

**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF GEORGINA**

**REPORT NO. SI-2024-0017**

**FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF  
COUNCIL**

September 11, 2024

**SUBJECT: Update on the Affordable Housing and Homelessness Resolution No. C-2024-0080, carried from the March 5, 2024 Special Council Meeting**

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**1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That Council receive Report No. SI-2024-0017 prepared by the Corporate Strategy and Transformation Division, Strategic Initiatives Department dated September 11, 2024 respecting an update on the Affordable Housing and Homelessness Resolution No. C-2024-0080, as per the Special Meeting of Council held on March 5, 2024; and,
2. That Council approve a request for \$180,000 over two years in funding from the Town's Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve to secure additional resources (that may include a combination of internal and external resources) to successfully advance the actions identified in this report, including implementation of the initiatives within the Building Faster Fund (BFF) Investment Plan.

**2. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the progress made and actions taken by staff in collaboration with York Region, the United Way of Greater Toronto (UWGT) and other key partners on Council's Resolution No. [C-2024-0080](#), as per the March 5, 2024 Special Council Meeting.

The timeline of this update is from March 6 to August 31, 2024. Development and implementation of actions is ongoing and will be reported through regular updates to Council.

**3. BACKGROUND:**

York Region is the Service System Manager (SSM) responsible for planning, administering and managing programs and services for housing and homelessness across the Region, including the Town of Georgina.

York Region works collaboratively with partners at all levels of government, including the lower-tier municipalities and local agencies, to develop and implement successful affordable housing and homelessness strategies and solutions.

In September 2023, Council passed Resolution No. [C-2023-0338](#). As part of the Resolution, Council directed staff to work collaboratively with York Region to organize a special meeting of Council to learn more about affordable housing and homelessness, and discuss actions to be taken to address the issues facing the Town of Georgina.

In March 2024, Council held a Special Meeting on affordable housing and homelessness that included presentations from York Region, United Way of Greater Toronto, and Northern South Simcoe Ontario Health Team, as well as non-profit organizations Inn From The Cold, Blue Door, and the Salvation Army. From that meeting, Council unanimously passed Resolution No. [C-2024-0080](#) to address housing and homelessness in Georgina. The Resolution stressed the need to enhance the partnership with York Region, the United Way of Greater Toronto and other local organizations as well as a request that York Region permanently fund and operate a seasonal shelter in Georgina.

In addition, staff was also requested to consult with local developers, like Treasure Hill Homes, to build multi-unit rental housing and/or smaller entry-level private ownership units, that staff review Town-owned lands that could be set aside to develop purpose-built rental/deeply affordable housing, and also bring forward a business case to support the Georgina Community Food Pantry. Further, that staff identify the need for additional resources (financial, staffing and community organizations) required to drive forward potential initiatives aimed at providing more affordable housing options for our various demographic groups, including seniors.

Immediately following the Council session, staff coordinated meetings with the designated partners to identify and start to deliver on specific actions that would advance the objectives as outlined in the Resolution.

#### **4. ANALYSIS:**

**Town staff, in collaboration with York Region, the United Way of Greater Toronto and other community partners, have made progress toward advancing actions related to Council Resolution [C-2024-0080](#).**

From March 5 to August 31, 2024, progress has been made toward achieving the objectives as set out through Council's Resolution [C-2024-0080](#). Through extensive collaboration and commitment to action, much work has been done to set the foundation for addressing the complex issues related to affordable housing and homelessness.

The actions and next steps outlined in this report have been provided with input from all key partners responsible for and leading the initiatives.

Chart 1 below categorizes the Council Resolution areas, the actions and next steps taken and identified for the period of March 5 to August 31, 2024. For most areas, work continues beyond the reporting period and will be ongoing.

Council Resolution Area	Actions and Next Steps
<p><b>1.</b> Continue to consult with York Region, as the provincially designated lead for Housing and Homelessness, on partnership opportunities for addressing homelessness in Georgina and increasing the number of affordable community housing units in the Town, including the identification of specific actions within their 10-year plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In July 2024, at the request of the Town, York Region initiated a front line operational group that includes staff from York Region, the Town and subject matter experts (that are called upon as needed). The group will be meeting regularly with the purpose of working together to identify opportunities to address the more immediate needs related to homelessness in Georgina.</li> <li>• The Town and York Region leadership teams continue to meet to discuss various affordable housing initiatives. In July 2024, the Town and York Region engaged in brainstorming sessions on potential initiatives for the Building Faster Fund (BFF). The agreed upon recommendations are being presented to Council on Sept. 11, 2024 through Report SI-2024-0015.</li> <li>• York Region began engagement with the Town of Georgina Council to inform the homelessness service system plan and 10-year housing and homelessness plan on March 5, 2024. A key action related to the homelessness plan is to increase collaboration with municipal staff. In addition, local municipalities will continue to be engaged in the development of the 10-year housing and homelessness plan. Once complete, the Province must review the plans with a presentation targeted to go to Regional Council in 2025.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b> Encourage continued partnerships and coordination of resources between York Region, local grass roots organizations, businesses and local individuals with respect to resources being provided throughout the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Region continues to explore options for increasing seasonal shelter capacity including evaluating the feasibility of providing seasonal shelter beds within existing York Region owned properties and the development of a seasonal program at the Salvation Army camp.</li> <li>• Through the York Region led operational group, local community stakeholders will be engaged in discussions to enhance collaboration and optimize opportunities for delivering programs, services and supports to individuals experiencing homelessness or at-risk of being homeless in Georgina.</li> </ul>

Council Resolution Area	Actions and Next Steps
<p><b>2.</b> Encourage continued partnerships and coordination of resources between York Region, local grass roots organizations, businesses and local individuals with respect to resources being provided throughout the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandgate Women's Shelter of York Region is proposing to build transitional housing for women and their children that is projected to add 10 units of housing for 15-20 individuals for up to four years. Sandgate has acquired the land, with donor funding, that adjoins the current emergency shelters and has been consulting with the United Way of Greater Toronto (UWGT) and others on opportunities for funding.</li> <li>• Sandgate was recently approved for one year capital funding through the UWGT to assist with their application to build transition housing for women and their children. The application to build does require land use planning approvals, including official plan and zoning by-law amendments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b> Send a written request to York Region to continue to fund/operate a seasonal shelter(s) within Georgina permanently and expand the hours of shelter operations to seven days/week and include daytime drop-in hours, recognizing Georgina is a large community and additional shelters may be required in multiple locations, and that transportation to these shelters be made readily available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A letter from Mayor Quirk and Regional Councillor Davison requesting support for the continuation of the seasonal shelter in Georgina was sent to Regional Chair Emmerson in April 2024. The communication was received by Regional Council Committee of the Whole on May 9, 2024 with a referral to staff.</li> <li>• As part of the Rapid Deployment Actions, focusing on services that help people experiencing homelessness meet their immediate needs and become stably housed, the Region is working with the Salvation Army, York Region Public Health and Georgina Fire and Rescue Services to determine how many additional emergency housing beds can be added to Sutton Youth Services in early fall of 2024. York Region continues to explore potential sites to operate a seasonal shelter program for adults.</li> <li>• The Town of Georgina approved the use of space at the Link in Sutton for a drop-in program in collaboration with York Region and Inn From The Cold. The drop-in is expected to open mid-to-late September, before the cold weather season begins. Also, going forward the Link will play a part in <a href="#">York Region's Heat Relief Strategy for People Experiencing Homelessness</a>.</li> </ul>

Council Resolution Area	Actions and Next Steps
<p><b>4.</b> Consult/negotiate with Treasure Hill (and other development industry partners where applicable) on a partnership framework to build a multi-unit rental housing development and/or smaller entry-level private ownership units, encouraging the building of housing opportunities at all levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision applications were approved by Council on April 17, 2024 (Garland Community (BT) Corp). Conditions of approval include a requirement to provide options in the sales/marketing program for the creation/rough-in of additional residential units, and discussions continue with respect to the potential conversion of some townhouse blocks from freehold ownership to rental tenure.</li> <li>• A Zoning By-law Amendment application was approved by Council on June 21, 2023 (New Building Blocks Inc., 1750582 Ontario Inc. and 2680682 Ontario Inc.) to facilitate the construction of an apartment building with 84 rental units at 27, 33 and 43 The Queensway South in Keswick. In April 2024, the Town received a request on behalf of the owner to re-assign servicing allocation to facilitate condominium ownership rather than rental tenure within the proposed apartment building. The request is under consideration as part of the ongoing servicing allocation review and update.</li> <li>• A Zoning By-law Amendment application was approved by Council on March 27, 2024 (Greengate Village Limited) to facilitate the construction a 20-unit rental townhouse development in Keswick.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.</b> Consult with the United Way of Greater Toronto and others on partnership opportunities to create deeply affordable housing units in the Town.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upon confirmation from Regional Council and York Region staff in May 2024, the Town initiated a Core Policy Group including leadership staff from York Region, the United Way of Greater Toronto and the Town of Georgina. The purpose of this group is to identify and implement shared strategies and actions that support the creation and maintenance of affordable/deeply affordable housing units and other services needed along the housing continuum. Ongoing discussions are in progress.</li> <li>• Other projects and initiatives funded by UWGT in York Region, many of which also support the housing needs of Georgina residents, were created through partnership with York Region Community Outreach Services, Loft Community Services, Blue Door, 360 Kids, Inn From The Cold, ENAGB Indigenous Youth Agency, Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child and Family Services and John Howard Society of York Region etc.</li> </ul>

Council Resolution Area	Actions and Next Steps
<p><b>5.</b> Consult with the United Way of Greater Toronto and others on partnership opportunities to create deeply affordable housing units in the Town.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For 2024/2025, the UWGT is distributing funding to Sandgate Women's Shelter of York Region to assist with their proposal to build transition housing for women and their children. The initiative is expected to add 10 units of housing for 15-20 individuals for up to four years.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6.</b> Consult with development industry partners on incorporating finished or roughed-in accessory apartment units within new ground related housing units.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A total of 38 additional residential units/accessory apartments were granted building permits in 2023. Discussions with builders are ongoing to include additional residential units and/or rough-ins as purchasing options for homebuyers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7.</b> Identify on a preliminary basis existing and possible additional financial/other incentives that could be explored to foster more affordable housing units.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under the Development Charges (DC) Act, affordable residential units are exempt from development charges. Further, the Region offers various DC deferrals and incentives. The two that apply to the Town are the 36-month and the 5-year Development Charges deferral programs for Affordable and Purpose-Built Rental Buildings.</li> <li>The Town was granted approximately \$1.5M through the Building Faster Fund (BFF) with a proposed Investment Plan aimed at increasing affordable housing being put forward to Council on Sept 11, 2024 (Report SI-2024-0015) for approval. Also, staff have drafted a proposal for Phase 2 of the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) with recommendations that include the development of an incentive pilot program related to Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs) to be considered for approval by Council on Sept 11, 2024 (Report SI-2024-0019).</li> </ul>
<p><b>8.</b> Identify resources (financial, staffing and community organizations) required to drive forward potential initiatives aimed at providing more affordable housing options for our various demographic groups, including seniors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town staff have identified the required/additional resources needed to drive forward the initiatives related to Council Resolution <a href="#">C-2024-0080</a> along with the Building Faster Fund. The details are provided further down in this report.</li> </ul>

Council Resolution Area	Actions and Next Steps
<p><b>9.</b> Continue to review the provision of Town-owned lands for the development of purpose-built rental and deeply affordable units.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town staff will be presenting an update report on invest/divest of Town-owned lands to Council in Oct. 2024.</li> <li>• The Town and York Region continue to review and assess available lands that could be used for affordable housing.</li> <li>• Options to leverage public land (including Regional and local municipal) were identified at a meeting of the Region's Housing Affordability Task Force in May 2024. Regional staff are assessing options in response to feedback from the Task Force and will consider land donation as part of an upcoming consolidated plan.</li> </ul>
<p><b>10.</b> Bring forward a business case as part of the 2025 budget deliberation process that proposes dedicated annual funding of \$25,000 for the Georgina Food Pantry and that staff return to a subsequent meeting in Q2 of 2024 regarding potential funding details or in-kind contributions for the Good Food Collective and its community lunches for the remainder of 2024.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town staff have developed and will present a Business Case to request annual ongoing funding for the Georgina Food Pantry as part of the 2025 budget.</li> </ul>
<p><b>11.</b> Report back to Council in Q3 on the above, which may need to be dealt with in closed session if discussing acquisition/disposition of property.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By way of this report, Town staff are reporting back to Council and providing an update on the Council Resolution <a href="#">C-2024-0080</a>.</li> </ul>

While Town staff, in collaboration with York Region, the United Way of Greater Toronto and other community partners, have made progress toward advancing actions related to Council Resolution [C-2024-0080](#), closing the housing affordability gap for the residents of Georgina, including an increase in supports, services and programs across the housing continuum will take a great deal of time and local effort to achieve.

Given the priority and magnitude of the housing and homelessness challenges facing our community, as well as the workload and timeline of March 2026 associated with the

development and implementation of the Building Faster Fund, staff have identified the need for required/additional resources to successfully move the actions and initiatives forward.

A summary of the roles and responsibilities associated with the requested resources include but are not limited to the following:

<b>Affordable Housing and Homelessness Lead/Consultant Roles and Responsibilities</b>
<p><b>Key Responsibilities (for both Council Resolution and Building Faster Fund)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full project management support, including development of project charters, work plans, agendas, minutes, correspondence/communication and follow up on action items</li> <li>• Central point of contact for Project Teams, Stakeholders and Vendors</li> <li>• Lead, coordinate and facilitate all project meetings</li> <li>• Conduct research and analysis including identification of data sources, collection of data, incorporating critical findings and recommendations into the project</li> <li>• Identify the need for required project resources and support development of requests and recommendations</li> <li>• Provide strategic guidance and advice to the project teams and support navigation of politically sensitive matters, complex risks/relationships and changes</li> <li>• Utilize and leverage existing relationships with all levels of government and key stakeholders (e.g., Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, etc.) to support advocacy plan and advance the actions of the project</li> <li>• Author and present regular update reports to Town of Georgina Council and the Senior Leadership Team</li> </ul>
<p><b>Specific Responsibilities for Council Resolution <a href="#">C-2024-0080</a></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead the Core Policy Group including coordinating, preparing for and facilitating meetings, agendas, minutes, correspondence/communication and follow up on actions</li> <li>• Town liaison to the York Region led Operational Group, including attending/participating in all meetings and bringing information back to the project teams</li> <li>• Support to York Region and the Town staff teams related to the development of partnerships and initiatives/programs addressing Affordable Housing and Homelessness in Georgina</li> <li>• Participate in meetings related to drop-in programs for the Link and Inn From The Cold Seasonal Shelter Program, and provide expertise and knowledge related to development and implementation</li> </ul>



- Coordinate and facilitate engagement/consultation with local developers, the Town and York Region to enhance/advance opportunities for affordable housing in Georgina
- Support procurement activities to secure third-party project expert(s), including drafting of acquisition requests, development of selection and evaluation criteria, participation in the evaluation committees and managing the 3rd party contracts, etc.
- Support project partners with the development and implementation of programs and initiatives specific to the Council Resolution

**Specific Responsibilities for the Building Faster Fund (BFF)**

- Lead the Project Team for Building Faster Fund (BFF), including preparing, coordinating and facilitating meetings, agendas, minutes, correspondence/communication and follow up actions
- Lead and facilitate the development and implementation of the approved BFF Investment Plan
- Support the procurement activities associated with the BFF, including drafting and managing of the Expression of Interest, the selection and evaluation of the applicants, etc.
- Manage the contract with the selected organization(s) including support with research, scans/data collection, connection to developers and navigation of land prospects identification/acquisition/development processes, ongoing risk/issue management, funding distribution/payment, etc.
- Ensure the project deliverables, milestones, budget and timelines are met as outlined through the BFF program requirements, authoring and presenting update and final reports with recommendations to the Town and funders as needed

**NOTE:** Should the Town's proposal for Intake 2 of the Government of Canada's Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) be approved (Report SI-2024-0019), the above resource(s) could be scaled up to support certain elements of the project management responsibilities associated with the HAF project.

As Town staff do not currently have the capacity nor the specific expertise needed to successfully advance all of the above work, the request for \$180,000 over two years in funding, if approved, would allow staff to quickly secure the required resources and expertise to meet the critical BFF timeline of March 2026 and also proceed with the actions related to the Council Resolution [C-2024-0080](#).

## **5. RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

The update and associated actions support the Corporate Strategic Plan's priority and goals related to housing supply and affordability.

<b>Pillar</b>	Ensuring Balanced Growth
<b>Goal</b>	Support a diversity of housing types in Georgina
<b>Initiative</b>	Advocate for and support building new residential units with a range of affordability and explore opportunities for partnerships and collaboration with York Region

In addition, the update aligns to Resolution No. [C-2024-0080](#) from the March 5, 2024 Special Council Meeting.

## **6. FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY IMPACT:**

This report includes a request for Council to approve up to \$180,000 in funding over two years from the Town's Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve to secure required/additional resources (that may include a combination of internal and external resources) to successfully advance the actions outlined in this report, including implementation of the initiatives within the Building Faster Fund Investment Plan (Report SI-2024-0015).

## **7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:**

There are no public consultations or notice requirements associated with this report.

## **8. CONCLUSION:**

It is understood that homelessness and the need for deeply affordable housing are serious and growing issues within York Region, including the Town of Georgina, with elevated home prices, increased rates of homelessness, and challenges related to housing affordability, adequacy, and supply.

York Region as the provincially designated service system manager for homelessness and housing services, through their system plans work, has developed goals and priority areas to guide the Region, local municipalities and community partners toward improving, enhancing and aligning the delivery of services and supports for all residents along the housing continuum.

While addressing the challenges related to affordable housing and homelessness have put a strain on upper and lower tier government resources, both York Region and the Town of Georgina remain committed to working together, in lock step with their community partners, to maintain and expand services for Georgina residents.

In response to the March 5, 2024 Special Meeting of Council on Affordable Housing and Homelessness, staff have continued to engage with York Region, the United Way of Greater Toronto and other partners having made progress on the actions identified through Council Resolution [C-2024-0080](#). However, there is much more to be done. With that in mind, staff have identified the need for required/additional resources that, if approved, would move the Town and its partners quickly to the next phase of action and ensure timeline of March 2026 for the Building Faster Fund is met.

### **APPROVALS**

Prepared By:	Susan Lazzer, Project Manager, Strategic Initiatives
Reviewed By:	Olga Lawton, Manager, Corporate Strategy and Transformation
Recommended By:	Shawn Nastke, Director, Strategic Initiatives Denis Beaulieu, Director, Development Services
Approved By:	Rob Wheeler, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Ryan Cronsberry, Chief Administrative Officer