocating for the affordable housing needs of its residents at the county and provincial levels
- Allows for proactive and collaborative planning in regards to the affordable housing needs of NG residents

### **Recommendation #16 – Access to Rental Data**

That Council request that the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) routinely release to municipalities rental related data, including annual surveys of market rents and other relevant rental information at a municipal level, in a format that addresses any privacy matters so that municipalities can calculate market rents to develop affordable housing policies.

**Timeline:** Immediate

**Rationale:**

- Limited residential market rent data currently available
- Difficult to calculate residential market rents and comply with senior government affordable housing policy requirements

### **Recommendation #17 – Advisory Committee**

That, following the conclusion of the Mayor's Task Force on Affordable Housing, Council establish an affordable housing advisory committee predominantly comprised of qualified volunteer residents of the NG to:

- assist Council with and advise Council on the implementation of the recommendations of the Mayor's Affordable Housing Task Force and other municipal affordable housing policies, programs and initiatives
- assist Council by monitoring and advising on North Grenville affordable housing trends and senior government legislation, programs and funding associated with affordable housing
- champion affordable housing related matters in North Grenville

**Timeline:** Short Term

**Rationale:**

- Provides a transparent mechanism for monitoring the implementation of recommendations and defining further priorities over time
- Establishes affordable housing as an ongoing focus within NG
- Supports Council in remaining current and furthering affordable housing opportunities, as they arise