

CHAPTER 4: HOUSING POLICIES

4.1 GENERAL POLICIES

- 4.1.1 The Township will maintain the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 10 years taking into account the density and *reurbanization* targets of this Plan, and if necessary, lands which are designated and available for residential development.
- 4.1.2 The Township will maintain, where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three year supply of residential units available through land suitably zoned to achieve the density and *reurbanization* targets of this Plan, and land in draft approved and registered plans.
- 4.1.3 The Township will give priority to the approval of *development applications* which provide housing types that are needed in the community.
- 4.1.4 The Township will encourage a high level of repair and maintenance in the existing housing stock by taking advantage of Federal, Provincial and Regional housing programs, adopting and implementing *Community Improvement Plans*, and by enforcing occupancy standards by-laws.
- 4.1.5 The Township may review its municipal development standards for sidewalks, curbs and gutters, and right-of-way widths to identify opportunities for reducing development costs while maintaining adequate servicing.
- 4.1.6 The Township Zoning By-law will be amended as necessary to implement the policies of this Section.

4.2 RANGE AND MIX OF HOUSING TYPES

- 4.2.1 The Township will encourage the development and integration of a diverse range and mix of housing types and tenure options consistent with the *reurbanization* and density targets established in this Plan. The Township will:
- a) provide opportunities for *reurbanization* within the *built-up area* of the Wellesley Urban Area, except where *infrastructure* is inadequate or there are significant physical constraints;
 - b) promote the efficient use of land in new residential developments and in redeveloping areas; and,
 - c) support and encourage innovative lot configurations, housing designs and construction techniques.
- 4.2.2 The Township will plan and provide for the development of *affordable housing* in both home ownership and rental housing, to meet the various physical, social, economic and personal support needs of future and current residents by:

- a) requiring, wherever appropriate, where a *development application* proposing residential uses is submitted for a site containing two hectares or more of developable lands, a minimum of 30 percent of new residential dwelling units to be planned in forms other than single detached and semi-detached dwellings, and may include housing forms such as street front townhouses and multiple residential units, in accordance with Section 3A of the Regional Official Plan.
- b) integrating compact, *mixed-use* development in new residential developments and redeveloping areas;
- c) supporting the construction of assisted housing, not-for-profit and affordable private sector residential units; and
- d) permitting the addition of one self-contained, residential unit (i.e., secondary suites) in detached, semi-detached and row houses, and ancillary structures located on the same lot in both existing and newly developing residential neighbourhoods, except where *infrastructure* is inadequate or there are significant physical constraints.

4.2.3 The Township will collaborate with the Region and other agencies in the preparation of the Region's Community Action Plan for Housing and the Homelessness to Housing Stability Strategy.

4.2.4 The Township will endeavour to provide a range of planning and regulatory incentives that encourage *affordable housing*. Such incentives may include:

- a) fast-tracking *development applications* that contain an *affordable housing* component;
- b) density bonusing;
- c) collaborating with community partners participating in Regional, Provincial or Federal programs to foster the provision of *affordable housing*; and
- d) providing financial relief in the form of Development Charge exemptions or deferrals for *affordable housing* projects.

4.3 ASSISTED AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

4.3.1 Proposed residential development in the Wellesley Urban Area will include a portion of ownership and rental dwellings that provide barrier-free access to people with mobility limitations.

4.3.2 The Township will permit *special needs housing* in all residential areas, including areas with access to medical facilities, *employment areas*, social services, *human services*, other *special needs housing* and amenities, subject to the policies of this Plan. The Township Zoning By-law shall not distinguish between the users of *special needs housing* on the basis of personal characteristics.

4.4 SENIORS' HOUSING

- 4.4.1 The Township will encourage and support seniors' housing projects that allow seniors to "age-in-place" and remain active in the community for as long as possible. Any form of seniors' housing will be encouraged to locate in close proximity to commercial and retail areas, community and recreational facilities, institutional uses and parks/open space areas.
- 4.4.2 The Township will support other forms of housing for seniors such as retirement homes, rest homes, nursing homes, long-term care facilities and other seniors housing complexes.
- 4.4.3 Proposed retirement, lifestyle or leisure communities will be required to locate in the Wellesley Urban Area or in Rural Settlement Areas.

4.5 CONDOMINIUM CONVERSION

- 4.5.1 A *development application* to create a plan of condominium, which would result in the conversion of rental *affordable housing* to condominium ownership, may only be permitted where:
- a) the current or latest vacancy rate for comparable rental units for the Township, or the Kitchener Census Metropolitan Area if not available for the Township, as surveyed by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, is 3.0% or greater for the preceding three years;
 - b) the conversion will address and result in the creation of *affordable housing* for affordable home ownership;
 - c) the conversion will rectify existing health and safety issues through the completion of building renovations/retrofits, the cost of which would necessitate an increase in rent levels above the affordability threshold;
 - d) the Township has issued building permits within the previous twelve month period for the construction of one or more residential buildings intended for rental occupancy and containing no fewer dwelling units than the number of units contained in the building for which conversion is proposed;
 - e) the owner/applicant submits a detailed inspection report on the physical condition of the property by a qualified architect or engineer to the satisfaction of the Region;
 - f) the building for which conversion is proposed meets the requirements of the property standards by-law and the requirements of the Ontario Building and Fire Codes;
 - g) the proposal satisfies any criteria contained in the Rental Housing Protection Act and other criteria established by the Province that may be applicable; and

- h) the owner(s) agrees to give all tenants of the building first right of refusal to purchase a unit or an interest or share with a right to occupy a unit in the converted building.

4.6 BED AND BREAKFAST ESTABLISHMENTS

4.6.1 Bed and breakfast operations will be permitted within all single-detached dwellings in the township provided:

- a) the character of the dwelling is not substantially altered; and
- b) all compatibility, safety and servicing requirements are met including the provision of adequate parking.

4.6.2 The Township Zoning By-law shall define a bed and breakfast operation use as distinct from a guesthouse and establish regulations addressing their establishment and operation.