



Homes for All

Community and Health Services Committee
March 5, 2024



Purpose

To provide an overview of three reports related to advancing the work of the Homes for All strategic priority.

Accelerating Housing on Municipal and Partner Lands

Affordable Housing Policy and Program Incentives

Property Tax Exemption for Affordable Housing



Homes for all

Factors Impacting Housing Affordability in Our Community

Housing crisis

Increased
inflation

Increased cost
of living

Growth of
region



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Tools Available to Regional Government

Use of Existing
Lands

Acquisition of New
Properties

Incentives

Protections through
Policy

Taxation

Collaboration



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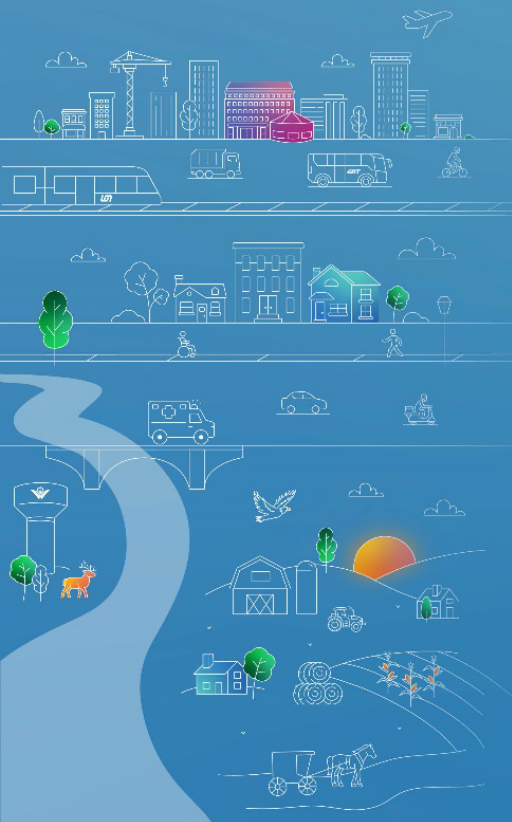
Strategic Plan 2023-2027

Vision

A compassionate community that cares for all people, stewards the land for future generations and where everyone has the opportunity to live a good life.

Mission

Bringing life's essentials to each and every person in Waterloo Region.



Homes for all

We will invest in affordable homes and economic opportunity for all that are part of inclusive and environmentally sustainable communities.

- Move quickly to create affordable, accessible, and equitable housing
- Eliminate chronic homelessness and reliance on traditional shelter models
- Invest in upstream solutions to reduce housing and economic precarity
- Unlock Region-owned land that supports community growth

Climate aligned growth



As we grow, we will support a healthy environment where communities can thrive. Through intentional collaboration and creativity, we will support sustainable community growth.

- Use a climate adaptation lens to re-imagine infrastructure, land and services for growth
- Foster car alternative options through complete streets and extended alternative transportation networks
- Steward our natural environment and shared resources as we grow



Equitable services and opportunities

Through collaboration and innovative design, we will provide equitable, accessible services across Waterloo Region that support the social determinants of health, safety and complete communities as we grow.

- Ensure services are inclusive, accessible, culturally safe and appropriate
- Design equitable Regional services that meet local community needs
- Explore new models of service through community collaboration and partnerships

growing
with care

Resilient and future ready organization



The Region of Waterloo is a great place to work, where everyone is valued, feels they belong and where they have the supports and tools they need to do a great job. We will be prepared for the future by providing a safe space for bold ideas and experimentation, based on data and other ways of knowing.

- Foster an empowered, people-centred culture
- Reconcile past injustices to advance our future together
- Explore new service models and partnerships to achieve fiscal resilience and better service

Homes for All – 2024 Initiatives

Create Housing

- Building Better Futures Plan
- Explore Policy Options
- Improve service levels for Waterloo Region Housing
- Development Tracking System
- Dedicated PM Team

End Chronic Homelessness

- The Plan to End Chronic Homelessness

Invest Upstream

- Service Provider Pilot (EO Transformation)
- Sunny Side Campus Master Plan
- Economic Development Strategy
- Airport Master Plan

Unlock Lands

- Expedite Regionally-owned lands & New land portfolio for affordable and attainable homes
- Shovel-Ready Strategy for employment and industrial development



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Equitable services and opportunities



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Resilient and future ready organization



Accelerating Affordable Housing on Municipal and Partner Lands

(PDL-ADM-24-001)



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Equitable services and opportunities



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Resilient and future ready organization

Accelerating Affordable Housing on Municipal and Partner Lands



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Accelerating Affordable Housing on Municipal and Partner Lands

Five Priority Areas:

Rapid Housing Municipal Committee

- A committee of the Region and area municipal CAOs
- Beginning work in March 2024
- Staff will provide an update to Council on the initiatives of the committee in Fall 2024

Inventory of municipally-owned lands for affordable housing

- Existing amount of available Regional lands for development are limited
- Currently pursuing strategic acquisition opportunities
- Land Readiness Team to accelerate the technical work and development analysis of projects

Regionally-Owned Lands & Procurement Process

- Projects underway
- New approach to RFPs – testing new ways to increase affordability and attainable housing options



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Accelerating Affordable Housing on Municipal and Partner Lands

Five Priority Areas Continued:

Partner Lands for Affordable Housing Development

- Interest from Not-for-Profit organizations to convert their land for affordable housing
- Requesting support from Region of Waterloo and other levels of government
- Staff are coordinating outreach to identify organizations interested in completing development analysis of their lands, which the land readiness team could support
- Staff will provide an update to Council on the initiatives of the committee in Fall 2024

Partnerships with Build Now and Development Stakeholders

- Ongoing conversation with stakeholders, land owners, not-for-profit and institutional partners
- Strong support for an acceleration of housing-related initiatives
- Opportunities to innovate in the approach to shifting the housing market in Waterloo Region



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Affordable Housing Policy and Program Incentives

(CSD-HOU-24-003)

Property Tax Exemption for Affordable Housing

(CSD-HOU-24-004)



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Equitable services
and opportunities



Climate aligned
growth



Resilient and future
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Affordable Housing Background

- Waterloo Region is losing affordable housing in the private market faster than we can create new affordable housing units
- Incentives are needed to encourage the development of more affordable housing units, and maintain existing units
- Developers who received capital grants to create some affordable units have expiring agreements, meaning those units may stop being affordable in the near term
- Tax exemptions create economic viability and sustainability



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Key Considerations

Incentives remain
crucial for increasing
affordable housing
stock



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Recommendations

For Council approval to:

- Explore policies and programs to preserve and generate affordable housing
- Continued collaboration with Area Municipalities
- Update Property Tax Exemption Program to further incentivize new affordable housing units
- Work with Area Municipalities to develop application process for 2025



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