

Whereas the City of Markham recognizes the importance of housing affordability and all orders of government in Canada acknowledge that we are in the midst of a housing crisis; and,

Whereas the City of Markham adopted Housing Choices: Markham's Affordable and Rental Housing Strategy in June, 2021 and is actively advancing actions to increase the supply of affordable and purpose built rental housing; and,

Whereas through the More Homes, Built Faster: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan 2022-2023, the Province committed to 1.5 million homes being built over the next 10 years and assigned a Municipal Housing Target to Markham, and in response the City of Markham made a housing pledge to facilitate the construction of 44,000 new homes; and,

Whereas the Federal Government launched the Housing Accelerator Fund to provide funding to local municipalities, to encourage initiatives aimed at increasing housing supply across Canada; and,

Whereas the City of Markham submitted an application in June, 2023 to the Housing Accelerator Fund requesting \$57,100,000 to implement seven initiatives that aim to provide a minimum of 1900 housing units; and,

Whereas the Federal Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities provided a letter to the City of Markham dated October 11, 2023 advising that the City has proposed strong steps forward to address the housing crisis through its Housing Accelerator Fund application initiatives but also requesting that the City go further than what was proposed in its application;

Whereas the Province amended the Planning Act through (Bill 23) to permit three Additional Residential Units (ARU) as-of-right on a parcel of land where residential uses are permitted in all municipalities in Ontario, replacing the previous permission of 2 units (resulting in an increase of 1 unit); and

Whereas the City of Markham has 22 Major Transit Station Areas (MTSA) with minimum density targets to support increased intensification for lands generally within 800 metres around transit station areas which is equivalent to approximately a 10-minute walk; and

Whereas each MTSA in the City of Markham is unique, and may have historical, environmental and/or physical contexts and community elements that positively influence built form;

And whereas the City of Markham needs to make a decision and respond to the requests from the Federal Government regarding the Housing Accelerator Fund.

Therefore, be it resolved:

1. That, as requested by the Federal Government, Council request staff to prepare a proposed amendment to the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-law to permit up to four (4) residential units on properties where zoning permits single detached, semi-detached or row house dwelling units. The implementing zoning by-law may prescribe additional criteria such as servicing capacity or parking to support the proposed units for consideration by Council;
2. That Council, request staff through Initiative 3 (Major Transit Station Areas (MTSA) Policy Update and Pre-Zoning) under the Housing Accelerator Fund application to assess and propose an amendment to the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-Law for Council consideration that would permit as a minimum up to four (4) storeys within MTSA's, excluding those that are solely comprised of employment areas and preclude residential development, in response to another request by the Federal Government;
3. That a copy of this motion be sent to the Federal Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities;
4. That Council direct staff to further engage with the Federal and Provincial Governments to explore opportunities to incentivize and increase the supply of affordable and purpose built rental housing, including necessary infrastructure, to support an appropriate mix and range of housing at all levels of affordability; and,
5. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.