
Subject: Niagara Housing Statement Final Summary Report

Report to: Planning and Economic Development Committee

Report date: Wednesday, July 10, 2019

Recommendations

1. That Report PDS 27-2019 **BE RECEIVED** for information; and,
2. That a copy of Report PDS 27-2019 **BE CIRCULATED** to the Local Area Municipalities.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the *Niagara Housing Statement Final Report* (“the Report”) which outlines the results of the data collected, known as the “Niagara Housing Statement Database”.
- The Report provides a summary analysis of population, demographic and housing characteristics, core housing need, and key population sub-groups, including older adults, immigrant populations, and aboriginal identity, through the use of graphics, geographical mapping at the sub-municipal level, and other visual aids intended to assist in the interpretation of the data collected.
- The Niagara Region hosted a training and facilitation session for local municipal planners on June 7th, 2019 in order to provide information regarding the contents and capabilities of the Niagara Housing Statement Database, as well as to explore the use of an agent-based analysis platform to gain insight into the risks and rewards of various housing scenarios.
- Staff will work to ensure that the Niagara Housing Statement Database is hosted on the Niagara Region’s Open Data portal and website for use by the public. Additionally, Regional staff will be determining the extent to which further analysis is required to inform the various studies and projects currently being undertaken across the Corporation to address housing need and affordability.

Financial Considerations

The Niagara Housing Statement project was funded through the 2018 Council Approved Operating Budget with contributions from the Planning and Development Services Department, and the Community Services Department. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Analysis

Niagara Region Housing Market Analysis Report

In December 2018, the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis (CANCEA), was retained by the Niagara Region for the preparation of a database to inform the comprehensive review of the Niagara Region 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan and the development of a Regional Housing Strategy. Overseen by the Planning and Development Services and the Community Services Departments, the final dataset provides an accurate assessment of the current and future demand for ownership, rental, and affordable housing within the Niagara Region, including detailed demographic and housing trends, income levels, and demographic and housing characteristics at the sub-municipal levels.

In order to verify and discuss the specific data procured for each of the twelve (12) local area municipalities, a series of one-on-one consultation meetings were held in March 2019 with local planning staff. The feedback received identified few corrections or gaps in the data presented, and as such, these consultation sessions were followed by a presentation from the CANCEA Project Team at the April 17th Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting (Report No. PDS 17-2019), which outlined the implications of the preliminary analysis of the data collected on core housing need within Niagara.

With the final database completed and circulated to local municipal staff, CANCEA has now prepared a final summary report (see Appendix I) to both provide a more comprehensive understanding of the demographic and housing trends that can be inferred from the prepared database, as well as to satisfy the remaining requirements of the Request for Proposal. The report, which had been reviewed by staff in the Planning and Development Services Department, Community Services Department, and Niagara Regional Housing, provides a summary analysis of population, demographic and housing characteristics, core housing need, and key population sub-groups, including older adults, immigrant populations, and aboriginal identity, through the use of graphics, geographical mapping at the sub-municipal level, and other visual aids intended to assist in the interpretation of the data collected.

Next Steps

The Niagara Region hosted a training and facilitation session for local municipal planners on June 7th, 2019 in order to provide information regarding the contents and capabilities of the Niagara Housing Statement Database, as well as to explore the use of CANCEA's agent-based analysis platform to gain insight into the risks and rewards of various housing scenarios. Based on the feedback received at this session, as well as inter-Departmental discussions, Regional staff will be determining the extent to which

further analysis is required to inform the various studies and projects currently being undertaken across the Corporation to address housing need and affordability.

Additionally, Regional staff will be working internally to ensure that the Niagara Housing Statement Database is hosted on the Niagara Region's Open Data portal and website for use by the public.

Alternatives Reviewed

N/A

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

The new Regional Official Plan will assist in implementing Council's Strategic Priority of Labour-Ready Workforce.

Other Pertinent Reports

- PDS 17-2019 Niagara Housing Statement – Affordable Housing Data

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Appendices