

Housing in Guelph: Actions and responses

October 17, 2023

Purpose



Provide updates on actions underway

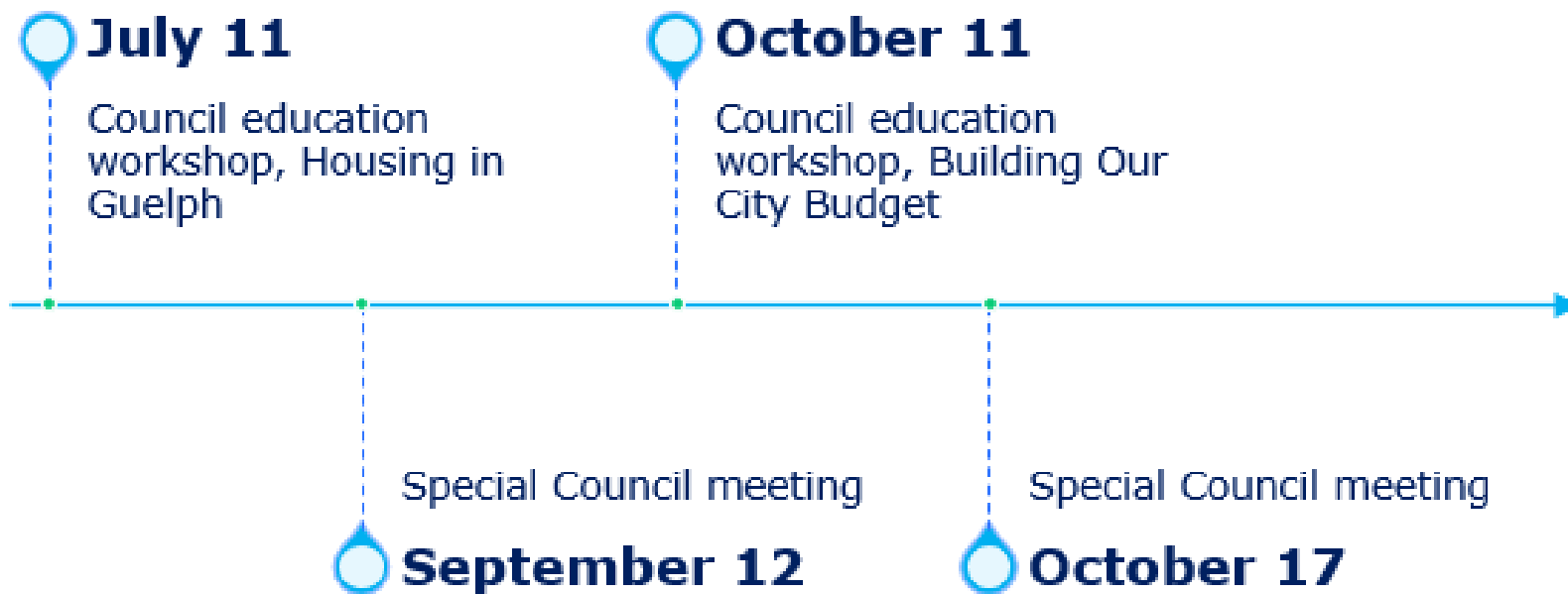


Present staff recommendations



Enable informed decision-making

Key dates



HOUSING CONTINUUM

Guelph-Wellington



Partnered, Resourced, and Supported

Primarily administered by the County

Primarily facilitated by the City

2,000 units a year facilitated

City actions



Financial support and investment



Laying the groundwork for growth



Facilitating accelerated pace of development



Identifying gaps and opportunities



Advocating for Guelph



Communicating and reporting progress



Taking a human rights-based approach to housing

To achieve by 2026

1. Develop and strengthen partnerships that catalyze momentum
2. Leverage incentives to drive housing development
3. Meet growth targets responsibly
4. Prioritize finding collaborative solutions along the housing continuum
5. Attract and retain a best-in-class team to meet our goals
6. Modernize our approach to servicing applications
7. Achieve and maintain a zero active appeals status
8. Lay the groundwork required for growth
9. Get results from federal and provincial governments through advocacy
10. Clarify roles and make progress on emergency housing, supportive and affordable housing

Recommendations

1. That the City of Guelph adopts a human rights-based approach to housing, including a Housing First philosophy, to align with the National Housing Strategy.
2. That the Mayor and CAO be directed to work with the County of Wellington Warden and CAO to conduct a review of the governance model of the County of Wellington's Social Services Committee, to establish clarity and accountability regarding the City and the County's role in the approval of priorities and spending related to Social Services, and report back to Council no later than Q1 2024.
3. That Council supports the County of Wellington's plan to host a Housing and Homelessness Symposium, no later than Q1 2024, including key community stakeholders to address the urgent needs facing the community. The planning committee should include representatives from the City of Guelph, the GW Ontario Health Team, WDG Public Health, the WG Drug Strategy and the Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination. The Symposium should consider the community needs for housing on the left-hand side of the continuum including shelter services and permanent supportive housing, as well as the integration of health services in the housing sector.

Recommendations

4. That Council call on the County of Wellington to develop and lead a coordinated, joint community advocacy effort as articulated in Appendix A of the County of Wellington's preliminary Homelessness Plan presented to Council on September 12, 2023.
5. That the Mayor be directed to send a letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, copied to the County of Wellington, the Premier of Ontario and area MPPs, requesting that the Government of Ontario develop and adopt a provincial housing strategy that considers the donation of provincial lands for affordable and supportive housing and incorporates measurable targets and sufficient funds for ending homelessness and ensuring access of all Ontarians, including those of limited income, to housing of an adequate standard without discrimination.
6. That staff be directed to work with the County of Wellington, GW Ontario Health Team and local supportive housing service providers to provide letters of support to the Ministry of Health expressing the urgent need for accessible base funding to support wraparound health supports on the left side of the housing continuum; and that staff work with CMHA Waterloo Wellington to provide any necessary letter of support for the application to the Ministry of Health to establish an alternate care destination clinic.

Recommendations

7. That given the recent success with donated land for the Kindle Supportive Housing project, Council urge local developers and the Chamber of Commerce to discuss and consider opportunities for land donation to address urgent housing needs in Guelph; and that the City continue to utilize the Strategic Real Estate program to look at all opportunities to repurpose City land and assets in ways to address housing needs.
8. That staff are directed to seek feedback from the DGBA, local downtown social service agencies and the County of Wellington to consider the best location(s) and delivery method for the provision of 12-hour service, 7 days a week daytime shelter space in the downtown secondary plan area, reporting back to Council on recommended next steps no later than November 2023. Options presented should consider issuing a Request for Proposals to identify interested service partners, and identification of possible funding sources. Staff are also directed to work with Royal City Mission to consider a month-to-month extension of the current Community Benefit Agreement, to ensure consistent service provision until Council has time to consider next steps.
9. That the Housing Affordability Strategy be completed with a goal to enable a greater supply and mix of housing and to enhance capacity, awareness and support for affordable housing throughout the community.

Recommendations

10. That the newly hired Development Advisor develop and support partnerships by establishing a community Housing Affordability Strategy focus group to advance the housing supply initiatives along the right-hand side of the housing continuum.
11. That the Development Advisor and Housing Stability Advisor review all available incentives to increase supply in the housing market of both affordable and market rate housing.
12. That staff be directed to immediately prepare a zoning by-law amendment that would permit, as-of-right, up to 4 residential units per lot within residential zones where the Council-approved (subject to appeal) Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw (2023)-20790 permits a maximum of 3 residential units per lot. The implementing zoning by-law may address criterion such as servicing capacity to support the proposed units.

Recommendations

13. That the City use the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) funding, if received, to incentivize approximately 975 additional new residential units by prioritizing and implementing initiatives such as advancing a cash-in-lieu program for parking, stormwater, and parkland, developing an evaluation framework to optimize City-owned land, and supporting, incentivizing, and attracting development of housing types that the City has identified as most needed. Attachment 1 provides a detailed overview of the City's HAF Action Plan initiatives.
14. That the Mayor be directed to follow up on his correspondence to Minister Calandra, dated September 7, 2023, to discuss the provincial actions identified in Guelph's Housing Pledge to help reach our housing targets, including making us whole financially.
15. That Council call on the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada to reconsider the fiscal framework in a new deal for municipalities to achieve healthy, equitable and thriving communities, and refine the way we engage across orders of government.

Recommendations

16. That the City support local post-secondary institutions in requesting funding from other levels of government, beyond those already provided by the City in the form of development fee exemptions to expedite the development of more post-secondary accommodation spaces.
17. That the Development Advisor work with the Guelph and District Homebuilders Association and Developers Association to advance outstanding sites that have approvals in place but have not been built and that the City maintain the list of approved and unbuilt sites.