

Leslie Macredie

November 29, 2024

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Mayor Berry Vrbanovic and City Councillors
C/O Office of the Mayor and Council
Kitchener City Hall
200 King St. W.
Kitchener, ON N2G 4G7

Re: Staff Report DSD-2024-498 on Inclusionary Zoning within PMTSA

Dear City Councillors and Mayor Vrbanovic:

I submit in writing my delegation to the Planning and Strategic Initiatives Committee regarding Staff Report DSD-202-498 which was based on the commissioned NBLC report *2024 Residential Market Update: IZ Policy Review for Municipal Partners*.

One of the two recommendations of the Report is the deferral of the start of Inclusionary Zoning from January 2025 to January 2026.

The call for the deferral is supported by statistics but the reasons seem to waver. Under the Executive Summary it's stated: "the Report concluded that implementing IZ policy now, as planned for January 2025, could further delay the recovery of the residential construction market at transit-oriented sites and exacerbate current challenges in delivering housing in these areas". But in the conclusion of the same Report the intention has changed: "[Shifting] the commencement of the IZ policy to January 1, 2026 provides an opportunity for staff and municipal team to adequately assess market viability of IZ and provide a more fulsome analysis and engagement with the broader community and development industry". Is the delay recommended because of the market OR because more information is required? Is the NBLC *2024 Residential Market Update* not complete? I may be misinterpreting the Report but it feels like the goal is delay for delay's sake. Even the Build Urban letter to Council suggests another meeting in 2025 BEFORE "finalizing an official implementation date".

Furthermore, who is the broader community? In this round of IZ study there was NO consultation with residents, tenants, or housing advocates. The minutes from the March 18, 2024 City Council meeting clearly state:

"That staff be directed to monitor local market conditions and engage with community and industry, and report back to Council no later than the end of 2024, 2026, 2028 and 2030, with recommendations

on whether inclusionary zoning requirements should continue to be advanced in the timeframe, with the Market Area categorizations, and in manner outlined in this report.”

Both the earlier stages of IZ planning as well as the development of the Rental Replacement legislation were informed by community feedback including I believe input from the Lived Expertise Working Group. I’m left wondering why that step is now absent. Will it be re-introduced in 2026, 2028 and 2030?

Consultation with the community would have raised the implications of the following numbers that we all know.

- 1) October 2024 point-in-time report on homelessness conducted by a number of agencies and volunteers: 2,371 people experiencing homelessness in Waterloo Region
- 2) Canada Mortgage and Housing: Kitchener rents increased by 70% on average between 2013 and 2023
- 3) *KW Record*: For each affordable home built in Waterloo Region, 39 are lost. This is greater than the numbers in Ottawa, Hamilton, Winnipeg, London or Toronto
- 4) Waterloo Region: Recommending an additional \$6.6 million be dedicated to homelessness in the 2026 budget
- 5) Waterloo Region: 9,000 applicants currently on the Region’s waiting list for affordable housing

Granted, IZ addresses a very small portion of a very specific demographic in the housing continuum. But we must strive to protect it so that the shift from homeless to housed can continue however incrementally.

I ask you to please maintain the original IZ framework and allow it to begin as it should in January 2025.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Leslie Macredie