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Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Municipal Housing Pledge

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is committed to doing its part as a critical partner to support the goal of building 1.5 million homes in the Province of Ontario by 2031. The Town has a role to play to ensure the residents of the province have access to housing and that housing should also be attainable and affordable.

All levels of government, key stakeholders, partners and homebuilders all have a role and responsibility to play in the provision of housing. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is committed to its role in the housing approval process, while acknowledging many components of housing supply are out of the control of the municipality.

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville pledges to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to facilitate the construction of 6,500 new dwelling units by 2031.

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is committed to undertaking the following actions and initiatives that are under its direct control to achieve the Town's Housing Target:

1. Implement the Town's new Official Plan, once adopted by Council and approved by its approval authority. The Town's new Official Plan contains policies that:
 - Provide greater direction and clarity for the type of development envisioned for the Town;
 - Will help address the supply of housing for the missing middle;
 - Promote intensification in key strategic areas for growth in the Town;
 - Permit increased heights and densities in appropriate locations;
 - Permit Additional Residential Units, where possible; and,
 - Enable the consideration of a Community Planning Permit System, in appropriate locations, to streamline the development review approvals process.
2. Complete a Comprehensive Review and Update of the Town's Zoning By-law, including:
 - Permissive policies to support Additional Residential Units (such as second and third units) in ground-related housing types;
 - Regulations to accommodate a wider range of housing types as-of-right;
 - Updates to Zoning in the Town's Major Transit Station Areas; and
 - Consideration for a Community Planning Permit System, in appropriate locations, to streamline the development approval process.

3. Streamline the development approvals review process by:
 - Implementing the new Collaborative Application Pre-consultation Process to assist the Applicants in preparing Complete Applications and submission materials for faster and efficient Planning Applications Process;
 - Implementing technological and digital improvements and online application portal; and
 - Continue to innovate and find opportunities for improvement for a faster and more efficient development review process.
4. Support the creation of Additional Residential Units by:
 - Creating clear guidelines and process for the creation of Additional Residential Units;
 - Working with developers through the development approval process to provide options for Additional Residential Units at the time of purchase and sale.
 - Offering options for pre-approved building plans for small scale developers and residents and make the permit and construction process as “turnkey, affordable and easy as possible”.
5. Encourage alternative forms of housing to encourage and support affordable housing initiatives by:
 - Reviewing and updating the Town’s Community Improvement Plan to incentivize development;
 - Removing barriers to alternative forms of modular housing or other alternative forms of housing, where appropriate;
 - Exploring opportunities and partnerships to encourage purpose-built rentals; and,
 - Establishing partnerships to increase affordable housing opportunities.
6. Implement the Town’s Housing Strategy, April 26, 2022 and undertake the actions and initiatives identified in the Strategy under the following themes:
 - Policy and Zoning;
 - Incentives (Financial and Non-Financial);
 - Advocacy, Awareness and Outreach; and,
 - Monitoring.
7. Align the Town’s Master Plans and Development Charges with a faster rate of growth between 2023 and 2031.
8. Continue to advocate and collaborate with York Region to ensure critical servicing infrastructure is planned for and provided when needed.

9. Continue to build collaborative relationships with critical partners and stakeholders in the development and housing approval process, including:
 - Conservation Authorities; School Boards; York Chapter of BILD; Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Ministry of Transportation; residents, businesses, and other key members of the community, etc.
10. Facilitate and encourage builders to proceed with their developments in a timely manner by ensuring servicing allocation is used within three years of an approval.
11. Ensure the Town develops in a fiscally responsible manner by:
 - Completing and/or updating growth-related revenue by-laws, including the Development Charges Background Study, Parkland Study, and the Community Benefits Charge Study;
 - Completing a review of development application fees as the new Collaborative Application Pre-Consultation Process progresses;
 - Establishing a formal process for front-ending agreements with developers for the pre-payment of Development Charges or front-ending project funding for roads, water and wastewater services to minimize debt requirements of the Town; and,
 - Advocating that York Region undertake more front-ending for capital infrastructure projects to ensure servicing will be available when needed by the Town.
12. Monitor, track and report on a Semi-Annual basis on the Town's progress to provide housing using new technology available to the Town, including:
 - Building permits and new housing starts;
 - Servicing capacity and allocation;
 - Development activity, including developments approved but not built; and,
 - Growth activity across the Town.
13. Work with other partner agencies such as York Region, school boards and others to find innovative solutions for the provision of surplus land for affordable housing.

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is fully committed to facilitating housing through an improved development approvals process. Notwithstanding its commitment, the Town does acknowledge that there are influences to the provision of housing that are beyond its control and should not be reflective of its performance to provide housing. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is primarily responsible for the development review and approvals process. Factors such as the market, supply chain issues, interest rates, inflation and material costs, labour shortages, land use appeals, provision of regional

infrastructure, legislative changes and development approvals that do not proceed to the development stage are not within the control of the local municipality in the provision of housing within the community.

The Council of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville recognizes that it is a critical partner and holds a shared responsibility in the provision of housing in the Province of Ontario. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is committed to creating a complete community that provides a great place to live, opportunities for employment, high quality community amenities, parks and open space while protecting and preserving its unique agricultural and natural heritage attributes. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville looks forward to further opportunities and discussions with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to ensure funding for critical infrastructure, facilities and complete community development is available.