



SUBJECT: City of Burlington Housing Strategy – Draft Engagement Plan

TO: Community Planning, Regulation & Mobility Cttee.

FROM: Community Planning Department

Report Number: PL-16-21

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 502-02-73

Date to Committee: April 6, 2021

Date to Council: April 20, 2021

Recommendation:

Direct the Director of Community Planning to work with the project Steering Committee and Working Group to finalize the draft Engagement Plan attached as Appendix A to community planning report PL-16-21; and

Appoint the following three members of Council to sit on the Housing Strategy Working Group:

- Mayor Marianne Meed Ward
- Councillor Shawna Stolte
- Councillor Paul Sharman

PURPOSE:

Vision to Focus Alignment:

- Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth

Increasing options for housing across the city was identified as a top priority and goal in the From Vision to Focus Plan. A key action item associated with this priority was 'to complete the City's Housing Strategy and implement the plan to address the needs related to young families, senior's housing, affordable housing, special needs housing and newcomers by Q2-2022'.

- Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture

From Vision to Focus identified being a municipal leader in community engagement and collaboration as a top priority and goal. The key action item associated with this priority is to employ a range of communication and engagement tactics to ensure citizen engagement represents all residents while also focusing on diverse demographic groups and communities.

Background and Discussion:

January 2021

At the January 14, 2021 Community Planning, Regulation and Mobility (CPRM) committee meeting Council considered staff report [PL-02-21](#) which included a [proposed Terms of Reference \(Appendix A to PL-02-21\)](#) outlining the scope of work related to Phase 1 of the City's Housing Strategy project. Council endorsed the proposed terms of reference and authorized the Director of Community Planning to engage consultants through a request for proposal to carry out the Phase 1 work. As outlined in the staff report, direction was also received to develop and implement an engagement plan as well as run an expression of interest with members of Council regarding serving on the Housing Strategy working group.

At the January 14th CPRM committee meeting staff received the following additional directions from Council with respect to the Housing Strategy project:

Direct the Director of Community Planning to continue to refine the scope of work in regard to milestones and timelines for delivering concrete, actionable recommendations to Council that can be implemented within this term of Council as set out in Vision to Focus 2018-2022 and report back by early Q2 2021 (SD-04-21); and

Direct the Director of Community Planning to coordinate and implement an initial community engagement event intended to introduce the Housing Strategy initiative to residents and key stakeholders in the community in an effort to seek public input as to how the community would like to collaborate on the Housing Strategy, in keeping with Council's commitment to IAP2 and our Community Engagement Charter and report back by early Q2 2021 (SD-04-21); and

Direct the Director of Community Planning in developing the draft engagement plan for the Housing Strategy, to include collaboration with all levels of government with a role in housing (SD-04-21).

This report has been prepared in response to Council direction.

Housing Strategy Virtual Launch and Survey

A Housing Strategy Virtual Launch was held on the evening of March 8, 2021 to introduce the project to residents and key stakeholders in the community and to seek input on the development of the Housing Strategy and how the community would like to collaborate on the Housing Strategy.

The Virtual Launch was a two-hour facilitated session hosted on the Zoom platform that included a presentation by staff detailing the project as well as a presentation from Ted Hildebrandt (Community Development Halton) who provided an overview of housing in Burlington. Following the presentations, there was a community panel discussion with representatives from the City, the Region, the building industry and non-profit organizations who shared their experiences and identified challenges and opportunities with respect to housing. Following the panel discussion was the opportunity to hear from the community through a stakeholder discussion. A series of questions were asked to those in attendance who were then invited to share their feedback with the group. One of the questions focused specifically on how they would like to be involved throughout this project. The Virtual Launch attracted over 100 attendees and a summary of the launch feedback can be found in the Feedback Report included as Appendix B. A [recording of the Virtual Launch](#) is also available on the Get Involved project page.

An online survey was prepared and released on March 1st on the Get Involved project page to gather feedback from the community to help inform the work on the Housing Strategy and the draft Engagement Plan. The survey questions were reflective of the questions asked during the stakeholder discussion component of the launch. Over the three-week period the survey was available, 230 responses were received. A summary of the survey feedback can be found in the Feedback Report included as Appendix B.

Draft Engagement Plan

A draft project Engagement Plan, included as Appendix A, has been prepared to provide a roadmap of the engagement activities that will take place through the development of the City's Housing Strategy. This Engagement Plan highlights the points in the process where engagement will take place, who will be engaged and level of engagement to be undertaken. The draft Engagement Plan includes a decision statement, a summary of stakeholders as well as engagement objectives. It also outlines project milestones and engagement levels, policies and factors that cannot be influenced, and proposed forms of engagement and communication with the public. It is important to note that the finalization of the Engagement Plan will be undertaken by the project team based on input received from CPRM Committee and Council, the Steering Committee, the Working Group as well as the project consultant. The project Steering Committee will approve the final document for public release on the Get Involved Project page in Q2 2021.

Project Steering Committee and Working Group

The Housing Strategy Terms of Reference endorsed by Council in January identified the establishment of a Steering Committee and Working Group to support the delivery of the Housing Strategy project.

The Steering Committee is an internal committee comprised of city staff that will provide strategic direction and advice on matters related to the project. The work of the Steering Committee will be guided by Committee Guidelines, which includes approval of the project Engagement Plan. The draft Guidelines for the Steering Committee are included in Appendix D. The final Committee Guidelines will be an appendix to the Engagement Plan.

The Working Group, which will be comprised of volunteers from a variety of sectors including government, not for profit, co-op, the business community as well as residents will:

- advise on local issues,
- be champions for the project,
- provide key insights, and
- will contribute to the refinement, finalization and implementation of the project Engagement Plan.

Draft Guidelines for the Working Group have been developed and are included in Appendix C. The final Working Group Guidelines will be an appendix to the Engagement Plan.

Recruitment for the Working Group will commence on April 6th through a sign-up form available through the Get Involved Project page and will conclude on April 30th. The Working Group will have a maximum membership of 20 people, including members of Council who have been appointed to the group through an expression of interest. The remaining member appointments will be approved by the City Manager.

In March 2021 the City Clerk ran an expression of interest with members of Council regarding serving on the Housing Strategy Working Group. The Housing Strategy Terms of Reference endorsed by Council in January indicated that the Working Group would include the Mayor and at least one additional member of Council. Both Councillor Stolte and Councillor Sharman expressed interest serving on the Working Group. Therefore, it is recommended that in addition to the Mayor, both Councillor Stolte and Councillor Sharman be appointed to the Working Group in accordance with the project Terms of Reference.

Project Timelines and Milestones

The draft Engagement Plan, included in Appendix A identifies a detailed timeline for the Housing Strategy project, including key milestones. Input from the project consultant on

the detailed timeline will be required to ensure alignment with the Phase 1 project workplan, prior to the draft Engagement Plan being finalized.

Planning staff are also exploring opportunities to implement actionable recommendations within this term of Council, in response to the staff direction received. These opportunities include possible updates to the City's zoning bylaw to align with the Planning Act and new Official Plan policies as well as the development of Inclusionary Zoning policies and bylaw as part of the Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) Area Specific Planning (ASP) work. Further details on actionable recommendations will be outlined in a report to Council together with the Housing Strategy Interim report scheduled for Q4 2021.

Strategy/process

Once the project Steering Committee and Working Group have been established they will finalize their respective Committee and Working Group Guidelines. As noted above, the final Engagement Plan will be shaped by the input received from CPRM Committee and Council, the Steering Committee, the Working Group and the project consultant.

Options Considered

N/A

Financial Matters:

A budget for engagement has been included in the Phase 1 project budget.

Other Resource Impacts

Staff time will be allocated to develop and implement the final Engagement Plan for the Housing Strategy project.

Climate Implications

On April 23, 2019, Burlington's City Council unanimously passed a motion to declare a climate emergency. The City's Housing Strategy will look for innovative solutions to address local housing issues while making better use of existing infrastructure and services through the provision of additional residential units and directing new housing options in locations for intensification to support the provision of a wider range of housing options and minimize impacts on the environment.

Engagement Matters:

The project Engagement Plan is a key deliverable to support the development of the City's Housing Strategy. The feedback received at the Virtual Launch and through the survey helped to inform the development of the draft Engagement Plan which identifies multiple opportunities for engagement on the project. As noted above, further input is required to finalize the project Engagement Plan.

The establishment of the Housing Strategy Working Group comprised of volunteers from a variety of sectors in our community as well as residents and members of Council will provide another avenue for engagement on this project. Although membership on the Working Group is limited, there will be many other opportunities for public engagement throughout the project.

The Get Involved Project page is an important source for learning about the Housing Strategy project. It provides project details including key dates, a document library and the option to subscribe for project updates. It also contains a project email address to contact staff and a recording of the March 8th Virtual Launch. Details on future engagement opportunities such as surveys and virtual sessions will be posted on the Get Involved Project page.

Conclusion:

The attached draft Engagement Plan was developed based on early input received from Committee, Council, the Housing Strategy Virtual Launch and the partner online survey. Staff will support the refinement and finalization of the Engagement Plan as Phase 1 of the Housing Strategy project moves forward. Staff will also actively work to deliver concrete actionable recommendations that can be implemented within this term of Council, alongside the development of the Housing Strategy.

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendices:

- A. Housing Strategy DRAFT Engagement Plan
- B. Housing Strategy Virtual Launch: Feedback Report
- C. Housing Strategy DRAFT Working Group Guidelines
- D. Housing Strategy DRAFT Steering Committee Guidelines

Notifications:

Curt Benson, Region of Halton

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.