

# City of Brampton Affordable Housing CIP

## What We Heard Report



### Context

The City of Brampton is the fastest growing city among Canada’s 25 largest cities. As the population of the City continues to grow, so does the demand for housing.

### Purpose

The draft City-wide Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan (Affordable Housing CIP) was informed by the current policy and legislative framework, an environmental scan of best practices, input from City staff, non-profit and private sector organizations that are involved in providing affordable housing, and financial analysis. Based on what we heard, some key considerations for the development of the program were outlined and these details were the basis for the projects Key Program Components.

The three key program considerations are:



#### Enhanced System Supports:

The Concierge Program is a recommended component for the City-wide CIP. The Concierge Program would serve as a central support system for affordable housing providers through processes relating to affordable housing delivery.



#### Large, Long-Term Investment:

To incentivize affordable rental and ownership housing development in Brampton, it is recommended that the City adopt grants or incentives tied to the provision of affordable units. The four main incentives explored in Phase 1 were: up-front grants, reimbursements, annual grants (TIEGs), and reduction in parking requirements.



#### Small, Short-Term Investment:

The City of Brampton has a well-established Additional Residential Unit (ARU) policy and has indicated an interest in including a rebate program for garden suites, as part of the City-wide Affordable Housing CIP.



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### Engagement Opportunities

Phase 2 Engagement included a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting held on March 21, 2024. There was a presentation on project timeline, research completed in Phase 1, such as the initial program operations and considerations, financial analysis, and feedback received to-date. Key Program Components were presented, with Mentimeter, an interactive presentation tool used with digital polling to obtain feedback.

As part of Phase 3 Engagement for the City-wide Affordable Housing CIP a TAC Meeting was held on August 21, 2024. The TAC meeting included a presentation on the revised Community Improvement Plan, including details on the Implementation and Monitoring of the Plan, as well as a guided question and answer period.

### Engagement Objectives

Phase 2 engagement focused on gathering comments on the Plan’s Key Program Components, as feedback was used to inform the Draft Incentive Program and support the development of the Implementation and Governance Plan. Phase 3 engagement focused on gathering comments on the CIP’s Implementation and Governance Plan, and the Monitoring Program aspects.

### Themes

#### Phase 2

In Phase 2, TAC Members were asked to, in one sentence or less, describe their understanding of the City’s housing needs. The following is a concise summary of key takeaways:



The City has diverse needs, students to seniors and everyone in between.



More inventory and housing is needed, expanding housing options to increase the supply as there is currently a shortage of affordable housing options in Brampton.



Opportunities to explore include up-front grants, reimbursements, and gentle density development.



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Recent housing solutions or best practices were also discussed, examples include partnerships through formal incentive programs, government making land available, and supporting projects through the planning approval process.

Using Mentimeter, questions were asked for each of the following themes: Expanded Concierge Program, Grants and Incentives, Rebate Program for Garden Suites, and Implementation Considerations. Key comments have been summarized by the themes below.

### Expanded Concierge Program

- Participants agreed that the components of the Concierge Program resonated with them and that the components are important.
- Streamlining the process and building capacity for a Concierge Program was an area of discussion, as navigating the approvals process was highlighted as a key component. Through this discussion, it was noted that efforts to increase the City's resources and capacity is an area of interest to support an efficient system when it comes to processing affordable housing projects.

### Grants and Incentives

- TAC members were asked to identify their preferred grant or incentive through a digital poll and up-front grants, reimbursements, and annual grants all received one vote.
- The cons for up-front grants were discussed, as members noted that they can be risky, in particular for newer non-profits.
- Participants noted that having a variety of tools available is a good approach, as the City has a annual grant set up for office employment.
- It would be ideal to have a portfolio of tools that can be selected.
- Other grants and incentives were discussed, such as the SEED program run by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. It was

noted that smaller organizations may use SEED over other opportunities, as SEED focuses on funding initial studies and investigations and is a two-step process making it easier to navigate.

### Rebate Program for Garden Suites

- Comments received noted that the City has established an ARU policy.
- TAC members responded that there is the general preference in favour of gentle density development compared to proactively encouraging garden suites as a form of affordable housing.
- Concerns were expressed with the administrative resources required to implement affordability requirements and ongoing monitoring compared to a one-time rebate.

### Implementation Considerations

- Up-front grants were noted as valuable and the City should examine the viability of projects and funding sources to mitigate some of the risks discussed.
- Participants highlighted in the discussion on rentership versus ownership that focusing on renter households better aligns with the City's affordability objectives. Comments recognized the affordable rental shortage with rentership opportunities needing to be an area of focus. It was highlighted that a



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TIEG is something that can be impactful for rental projects.

- Comments noted that it is preferred for their to be a number of grants and incentives, a suite of funding tools in addition to the concierge program to be part of the Affordable Housing CIP.

### Phase 3

Phase 3 Key themes from TAC members included:



Feedback noted the importance of having a Concierge staff member with the right skill set and experience in order to be effective, this would include an understanding of planning, finance, and legal implications.



Discussion and confirmation that the garden suite program should not include an affordability requirement but should be monitored annually for trends and effectiveness in creating new gentle density housing opportunities.



Participants expressed interest in ensuring that there will be effective key performance indicators so that both the municipality and the public will be able to understand the value that the CIP is providing.

