

# Staff Report



Development Services Department

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**REPORT TO:** Planning and Strategic Initiatives Committee

**DATE OF MEETING:** March 25, 2024

**SUBMITTED BY:** Rosa Bustamante, Director of Planning and Housing Policy / City Planner, 519-741-2200 ext. 7319  
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**WARDS INVOLVED:** All

**DATE OF REPORT:** March 11, 2024

**REPORT NO.:** DSD-2024-121

**SUBJECT:** Planning and Housing Policy Division & Development and Housing Approvals Division - Significant Planning Applications, Policy Projects, Affordable Housing Projects, and Housing Pledge Update

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**RECOMMENDATION:**  
For Information.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to provide an update of significant development applications, policy projects, affordable housing projects and significant projects to streamline and remove barriers as well as our housing pledge update. Not all work that is currently being undertaken by the Planning and Housing Policy & Development and Housing Approvals Divisions is captured in this report, rather a snapshot of significant work is captured.
- Planning staff provide a quarterly update report every March, June, September, and December of each year of all current significant development applications. It is important to be providing greater transparency on significant development applications with the community and Council.
- The key findings of this report include:
  - Since signing the Housing Pledge in March 2023, Kitchener Council has approved Official Plan Amendment and/or Zoning By-law Amendment applications for projects which propose 11,457 dwelling units (32.7% of housing pledge), Planning staff have issued final site plan approval for 3613 dwelling units, and building staff have issued building permits for 2981 dwelling units.
  - Three initiatives associated with the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) are nearing completion: Growing Together, Inclusionary Zoning and Enabling 4 Units. Three of the other five initiatives are also underway with various milestones anticipated later

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in 2024. Two initiatives have not yet been initiated, but have been built into project work plans and will commence in the coming months.

- In this last quarter, significant work has advanced on Growing Together, Inclusionary Zoning and Enabling 4 Units with recommendation reports being brought forward to Council for consideration. Council also authorized the launch of Kitchener's Official Plan review which will result in a new Official Plan for Kitchener in 2026.
  - Kitchener's affordable housing incentives is supporting six projects which will total 350 new affordable housing units in various stages of development from application to construction.
  - Extensive work continues to streamline development approvals, meet provincially mandated timelines and support excellent customer service with the current priority as site plan folder updates to prepare for the public portal.
- There are no financial implications with this report.
  - Community engagement is undertaken for each development application and project, which varies for each.
  - This report supports the delivery of core services.

## **REPORT:**

Since December of 2021, Planning staff have provided a quarterly update report every March, June, September, and December of all current significant development applications. This report, and future quarterly reports, will also include the following:

- Progress and next steps for Kitchener's Housing Accelerator Fund initiatives;
- Progress and next steps for major planning policy projects;
- A summary of development applications that include affordable housing;
- Updates on significant initiatives to remove barriers and streamline processes to support the development of housing;
- Housing Pledge reporting - Development application data required to be reported under a new Provincial regulation – Ontario Regulation 73/23 – Municipal Planning Data Reporting.

It is important to be providing greater transparency on significant development applications with the community and Council. Attached to this report, the Significant Planning Applications Quarterly Report (Q1 2024) provides a summary of the current Planning applications under review at the time of the preparation of this report (Attachment A).

The current significant development applications section includes Subdivision, Official Plan Amendment, and Zoning By-law Amendments that have not received final approval. These are the bulk of the applications that Planning staff consult with the community on an application specific basis. Significant development applications include property specific proposals as well as new greenfield communities (subdivisions). Additional details on the development applications can be found using the online mapping tool available at [www.kitchener.ca/planningapplications](http://www.kitchener.ca/planningapplications).

## **Kitchener's Housing Accelerator Fund Initiatives**

In November 2023 Kitchener received \$42.4 million as part of the Federal government's Housing Accelerator Fund to help deliver more affordable housing in our community. 8 action plan initiatives are part of Kitchener's Housing Accelerator Fund and they include the delivery of:

- Growing Together West: planning framework updates in Kitchener's western protected major transit station areas;
- Growing Together East: planning framework updates in Kitchener's eastern protected major transit station areas;
- Growing Together West Inclusionary Zoning;
- Affordable Housing Construction Offset on City-Owned Lands Incentive
- Not-for-Profit Affordable Rental and Co-op Housing Incentive Pilot;

- Enabling 4 Units – additional dwelling unit implementation;
- Strategic land acquisition and supporting infrastructure;
- A climate adaptation plan as an input into Kitchener’s new Official Plan; and,
- A housing needs assessment

Attachment B provides a description of each initiative, current status, next steps and target completion.

### **Major Planning Projects**

There are currently 14 planning projects underway or that have been recently completed spanning a wide range of topics. These include:

- Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review
- Housing for All implementation
- New Official Plan
- Review of Provincial legislation, policies and plans
- Rental Housing, Eviction and Displacement Study
- Tree Conservation Tools Review
- Urban Design Manual Review
- Hidden Valley Secondary Plan
- Growing Together (Major Transit Station Area) Planning Framework review – West MTSAs and East MTSAs
- Lower Doon Land Use Implementation Study
- Dundee North Secondary Plan
- Inclusionary Zoning
- District Energy Business Case
- Green Development Standards

Attachment C provides a description of each project, current status, next steps, and target completion.

### **Development Applications – Affordable Housing**

With a strong focus on the housing crisis, this report also includes a summary of 2024 current projects that include affordable housing that are either under review, received approvals this year to start construction or are under construction. To address provincial directives, streamline development approvals and support excellent customer service, the report also provides an update on significant process improvements underway in 2024 (Attachment D).

### **Housing Pledge Reporting**

As part of the More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022 (Bill 109), the Planning Act was amended to give the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing the authority to require municipalities to report information on planning matters (Section 64). On April 6 2023, the Province implemented [Ontario Regulation 73/23 - Municipal Planning Data Reporting](#) requiring Ontario’s largest and fastest-growing municipalities, which includes the City of Kitchener to report development application information on a quarterly basis (as per Schedule 2 of the regulation) and additional information on an annual basis (as per Schedule 3 of the regulation).

The City’s quarterly report data includes the following development application types:

- Official Plan Amendments,
- Zoning By-law Amendments,
- Site Plan Applications,
- Minor Variances,
- Land Severances (Consents),
- Plan of Subdivisions,

- Plan of Condominiums,
- Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator Orders, and
- Minister's Zoning Orders

The report data must include the following:

- application identifiers (application ID and address);
- application details, as applicable (date application submitted, date application deemed complete, application status, date of decision, date of adoption/passing, date of registration, number of new residential units if registered);
- heritage information for the subject property as applicable (listed under section 27 (3) of the Ontario Heritage Act, designated to be of cultural heritage value or interest, subject to easement or covenant under section 37 of the Ontario Heritage Act, within a heritage conservation district area); and,
- appeal information if applicable (third party appeal, type of appeal, date of appeal, date of appeal decision).

The data gathered by the Province is being used to measure progress towards various Housing Supply Action Plan commitments and will also provide the information needed to support informed, evidence-based decisions around housing and planning policy. The regulation also complements the Province's initiative of developing standards and achieving consistency for exchange of data required for development applications.

The City of Kitchener has submitted quarterly development application data to the Province for Q4 (from October 1 to December 31, 2023). The Q4 quarterly planning data reports to the Province are attached to this report (Attachment E).

On an annual basis Kitchener is required to report geospatial data for the following areas:

- Strategic Growth Areas
- Employment Areas
- Employment Area conversions
- Major Transit Station Area boundaries
- Settlement Area boundaries.

The City of Kitchener has submitted this annual information to the Province.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This report supports the delivery of core services.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the Council / Committee meeting.

CONSULT – Significant development application specific engagements are undertaken for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law, and Subdivision applications. Engagement includes mailing

postcards to property owners and occupants of all buildings within 240 metres of the subject lands, publishing a newspaper notice when the application is first circulated and when the statutory public meeting is scheduled, as well as informal community meetings including Neighbourhood Meetings and/or site walks. A large plain language sign is also posted on the property.

For planning policy projects, community engagement plans are developed and implemented to ensure fulsome, tailored engagement occurs early and throughout each project at a level commensurate with the scope of the project.

**PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:**

There are no previous reports/authorities related to this matter.

**APPROVED BY:** Justin Readman – General Manager, Development Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment A – Significant Planning Applications Quarterly Report (Q1 2024)
- Attachment B – Housing Accelerator Fund Projects (Q1 2024)
- Attachment C – Significant Planning Projects (Q1 2024)
- Attachment D – Affordable Housing and Significant Streamlining Projects (Q1 2024)
- Attachment E – Provincial O.Reg 73/23 Q4 Quarterly Planning Data Report