

December 2, 2024

Re: Copy of Chloë Hill's delegation, presented on behalf of Kitchener Citizens for Livable Development

To: Planning & Strategic Initiatives Committee members and Committee Clerk

Respected Mayor and Councillors, my name is Chloë Hill. I am a proud resident of the Cedar Hills neighbourhood in Ward 9 and an active member of both Kitchener Citizens for Livable Development and the Cedar Hills Community Group. Today, I stand before you not only as a concerned resident but as the collective voice of a diverse coalition representing more than nine neighbourhoods in and around our downtown core. Together, we are steadfast in our commitment to advancing inclusive policies that prioritize affordable housing, preserve green spaces and ensure meaningful community engagement in the development process.

With the Kitchener Citizens for Livable Development's Chair Peggy Nickels by my side, I'm here on their behalf to urge Council to renew its support for the Inclusionary Zoning plan that you all voted for in March of this year, and not to defer it to 2026.

Ontario faces a significant affordability and homelessness crisis, and Kitchener is no exception. McMaster professor Steve Pomeroy found that between 2011 and 2021, for every subsidized affordable home built, 39 were lost in our Region. Just this week, the *Waterloo Region Record* reported that homelessness has more than doubled in three years, now affecting over 2,300 people.

In March of this year, many of us were encouraged by Council's unanimous approval of the Region's first Inclusionary Zoning by-law. While we found the transition timelines for implementation and the modest set-aside rates to be overly cautious, we saw it as a meaningful step forward in tackling the pressing challenges of affordability and homelessness. Additionally, it helped address some concerns about the substantial upzoning introduced through the Growing Together framework.

When Council approved the Inclusionary Zoning by-law, it directed Staff to conduct a market conditions study by the end of 2024 to assess whether the decision made in March should remain or if the set-aside rates should be increased. You can imagine our frustration upon hearing that Staff are now recommending a deferral of Inclusionary Zoning to 2026 and a reduction in the already conservative set-aside rates!

After thoroughly reviewing the Kitchener Staff report and the analysis of N. Barry Lyon Consultants, we have identified the following concerns:

- Firstly, Community Engagement was limited to members of the development industry and the Kitchener Development Liaison Committee. As a result, the report's recommendation reflects the bias of the development community and is not balanced against the need to address the affordability and housing crisis, which is the point of Inclusionary Zoning. (Source: Staff Report, Report Highlights)
- Secondly, deferring implementation was not an option raised by Council in March 2024 when staff were directed to conduct a market conditions study by year-end. Council specifically

mandated staff to recommend whether the affordable housing percentage should be imposed or increased, not delayed further (Source: Staff Report, Background).

- Next, according to the Region's 2023 Discussion Paper on Inclusionary Zoning, even at the forecasted number of Inclusionary Zoning units for 2031, Kitchener will only be producing about 80 units per year. Deferring the start date of Inclusionary Zoning to 2026 puts us even farther behind meeting housing needs (Source: Discussion Paper, p. 11, June 2023).
- Finally, following our review of both reports, it appears that the Staff Report is based wholly on what the consultants said, with no consideration of the urgency of affordability and homelessness (Source: Staff Report, *Table 1*).

The housing crisis in Kitchener-Waterloo is worsening, with affordability slipping further out of reach for many. Current efforts fall short of meeting the urgent need for accessible housing. Implementing Inclusionary Zoning is a vital step to ensure future developments contribute to affordable housing. The time for decisive action is now—let's build a community for all.

Thank you, Mayor and Councillors, for providing me with the opportunity to speak today and contribute to this important discussion on inclusionary zoning.