



CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS HOUSING DIRECTIONS STRATEGY

Tuesday, March 22, 2022
Presentation to Council

Agenda

- Recap- where we've been
- Vision and Goals for the Housing Strategy
- Themes for the Housing Strategy
- Theme-based Actions
- Priority Actions
- Next Steps



Recap: Where We've Been

Phase 1: Data Collection and Monitoring



Phase 2: Recommendations



We are here

Recap of prior touchpoints with Council

- Council # 1- June, 2021
 - Introduction to the project's purpose
 - Overview of preliminary findings contained within the Housing Needs and Supply Report
 - Obtain general feedback and input from Council to inform development of the Housing Strategy
 - Obtain endorsement from Council to develop Housing Strategy



Housing Needs and Supply Report- Key Findings- Rental Households

Annual Household Income	Affordable Monthly Rent
Up to \$70,000	\$1,750
Up to \$60,000	\$1,500
Up to \$50,000	\$1,250
Up to \$40,000	\$1,000
Up to \$30,000	\$750

Unit Type	Average Monthly Rent- 2020
Bachelor	\$643
One-bedroom	\$968
Two-bedroom	\$1,098
Three-bedroom	\$1,145

- Median household income in the City is ~\$60,000
- 47.4% rental households are in core housing need related to affordability
- Vacancy Rates in the City have been below 3% since at least 2016
- Average rents in the City are not affordable to many residents

Housing Needs and Supply Report- Key Findings- Ownership Households

NIAGARA REGION INCOME DECILES	2016 INCOME	2016 TO 2021 CPI	2021 INCOME	MAX AFFORDABLE HOUSE PRICE	COMPOSITE BENCHMARK	SINGLE- FAMILY BENCHMARK	ONE-STOREY BENCHMARK	TWO-STOREY BENCHMARK	TOWNHOUSE BENCHMARK	APARTMENT BENCHMARK
Price	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$595,100	\$609,500	\$604,500	\$606,900	\$450,800	\$401,600
Low Income	\$19,400	13.75%	\$22,100	\$115,000	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Low Income	\$29,500	13.75%	\$33,600	\$174,800	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Low Income	\$39,800	13.75%	\$45,300	\$235,800	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Moderate Income	\$52,700	13.75%	\$60,000	\$312,300	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Moderate Income	\$68,400	13.75%	\$77,900	\$405,300	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Moderate Income	\$84,300	13.75%	\$95,900	\$499,500	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
High Income	\$101,200	13.75%	\$115,200	\$599,600	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
High Income	\$122,200	13.75%	\$139,100	\$724,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
High Income	\$155,900	13.75%	\$177,400	\$923,700	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

- 17.6% of ownership households are in core housing need related to affordability
- Many ownership options are not affordable to residents in the City, when considering that the average household income in the City was ~\$60,000 based on the 2016 Census


Data Source: CANCEA, CREA, Bank of Canada, Niagara Association of REALTORS

Housing Needs and Supply Report- Key Messages

- There are considerable gaps in the City's housing continuum
 - Predominantly single detached
 - Low vacancy, with many renters vying for units
 - Few options for renters and owners to meet income/ affordability needs (lack of higher density built forms and apartment units)
- While there continues to be demand for single-detached dwellings, there is increasing demand and need for higher density housing that would be more affordable to single persons, sole-parent households and those working in the tourism, hospitality, service and agriculture sectors
- 6 Major areas of focus in developing an implementable strategy to address housing gaps identified

The Housing Continuum





Role of the TAC and Input Received to Develop the Strategy

TAC Membership

- City Councillors– Campbell and Lococo
- City Planning
- City Economic Development
- Regional Planning
- Regional Housing/ Homelessness
- Real Estate Representative
- Homebuilder Representative
- Non-profit Housing Provider
- Community Organizations
- Chamber of Commerce

Summary of TAC Meetings

- TAC # 1
 - Introductions to the project purpose
 - Overview of preliminary findings
 - Roundtable discussion to inform development of Housing Needs and Supply Report
- TAC # 2
 - Update on findings from online survey and stakeholder consultation
 - Discussion on recommended targets for housing
 - Receive feedback on draft Housing Needs and Supply Report
 - Introduction of preliminary recommendations to inform the development of the Housing Strategy
- TAC # 3
 - Present draft Strategy for discussion
 - Receive feedback on draft Strategy in order to finalize to present to Council

The Housing Strategy

Purpose of the Strategy

- Build upon the technical work presented in the Housing Needs and Supply Report
- Provide a blueprint for the actions the City will need to implement to address the City's housing needs and gaps

Vision

"All residents in the City have safe, stable and appropriate housing to meet both their physical and financial needs throughout the various stages of life"

Goals

Goal #1	<i>Ensure housing is available throughout the City to meet the varying financial needs of existing and future residents.</i>
Goal #2	<i>Diversify the City's housing supply to include a wider range of price points; mix of housing types and densities; and, a range of options for housing tenure (rental and ownership).</i>
Goal #3	<i>Remove barriers to the creation of a range and mix of housing types, including alternative forms of housing throughout the City.</i>
Goal #4	<i>Develop an understanding of the City's housing system moving forward through continuous and ongoing comprehensive data collection, monitoring and reporting.</i>
Goal # 5	<i>Cultivate and maintain strong relationships with regional and municipal partners, other levels of government, the private sector, and not-for-profit sectors to advance the various actions set out in the Housing Strategy</i>

Six Themes for the Strategy



Establish Affordable Housing Targets to set the City up for success to meet affordable housing goals



Promote a Greater Diversity of Housing Types to ensure there is a diversity of housing options available to meet the needs of the City's diverse residents



Ensure a Healthy Supply of Rental Units to provide a range and mix of rental options for Niagara Falls residents now and into the future

Six Themes for the Strategy



Increase Public Education and Provide Advocacy for Partnerships to make sure everyone understands the role they can play in addressing housing issues



Provide a Variety of Financial Incentives to promote and facilitate the development of affordable and rental housing



Monitor and Report to measure the efficacy of implementation of the Housing Strategy, address emerging housing needs and ensure actions are met within the stated timeframes

Actions to Address Housing Gaps

- The Strategy includes a total of 21 recommended actions to be taken by the Municipality which are grouped by the six themes
- A timeframe for implementation is also assigned to each action

Establish Affordable Housing Targets



Action 1: Update the City's Official Plan to include Affordable Housing Target(s)

- 270 units per year to be built as affordable, with the following breakdown
 - 135 units per year to be built with a price at or below \$499,440 (ownership) and \$2,400 (rental)
 - 135 units per year to be built as rental units, with a rental price below \$968/month

Action 2: Update the City's Official Plan to include a framework for achieving the Affordable Housing Target(s)

Timeframe for Action 1 & 2: Short-term (6 months- 1 year)

Promote a Greater Diversity of Dwelling Types



Action 3: Support and permit higher-density types of housing

Timeframe: Medium-term (3-5 years)

Action 4: Support and permit alternate forms of housing

Timeframe: Medium-term (3-5 years)

Action 5: Provide opportunities for the creation and ongoing monitoring of second units

Timeframe: Short-term for conformity; medium-term for monitoring and incentives

Ensure a Healthy Supply of Rental Units



Action 6: Preserve existing purpose-built rental housing stock through the introduction of demolition and conversion control policies as well as a rental replacement by-law

Timeframe: Medium-term (3-5 years)

Action 7: Undertake a formal assessment of the potential to introduce Inclusionary Zoning

Timeframe: Medium-term (3-5 years)

Action 8: Explore the Formalization of the use of Motels as Long-term Stay Accommodation

Timeframe: Review in conjunction with Action # 6, over the medium-term (3-5 years)

Increase Public Education and Provide Advocacy for Partnerships



Action 9: Develop an understanding of upper level government housing programs (regional, provincial, federal)

Timeframe: Short-term (6 months- 1 year)

Action 10: Clearly Define the City's Role and Responsibility in Supporting Housing Affordability

Timeframe: Short-term (6 months- 1 year)

Action 11: Develop a policy to review all surplus municipal land for housing suitability

Timeframe: Short-term (6 months- 1 year)

Increase Public Education and Provide Advocacy for Partnerships



Action 12: Create a database of non-profits and other community groups with land suitable for housing

Timeframe: Short-term (6 months- 1 year)

Action 13: Explore private workforce housing for hospitality and tourism employees

Timeframe: Medium-term (3-5 years)

Action 14: Create an affordable housing information online portal

Timeframe: Short-term (6 months- 1 year)

Action 15: Reduce potential for NIMBYism associated with affordable housing developments

Timeframe: Immediately/ Short-term (6 months- 1 year)

Provide a Variety of Financial Incentives to Promote and Facilitate the Development of Affordable and Rental Housing



Action 16: Review possible exemptions to City fees and property taxes to support the provision of new long-term affordable housing

Timeframe: Medium-term (3-5 years)

Action 17: Develop a City-wide Community Improvement Plan for Affordable Rental Housing

Timeframe: Medium-term (3-5 years)

Action 18: Allocate Appropriate Staff Resources to Implement and Administer the Housing Strategy and Associated Actions

Timeframe: Immediate/ Short-term (6 months- 1 year)

Monitor and Report



Action 19: Develop a monitoring program in the medium to long term for Second Units

Timeframe: Short-term (1-2 years)

Action 20: Develop an annual housing and affordable housing monitoring and reporting system to Council

Timeframe: Short-term (1-2 years)

Action 21: Review and update the Housing Strategy every 5 years

Timeframe: Long-term (5 years, and a 5-year cycle thereafter)

Priority Actions

- Housekeeping OPA-- underway
- Allocate Appropriate Staff Resources
- Preserve existing purpose-built rental housing stock
- Develop a City-wide Community Improvement Plan for Affordable Rental Housing
- Provide opportunities for the creation and ongoing monitoring of second units
- Review possible exemptions to City fees and property taxes
- Explore private workforce housing for hospitality and tourism employees

Next Steps

- Prepare OPA to implement some of the short-term actions (Action 1, 2, 5, 10)
- Planning Act process for approvals of OPA