



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, April 13, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**City makes progress on affordable housing goals
2018-2020 Affordable Housing Monitoring Report highlights accomplishments & opportunities**

(Barrie, ON) City Council received the Affordable Housing Monitoring Report at last night's Council meeting, which provided an important update on the state of affordable housing in Barrie.

The City of Barrie's Affordable Housing Strategy, completed in 2015, is a 10-year plan based on the County of Simcoe's Affordable Housing Strategy. The City's strategy aims to encourage, stimulate and increase the supply and range of affordable housing options to meet the needs of Barrie residents, at all income levels and stages of life.

"Although there have been gains in affordable housing, there is still much work to be done," says Mayor Jeff Lehman. "Barrie is experiencing a housing affordability crisis and the ability to find homes for the hardest to house in our community remains a challenge. The City is committed to working together with community partners to increase housing options and affordability."

Some highlights and areas of note in the Report include:

- 840 new affordable housing units was the goal established in the 2015 Affordable Housing Strategy.
- 872 new units have been created, including 409 unfunded second suites. Using an adjusted affordability estimate for unfunded second suites, 156 can be considered affordable, therefore a total of 619 new units were created.
- The cost of renting second suites is increasing and based on the County of Simcoe's approach, only 25 per cent of second suites built in 2020 were assumed to be affordable. This percentage has changed over time and if 25 percent was applied (instead of higher discounts in earlier years), the number of new affordable units would drop to 619.
- Only 14 per cent of the affordable housing units are purpose-built, primary rental units, which shows more focus is needed in this area.
- Vacancy rates remain low, and the price of rent continues to climb.
- Over \$1.7M in Affordable Housing Development Grants was awarded in 2020 under the City's new Community Improvement Plan for future affordable housing units.
- The City exceeded the Official Plan goal for 10 per cent of all new dwelling units annually to be affordable in new subdivisions and condominiums in 2018 and 2019.
- Market homeownership is becoming increasingly unaffordable for many Barrie residents, with average resale home prices quickly climbing.

Several upcoming City initiatives will address housing affordability issues. These include a report card of the strategy, City-initiated changes to the zoning by-law, and the [establishment of the Affordable Housing Task Force by Council](#) this spring.



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The County of Simcoe is the designated service manager for the City under the Housing Services Act, 2011. The County is responsible for planning, funding and managing social housing programs and homelessness services. The City of Barrie can encourage and facilitate the provisions of affordable housing through initiatives, programs and policies however, the City does not provide or manage housing.

Visit barrie.ca/AffordableHousing to read the full report and for more information.

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