

Report to Council

Report Title:	CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund Grant Application		
Prepared By:	Fiona Hamilton, Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk), Dalton Stone, Municipal Services Coordinator, Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer and Dieter Weltz, Building and Planning Manager		
Department:	Administration		
Date:	August 8, 2023		
Report Number:	CAO2023-14	File Number:	C11AD, F11
Attachments:	CMHC HAF Resource Sheet		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number CAO2023-14 - CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund Grant Application, prepared by Fiona Hamilton, Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk), Dalton Stone, Municipal Services Coordinator, Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer and Dieter Weltz, Building and Planning Manager and in doing so approves applying to the CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund, and approving the Action Plan based on the initiatives below, and further delegates authority to Sonya Watson, CAO, Fiona Hamilton, DLLS (Clerk) and Dieter Weltz, (CBO) jointly to approve the final action based on feedback received from the Ministry of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, and further approves Monteith Brown Planning Consultants completing a Housing Needs Assessment for Brockton.

Report:

Background:

The Housing Accelerator Fund ("HAF") is an application-based program that was introduced in the 2022 Federal Budget with a funding allocation of \$4 billion until 2026-2027. The program aims to bring about significant change in local government's control over land use planning and development approvals. The goal is to support lasting changes that will improve housing supply for years to come. As part of the application process, applicants must outline the actions that they will take to increase housing supply and reflect these initiatives in an action plan. Brockton is eligible under the Small/Rural/North/Indigenous category located anywhere in Canada with a population of less than 10,000 (based on 2021 census data).

Applicants are required to meet the following minimum requirements:

- Develop an action plan as part of their HAF application, including satisfying the prescribed minimum number of initiatives (5).

- Commit to a housing supply growth target within their action plan that increases their average annual rate of growth by at least 10%. The growth rate must also exceed 1.1%.
- Complete or update a housing needs assessment report.
- Submit periodic reports to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) in the form and timelines prescribed.

As previously stated, applicants are required to prepare housing initiatives that will help the applicant achieve their committed housing supply growth target and any additional targets. The applicant must indicate how each initiative will increase the supply of housing and associated timelines, as well as any other expected results. Staff have identified the following initiatives that should be taken in order to facilitate additional housing growth in the Municipality of Brockton (in order of priority):

1. Updating infrastructure planning to align with official community plans, growth targets and housing needs assessment.
2. Implemented disincentives to discourage idle units.
3. Promoting infill developments (adding new units to existing communities) with increased housing density and a variety of unit types (e.g. duplexes or secondary suits).
4. Creating a process for disposal of Municipally owned land assets for the development of affordable housing.
5. Ensuring that development and amenity charges are clear, transparent and pre-determined
6. Aligning development charges with the costs of infrastructure and servicing
7. Revised parking requirements – such as reduced or eliminated parking spaces for new developments that may benefit apartments to create more units where multiple spaces are not necessary.
8. Allowing increased density housing on a single lot - reducing impact on available land supply
9. Implementing incentives, costing or fee structures (for example density bonusing), to encourage such things as affordable housing and conversions from non-residential to residential
10. Promoting and allowing more housing types that serve vulnerable populations
11. Partnering with non-profit housing providers to preserve and increase the stock of affordable housing

Many of the initiatives described above are related to projects that Brockton has successfully undertaken in the past and/or has been discussing for the future, or can be implemented with relative ease and do not involve significant additional expenses (for example, initiative 7 can be undertaken using a housekeeping amendment to the zoning by-law, initiative 11 can be a partnership with the County on administration of a rent subsidy program to support a set number of affordable units).

Applicants are also required to estimate current housing growth without new initiatives, as well as estimate the projected housing growth with the above initiatives. The surplus growth represented by the number of units with the new initiatives is the determining factor when considering the funding framework. These additional units are described as “HAF incented units”. There are three funding components of the grant framework: base funding, top up funding, affordable housing bonus. A highlight sheet has been attached with more details about the program.

Applicants have the flexibility in how funding is used, provided it is for a permitted use. Permitted uses can include things like constructing connecting trails, developing parks and greenspaces, installing infrastructure, etc.

Analysis:

The Municipality of Brockton has long identified the need for more housing, especially housing that is available to support workers and promote economic growth. Through the Official Plan process, the County of Bruce noted that there was a deficiency in the lands available in the urban boundary in Walkerton to support the growth that was occurring. Brockton retained external planners to provide submissions to the County of Bruce Official Plan process. These submissions identified that Brockton would require more than 600 additional units to accommodate our projected growth in the long-term. This number may increase depending on whether major local infrastructure projects proceed (such as the DGR, and Bruce Power's medical isotope project and the MCR project at Bruce Power).

Brockton Council has been clear and supportive in their direction to make housing, particularly the missing middle (meaning townhouses, and low rise apartment buildings and duplexes), a top strategic priority with inclusion in the Strategic Action Plan. This application represents an opportunity to potentially receive funding to support this growth and advance further actions to see real and positive advancement in the community. This funding can be allocated towards infrastructure that supports new and existing residents, future planning for needed infrastructure related to growth, programs and policies to advance needed units and the available supply attainably priced units.

The application requires that Brockton provide a Housing Needs Assessment within a certain period of time. This document will also support work and planning forecasts required to advance the Official Plan and Zoning By-Law in the future. Staff recommend retaining Monteith Brown Planning Consultants for this purpose as it will be more efficient for them to expand on the work they have already completed related to the Planning justification report in submitting comments through the County's Official Plan process. The cost for creating this Assessment will be funded from the 2023 planning budget.

This grant criteria and application was released mid July and is due on August 18th, 2023. This was not in existing work plans and staff have spent a great deal of time determining achievable units within known and potential opportunities in Brockton to come up with a successful mix for a favorable application. Due to the time required to allocate to the tasks associated with this grant and the Housing Needs Assessment we have secured Grant Match to assist with the submission of the application by August 18th, 2023 for a reduced rate. Grant Match will also be responsible for all associated reporting if we are successful. At the time of writing this report we are potentially looking at a grant application for funds between \$9 and \$11 million depending on the final initiatives advanced based on further consultations with Ministry representatives.

This has the potential to be a very significant funding source for initiatives since April 2022, and initiatives currently underway, and initiatives planned for the future of the community of Brockton.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Strategic Action Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

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| • Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life | Yes |

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| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance | Yes |

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

With the limited time frame to put the required detail together and the complexity of the application and housing mix necessary we have secured Grant Match to submit the application for a reduced rate. No monies are payable to Grant Match if the application is unsuccessful.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

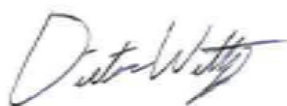
Respectfully Submitted by:



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Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer