

Burlington Housing Strategy

DRAFT Engagement Plan

Background

The City of Burlington's Strategic Plan "2018 -2022 Burlington's Plan: From Vision to Focus" highlights housing as a top priority. It identifies the need for a Burlington Housing Strategy to increase options for housing across the city. In January 2021, City council endorsed the Burlington Housing Strategy Terms of Reference, directing staff to commence work on the Housing Strategy.

The Housing Strategy will provide an opportunity to look for creative and innovative solutions to address local housing issues by exploring planning policy and financial tools, partnerships, collaboration and advocacy opportunities, strategies and initiatives that will build on and support the Region's Housing Strategy to develop innovative local solutions to housing issues in Burlington.

To include as many voices as possible in this important conversation about housing, the Housing Strategy will incorporate public engagement as a key element of the project and will be hosting several public engagement activities designed to give current and future community members and stakeholders an opportunity to provide meaningful input. The input that is gathered will inform both the interim report in December 2021 and the final report recommendations to City Council in mid-2022.

Engaging people on issues that affect their lives and their city is a key component of democratic society. Public involvement encourages participation, actions and personal responsibility. Burlington's commitment to public engagement is reflected in its [Community Engagement Charter](#), adopted by City Council. The Charter establishes the commitments, responsibilities and concepts of the relationship between the City of Burlington and the citizens of Burlington related to public engagement. The goal of community engagement is to lead to more informed and, therefore, better decision-making.

The following plan provides a roadmap of the engagement activities that will take place over the next few months, highlighting at which points in the process engagement will take place, who will be engaged and the level of engagement. The plan also clearly defines which aspects of the process the City and public can influence throughout the discussion.

Project Overview

- On Feb. 7, 2019, Burlington City Council voted to approve [2018 -2022 Burlington's Plan, From Vision to Focus](#).
- On January 14, 2021, Burlington City Council voted to endorse the [Burlington Housing Strategy Terms of Reference](#).

- On March 8, 2021, City Staff hosted a [Virtual Launch](#) to introduce the Housing Strategy initiative to residents and key stakeholders in the community. The purpose of the event was to seek input on the development of the Housing Strategy and to seek input on how the community would like to collaborate on the Housing Strategy throughout the process.

Decision Statement

At the beginning of an engagement process, it is helpful to know, “what is the decision to be made?” The decision statement clearly identifies:

- What decision needs to be made;
- Who is the decision maker; and
- When the decision is required.

The following decision statement has been refined through the preliminary engagement undertaken at the Virtual Launch and online survey.

Housing Strategy Decision Statement:

In 2022, Burlington City Council will consider endorsing a City of Burlington Housing Strategy to increase options for housing across the city.

Summary of Stakeholders

- Current and future residents
- Resident groups
- Indigenous communities
- Community organizations; special interest, advocacy, and activism groups
- Development industry
- Government and public service providers (internal and external)
- City Advisory Committees and arms-length city agencies
- Private and non-profit community service providers
- Elected Officials

Objectives of Engagement

The following objectives describe what the public engagement will strive to achieve through the community discussion about the Burlington Housing Strategy:

- Provide relevant information about the project, decision-making process, and how the public can provide input and feedback;
- Work with Project Consultants to provide a coordinated approach to engagement, communication and preparation of the Housing Strategy;

- Provide multiple channels for people to provide meaningful input virtually at appropriate decision points;
- Work with the Housing Strategy Working Group provide direction and advice on matters related to the Housing Strategy to advise on local issues, be champions for the project, provide key insights given their diverse backgrounds, and contribute to the refinement and implementation of the engagement plan;
- Create an ongoing record of what is said during engagement opportunities and make it available to the public throughout the process, so they can track the progress of the project, including reports back to the community that highlight how feedback was or was not incorporated into the final recommendations to Council;
- Gather meaningful input from members of the community whose voices are historically underrepresented in conversations about city issues;
- Establish a project page on getinvolvedburlington.ca as the main online platform for up-to-date information about the project and upcoming engagement opportunities; and
- Use clear, plain language in the delivery of the Engagement Plan to inform the public about what can and cannot be influenced through the Housing Strategy.

COVID-19

The City of Burlington continues to take appropriate action to prioritize the health and well-being of our community and staff. Our goal is to keep the public and staff safe and help minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Following Provincial and Public Health directives, the City is currently offering engagement opportunities virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will do so until the pandemic is over.

Project Milestones and Engagement Level

At its meeting on Jan. 19, 2021, City Council approved the terms of reference for the Burlington Housing Strategy. The key milestones for the project are below. For each milestone, the Engagement Plan identifies where public input will take place, who will be involved in the engagement and what level of engagement will occur. The different levels of engagement are based on the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)'s Public Participation Spectrum, which is also a component of Burlington's [Community Engagement Charter](#).

The shaded areas in the table below indicate project milestones where significant public engagement opportunities will take place.

Timing (WHEN)	Milestone	Message (WHAT)	Stakeholders (WHO)	Level of Engagement
Jan. 19, 2021	1. Housing Strategy Terms of Reference	Outline the scope of work related to the preparation of a Housing Strategy for the City of Burlington.	Burlington City Council, Individuals and groups	Inform with stakeholders

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		The purpose of the strategy will be to develop creative and innovative solutions to local housing issues.	interested and affected by the Housing Strategy.	Involve/Collaborate with City Council
March 8, 2021	2. Housing Strategy Virtual Launch	Introduce the Housing Strategy initiative to residents and key stakeholders in the community and to seek public input on the development of the Housing Strategy along with how the community would like to collaborate on the Housing Strategy.	Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy.	Consult
March	3. Engagement Plan Develop the DRAFT Engagement Plan through pre-engagement with stakeholders through the online survey results and through feedback received at the Virtual Launch on March 8.	Develop a DRAFT Engagement Plan with input from stakeholders.	Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy.	Collaborate with Working Group and Steering Committee Consult with stakeholders
April 6, 2021	4a. CPRM meeting to present the DRAFT Engagement Plan, Refined Milestones and virtual launch Consultation Summary.	Staff will present the DRAFT Engagement Plan informed by the initial consultation as well as refined project milestones.	Burlington City Council, individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy.	Consult with City Council Inform stakeholders
	4b. Report back to the public about how their input was or was not used in the creation of the draft Engagement Plan.			
May 2021	5a. Refine and finalize the Engagement Plan using input from Council (April), the Housing Strategy Working Group and the Steering Committee in collaboration with the Project Consultant.	Staff will work with the identified groups to finalize and release the FINAL Engagement Plan to be posted on Get Involved.	Housing Strategy Working Group, Steering Committee and Project Consultant.	Collaborate
	5b. Provide summary and meeting minutes of Working Group meeting to the Get Involved website.			

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May - June 2021	6. Prepare Housing Background Memo	Project Consultants will prepare a Housing Background Memo based on the work outlined by the Housing Strategy Terms of Reference.	n/a	n/a (no engagement)
May - June 2021	7. Prepare Housing Trends and Analysis Memo	Project Consultants will prepare a Housing Trends and Analysis Memo based on the work outlined by the Housing Strategy Terms of Reference.	n/a	n/a (no engagement)
June 2021	8a. Finalize and post Housing Background Memo and Housing Trends Analysis Memo	The Working Group and Steering Committee will review this work and provide advice and recommendations. Post to get involved.	Working Group and Steering Committee	Involve/Collaborate
	8b. Provide summary and meeting minutes of Working Group meeting(s) to the Get Involved website.			
July 2021	9. Prepare the Best Practice Scan/Innovative Practices, State of Housing in Burlington, and Housing Needs Assessment Memo	Project Consultants will prepare these Memos based on the work outlined by the Housing Strategy Terms of Reference.	n/a	n/a (no engagement)
July 2021	10a. Finalize and post Best Practice Scan/Innovative Practices Memo, the State of Housing in Burlington Memo and the Housing Needs Assessment Memo	The Working Group and Steering Committee will review this work and provide advice and recommendations. Post to get involved.	Working Group and Steering Committee	Involve/Collaborate
	10b. Provide summary and meeting minutes of Working Group meeting(s) to the Get Involved website.			
August – September 2021	11a. Prepare Housing Strategy Project Update Report	Prepare Housing Strategy Project Update Report. Outlining what has been learned thus far and the work that has been done to date. Including refinement of the understanding of the nature of the project, the context of the housing	Working Group and Steering Committee	Involve/Collaborate

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		issue in Burlington and emerging themes, housing objectives and actions.		
	11b. Provide summary and meeting minutes of Working Group meeting(s) to the Get Involved website.			
September 2021	12. CPRM meeting to share Housing Strategy Project Update Report.	Staff will present Housing Strategy Update Report Outlining what has been learned thus far and the work that has been done to date, including refinement of the understanding of the nature of the project, the context of the housing issue in Burlington and emerging themes, housing objectives and actions.	Burlington City Council, Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	Consult
August - November	13a. Prepare Interim Report	Based on direction from Council, and the Project Consultant lead work, Project Consultants will develop an Interim Report outlining initial City housing objectives, recommendations and actions plans to support implementation for public engagement and Council consideration.	Working Group and Steering Committee	Involve/Collaborate
	13b. Provide summary and meeting minutes of Working Group meeting(s) to the Get Involved website.			
December, 2021	14. CPRM Meeting with Council to share Interim Report	Staff will present the Interim Housing Strategy Report.	Burlington City Council, Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	Consult
January – March, 2022	15a. Engage on the Interim Report to support the development of the Final Housing Strategy Report.	Lead interactive public engagement opportunities for community to review initial City housing objectives, recommendations and actions plans to support implementation to guide the drafting of the Housing Strategy	Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	Involve/collaborate

		Final Report. To share interim directions, identify gaps and modifications needed for the final Strategy.		
	15b. Report back to the public about how their feedback can or cannot contribute to the development of the Housing Strategy Final Report.			
April – June, 2022	16a. Prepare Final Report	Based on consultation feedback and direction from Council, Staff will prepare a Final Report that sets out City housing objectives, a set of recommendations and actions plans to support implementation.	Working Group and Steering Committee	Involve/collaborate
	16b. Provide summary and meeting minutes of Working Group meeting(s) to the Get Involved website.			
June 2022	17a. Council Meeting for approval of Housing Strategy Final Report	Staff will present the Burlington Housing Strategy Final Report and Working Group Memo for endorsement. Members of the public may delegate at this meeting.	Burlington City Council, Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	Inform with stakeholders Involve/Collaborate with City Council
	17b. Report back to the public about Council’s decision			
August, 2022	18. Engagement Evaluation Report	Staff will evaluate each form of engagement and report back on how they impacted the overall public participation process over the course of the project.	Burlington City Council, Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	Inform

Policies and Factors That Cannot be Influenced

In every public engagement process, it is important to be aware of the things that cannot be influenced: either because they are beyond the City’s control (for example things that are required by regional or provincial policy or law), or because they are outside the scope of the project as set out in the Council-approved work plan. In discussing the Burlington Housing Strategy, the following aspects of the project are considered ‘givens’ and will not be included in engagement activities:

1. The City does not build housing or have a direct responsibility for housing. Through Official Plan policies, zoning and actions the City of Burlington guides city building which supports the development of a more diverse range of housing options across the entire City.

2. Housing is a shared responsibility across all levels of government and with the private and non-profit sectors. Through the Housing Strategy, the City is not looking to duplicate or replace the role of these stakeholders but to build on or support the work they are already doing. Where stakeholders have a defined role in housing, the City's Housing Strategy could identify advocacy and partnership opportunities with those stakeholders.
3. Housing policy is guided by various legislative requirements and policy documents such as the Housing Services Act, the Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement, provincial plans, the Halton Region Comprehensive Housing Strategy and Halton Region Official Plan.
4. Halton Region is the designated Municipal Service Manager for housing under the Housing Services Act and is responsible for the planning, management and program delivery across the housing continuum, including the creation of assisted housing options to house those on the Region's social housing waitlist.
5. The scope of work, timing and resources, including the terms of reference for Phase 1 of the Housing Strategy project has been approved by Council through staff report PL-02-21. Please refer to the [terms of reference](#) to understand what will not be discussed as part of this project.
6. There is no one solution to address local housing issues. The Housing Strategy will provide an opportunity to look for creative and innovative solutions through policies, tools and actions to address housing needs now and in the future.
7. The Housing Strategy will not explore solutions to increase income levels.
8. The Housing Strategy will not be addressing land supply or urban boundary expansions. These matters are being addressed through [Halton Region's Official Plan Review/Municipal Comprehensive Review](#), currently underway.
9. The Housing Strategy is not specifically an Affordable Housing Strategy. Affordable Housing is a term that will be used in the project and is defined in both the Halton Region Official Plan and the City of Burlington Official Plan. The Housing Strategy will explore the concept of attainable housing in the Burlington context.
10. The City does not have control over the speed of change related to development. Property owners decide when and if they will develop or redevelop their property.

Forms of Engagement and Communication to the Public

The strategies that will be used for public involvement in the Burlington Housing Strategy directly reflect the feedback provided by interested and affected stakeholders at [the Housing Strategy Virtual Launch](#) hosted by Staff on March 8, 2021 and through the Housing Strategy Launch online survey. These strategies will be refined by the Housing Strategy Working Group and the Steering Committee. The input provided encouraged the City to provide engagement opportunities that allow for flexible online engagement. Details of the themes captured during this engagement are available in Appendix A.

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(WHEN)	Milestone	Message (WHAT)	Stakeholders (WHO)	Communication Tactic (OUTPUT)
Jan. 19, 2021	1. Housing Strategy Terms of Reference	Outline the scope of work related to the preparation of a Housing Strategy for the City of Burlington which will include creative and innovative solutions to local housing issues.	Burlington City Council, Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy.	City meeting calendar City Update calendar
Mid-February to March 8, 2021	2. Housing Strategy Virtual Launch	Introduce the Housing Strategy initiative to residents and key stakeholders in the community and to seek public input on the development of the Housing Strategy along with how the community would like to collaborate on the Housing Strategy	Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	City Get Involved calendar Get Involved page Media release City Update ad Twitter, Instagram Facebook + FB Event Homepage backer 360 banner
April 6, 2021	4. CPRM meeting with Council to present the DRAFT Engagement Plan, Refined Milestones and virtual launch Consultation Summary	Staff will present the DRAFT Engagement Plan informed by initial consultation as well as refined project milestones	Burlington City Council, Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	POST UPDATE Get Involved page Twitter, Instagram Facebook
	4b. Report back to the public about how their input was or was not used in the creation of the draft Engagement Plan			
May 2021	5. Refine and finalize the Engagement Plan using input from Council (April), the Housing Strategy Working Group and the Steering Committee	Staff will work with the identified groups and finalize and release the FINAL Engagement Plan to be posted on Get Involved.	Housing Strategy Working Group, Steering Committee and Project Consultant.	Get Involved page Media release City Update ad Twitter, Instagram Facebook Homepage backer 360 banner
	5b. Provide a summary and meeting minutes of Working Group meeting(s) to Get Involved Website			
June 2021	8a. Finalize and post Housing Background Memo and	The Working Group and Steering Committee will review this work and provide advice and	Working Group and Steering Committee	POST UPDATE Get Involved page

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	Housing Trends Analysis Memo	recommendations. Post to get involved		
	8b. Provide summary and meeting minutes of Working Group meeting(s) to the Get Involved website.			
July 2021	10a. Finalize and post Best Practice Scan/Innovative Practices Memo, the State of Housing in Burlington Memo and the Housing Needs Assessment Memo.	The Working Group and Steering Committee will review this work and provide advice and recommendations.	Working Group and Steering Committee	POST UPDATE Get Involved page
	10b. Provide summary and meeting minutes of Working Group meeting(s) to the Get Involved website.			
September 2021	12. CPRM meeting Council with to share Housing Strategy Project Update Report.	Staff will present Housing Strategy Update Report Outlining what has been learned thus far and the work that has been done to date, including refinement of the understanding of the nature of the project, the context of the housing issue in Burlington and emerging themes, housing objectives and actions.	Burlington City Council, Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	POST UPDATE Get Involved page Twitter, Instagram Facebook
December, 2021	14. Council Meeting to share Interim Report and Working Group memo parallel report	Staff will present the Interim Housing Strategy Report.	Burlington City Council, Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	City Get Involved calendar POST UPDATE Get Involved page Twitter, Instagram Facebook
January – March, 2022	15a. Engage on the Interim Report to support the development of the Final Housing Strategy Report.	Lead interactive public engagement opportunities for community to review initial City housing objectives, recommendations and actions plans to support implementation to guide the drafting of the Housing Strategy Final Report. To share interim directions, identify gaps and	Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	City Get Involved calendar Get Involved page Media release City Update ad Twitter, Instagram Facebook + FB Event Homepage backer

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		modifications needed for the final Strategy.		360 banner
	15b. Report back to the public about how their feedback can or cannot contribute to the development of the Housing Strategy Final Report.			
June 2022	17a. Council Meeting for approval of Housing Strategy Final Report	Staff will present the Burlington Housing Strategy Final Report and Working Group Memo for endorsement. Members of the public may delegate at this meeting.	Burlington City Council, Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	City Get Involved calendar Get Involved page Media release City Update ad Twitter, Instagram Facebook + FB Event Homepage banner 360 banner
	17b. Report back to the public about Council's decision			
August, 2022	18. Engagement Evaluation Report	Staff will evaluate each form of engagement and report back on how they impacted the overall public participation process over the course of the project.	Burlington City Council, Individuals and groups interested and affected by the Housing Strategy	POST UPDATE Get Involved page Twitter, Instagram Facebook

How the City Will Collect and Respond to Feedback

Throughout the engagement process, City staff will collect all input provided by stakeholders by theme into engagement feedback reports, showing how the comments shaped the study process, the housing objectives and the recommended action items proposed to Council. For an example of how the City will respond to feedback throughout the process please see Appendix A for the Housing Strategy Engagement Feedback Report detailing the pre-engagement process and how it informed the development of this Engagement Plan.

Evaluating the Public Engagement Process

To assist in measuring how public participation contributed to the project decision to be made, the following will be used to evaluate the public participation process.

1. Once the project is complete, measure the degree to which community members felt they:
 - a. Understood the project's process
 - b. Understood how the feedback they provided influenced the outcome of the City Council approval.

2. Evaluate each form of engagement.
How did each of the engagement approaches used help to achieve the engagement objectives?
3. Analyze how the feedback received about the forms of engagement impacted the overall public participation process as the project moved forward.

List of Appendices

- A. Consolidated feedback from the Virtual Launch and online survey
- B. Working Group Guidelines
- C. Steering Committee Guidelines

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