

Affordable Housing Report for 126-140 Bradford Street, Barrie

Final Report

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Prepared by



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1.0 Introduction

An Affordable Housing Report is one of the required documents for a complete application at the City of Barrie. This report is being provided to highlight how the project at 126-140 Bradford Street is proposing to contribute to housing choice and affordable housing in downtown Barrie that aligns with the requirements of City policies.

The Proposed Development seeks to redevelop the lands at 126-140 Bradford Street (“Subject Site”) and construct approximately 912 units in approximately 553,000 square feet of gross residential floor space.

The subject lands are legally described as Lots 7, 8, 9, 10 and Part of Lot 6 west side of Bradford St, Registered Plan 22, City of Barrie, and municipally known as 126-140 Bradford Street. The subject lands have an area of approximately 0.39 hectares with 89.9 metres of frontage along Bradford Street.

The subject lands are currently designated ‘High Density’ in the City of Barrie Official Plan and are zoned ‘General Commercial (C4)’ in the City of Barrie Zoning By-Law. See Figure 1.

Figure 1: Subject Site Zoning

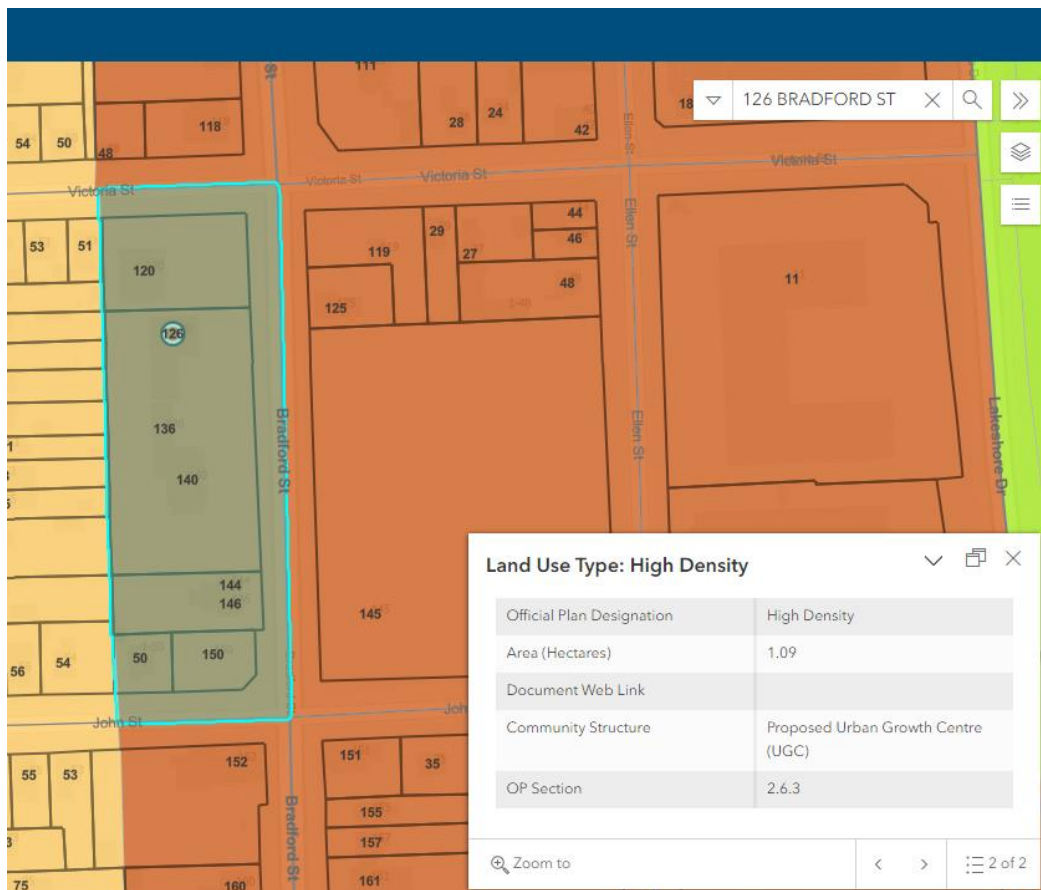


Figure 2: Subject Site Context Map



2.0 Description of the proposal and concept plan

The proposal includes one (1) mixed-use building with two residential towers, each forty-five (45) storeys in height and a shared six (6) storey podium with commercial at-grade. As a whole, the proposal will result in a total gross floor area (GFA) of approximately 51,383 m², comprised of 51,049 m² of residential GFA and 333 m² of retail/commercial GFA. The proposal will also provide approximately 1,509 m² of indoor amenity space and 14,810 m² of outdoor amenity space (including private balconies). In total, the proposed development offers 912 residential units, in the form of 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom options. The proposed development seeks to provide 15% of units, for a total of 136 units, as affordable housing units. The proposed development offers a total of 361 parking spaces, located within the podium structure (a parking ratio of 0.461 parking spaces per unit, excluding affordable housing units); and 912 bicycle parking spaces (a ratio of 1 space per unit). The proposal is anticipated to be a phased development with phases to be determined as the project progresses.

2.1 Number of existing residential (including rental) units

The Subject Site currently has three single floor commercial uses. There are no existing residential units on the site.

2.2 Number of residential units to be retained, added, or lost.

There are no existing residential units on the Subject Site. This development proposed to create 912 new residential units.

2.3 Type and size of units

The proposed development will include one-bedroom and two-bedroom units. The approximate distribution of unit types is 608 (66%) one-bedroom and 304 (33%) two-bedroom units.

Unit Sizes and Mix	1-Bedroom	2-Bedroom	3+ Bedroom
Unit Counts	608	304	0
Mix Mix	66%	33%	0%
Unit Sizes			
Affordable Unit Sizes (sq. ft .)	350-475		
Market Unit Sizes (sq. ft.)	430-495	580-700	NA

To improve the overall attainability of units in the development, the one bedroom units range from 430 to 495 sq. ft. providing attainable opportunities for first time home buyers. The affordable units will be in the range of 350-475 sq. ft. units. The market-priced two-bedroom units will be between 580 and 700 sq. ft.

The intent is for this project to have condominium ownership and that the affordable units be delivered through an affordable ownership framework.

2.4 Proposed rental and sale prices

The housing needs assessment¹ brought to Barrie's Council on June 7, 2023 included estimates of current market condominium sales prices that align with the proponent's understanding of the current market. The intent is to sell the market units near the following prices, which will be adjusted for inflation between now and when units are being sold:

- One Bedroom: \$530,000
- Two Bedroom: \$765,000.

The affordable units will be priced at the affordability threshold for households earning the 60th percentile income in Barrie. The recent housing needs assessment identified that the 60th income percentile household could afford a unit priced at \$399,338. The final pricing of the affordable units will be adjusted to reflect any changes to the 60th income threshold between now and when the affordable units are sold.

2.5 Project Phasing

The project is proposed to be delivered through two phases, with the 136 affordable ownership units (15%) being integrated into both phases of development.

2.6 Site and contextual considerations

The Subject Site does not have restrictions such as historical designation or environmental contamination.

There has been significant redevelopment proposed nearby recently. There are 4 other applications on Bradford Street. They range from a 3-storey commercial building to large towers in the 14-29 storey range on sites of up to 3.4 hectares.

220 Bradford Street

- 14-storey (121 unit) apartment building with ground floor commercial

34, 36, 38, 40, 44 & 50 Bradford Street

- Two residential apartment buildings with shared six-storey podium.
- Tower one is 29 storeys (276 units) and tower two is 25 storeys (228 units).

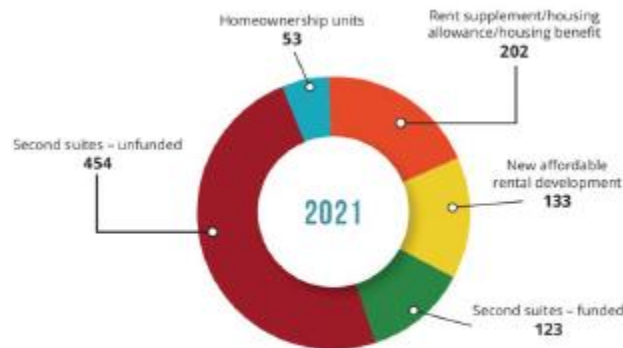
51–75 Bradford Street & 20 Checkley Street

- 4 buildings with approximately 1700 residential units, commercial space, a hotel space and public corridors
- Phase 1 includes a 25 storey building with 145 hotel units and 230 residential units

¹ Housing Needs Assessment for Barrie. Downloaded from: [PRES 14.2 - COB Housing Needs Assessment Strategy - May 2023 \(ehq-production-canada.s3.ca-central-1.amazonaws.com\)](https://ehq-production-canada.s3.ca-central-1.amazonaws.com/PRES_14.2_COB_Housing_Needs_Assessment_Strategy_May_2023)

This proposal for approximately 692 units is slightly larger than the two towers proposed at 34 Bradford Street with 604 units and smaller than the 1700 residential units proposed for 51–75 Bradford Street & 20 Checkley Street.

There is a current lack of affordable homeownership units available in the City, as demonstrated through a review of recently approved developments (Table 1) and the City of Barrie Affordable Housing Monitoring Report (Figure 19 from the City of Barrie Affordable Housing Report 2022 Update). As a result, the proposed development provides much needed affordable homeownership units to the City's affordable housing target and increases the overall attainable housing stock within the City of Barrie.



Source: County of Simcoe – Social Housing Department & City of Barrie - Development Services

Figure 19. City of Barrie Affordable Housing Report (2022 Update)

Table 1: Affordable Housing Units of Surrounding Development Applications

PROPERTY	STATUS	STOREYS	NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE UNITS
51-75 Bradford St & 20 Checkley	Approved	25-46 storeys	233 Rental Units (not specifically affordable)
34 Bradford St	Approved	25-29 storeys	None, however states that there are units without a parking space which are more affordable (parking ratio of 0.78 spaces/unit)
220 Bradford St	Approved	14 storeys	None
272 Innisfil St	Approved	17 storeys	None
17 Jacobs Terrace	Approved	19-23 storeys	None
41 & 43 Essa Rd	Proposed	23-39 storeys	None
70 & 76 Edgehill	Proposed	16 storeys	21 affordable units (~5%)
175 & 199 Essa Rd	Proposed	12-35 storeys	None

3.0 Policy Review

3.1 Provincial Policy Statement

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) provides direction on matters of Provincial Interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS is a key part of Ontario's policy-led planning system and sets the policy foundation for regulating development and land use while protecting resources of provincial interest. The PPS recognizes the subject lands as being within the City of Barrie Primary Settlement Area. The housing policies in the PPS are analyzed in relation to the subject application, below.

Section 1.4 of the PPS states policies for Housing with the goal of providing for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities in order to meet the current and future needs of residents (1.4.1). Section 1.4.3 places an obligation on planning authorities to provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities in order to meet the projected market based and affordable housing needs of current and future residents. These objectives are to be achieved by providing for housing that is affordable; directing new housing to areas with appropriate levels of infrastructure and public services; promoting densities that efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure, and support the use of active transportation and public transit; and by prioritizing development and intensification in areas with proximity to transit (corridors and stations).

The proposed development provides for much needed housing opportunities along the Intensification Corridor and within the Urban Growth Centre where a mix of uses, resources, infrastructure, and public service facilities are available and can be efficiently used. The proposed development provides much needed housing to the area and responds to market demand. The proposal provides for more attainable housing options by providing for a mix of unit sizes while contributing 15% of the total proposed residential units as affordable housing (136 affordable housing units). This will help the Province and Municipality in meeting their affordable housing targets.

The proposed development further provides for densities that efficiently use land and resources while supporting active transportation through direct connections to municipal sidewalks and location along existing/planned cycling network, providing direct access to the Waterfront, Downtown, and other areas of Barrie. Furthermore, the proposed development is transit supportive through its location along existing bus routes and direct access to the Barrie Transit Terminal and the Allandale GO Station; the increased density further supports existing and future transit infrastructure and investments.

3.2 Growth Plan

The Growth Plan provides guiding policies for the efficient and coordinated growth within the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The subject lands are recognized as being within the City of Barrie Primary Settlement Area. The following policies have been analyzed in relation to the application.

Settlement Areas

Similar to the PPS, the Growth Plan uses an intensification approach for development in Settlement Areas. Settlement Areas are identified as the focus of population and employment growth. Policy 2.2.1 provides the following:

2.2.1.4 Applying the policies of this Plan will support the achievement of complete communities that:

- a) *feature a diverse mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses, and convenient access to local stores, services, and public service facilities;*
- b) *improve social equity and overall quality of life, including human health, for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes;*
- c) *provide a diverse range and mix of housing options, including additional residential units and affordable housing, to accommodate people at all stages of life, and to accommodate the needs of all household sizes and incomes;*
- d) *expand convenient access to:*
 - i. *a range of transportation options, including options for the safe, comfortable and convenient use of active transportation;*
 - ii. *public service facilities, co-located and integrated in community hubs;*
 - iii. *an appropriate supply of safe, publicly-accessible open spaces, parks, trails, and other recreational facilities; and*
 - iv. *healthy, local, and affordable food options, including through urban agriculture;*
- e) *provide for a more compact built form and a vibrant public realm, including public open spaces;*
- f) *mitigate and adapt to the impacts of a changing climate, improve resilience and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and contribute to environmental sustainability;*

The proposed development provides for a mix of uses, providing for at-grade commercial that provides convenient access to local stores and contributes to a vibrant public realm along Bradford St. The proposed development provides for new housing options within an intensification area, offering unit sizes and options that contribute to more attainable housing options that are accessible to a range of household sizes, incomes, ages and abilities. Additionally, the proposed development seeks to provide 136 affordable housing units (15%), further contributing towards the Province and City's affordable housing targets and addressing the current housing crisis. The proposal will have access to a range of transportation options, reducing auto-dependency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the proposed development is located within the UGC where a mix and range of uses is encouraged.

The proposed development will permit the mixed use development of both residential and commercial uses which will assist in achieving the population targets for the Region and City as set out in through this policy and in Schedule 3 of the Growth Plan. The proposal supports the Growth Plan's intensification and mixed-use directives by adding new residential units in an intensification area within the City of Barrie that will utilize existing and planned public infrastructure and focus new growth through intensification on an underutilized site.

Delineated Built Up Areas

Section 2.2.2 of The Growth Plan directs municipalities to encourage intensification generally throughout built-up areas and supports the achievement of complete communities. This project supports the policies by directing mixed-use intensification to land within an urban settlement

area designated for growth. The proposal introduces a range of residential units to an area with various amenities and public service facilities in proximity within the Urban Growth Centre.

Housing

Section 2.2.6 provides policies on housing to be considered by municipalities, on a municipal level. These policies seek to achieve the minimum housing targets while providing for a range and mix of housing types and densities that meet the needs of current and future residents. These policies seek to provide for complete communities while also supporting the minimum intensification and density targets set out in Section 2.2.2.1 of the Growth Plan. As stated in Section 2.2.2.1, the minimum intensification target for the City of Barrie is a minimum of 50% of all residential development occurring annually within the delineated built-up area.

In aligning with the goals and policies stated in the Growth Plan, the proposed development brings new housing options and provides for a higher density along the Bradford St Intensification Corridor. The proposed development takes place along an intensification corridor with existing transit and public service facilities. The proposed development encourages complete communities by providing a mix of residential and commercial uses in the Urban Growth Centre, where a range of uses are provided and encouraged. The proposed development provides for a more compact built form and provides much needed housing, and affordable housing units, to the City of Barrie.

3.3 Official Plan Policies

The Official Plan for the City of Barrie includes sections that provide direction for affordable housing across the city and within major growth areas. The Subject Site is located within the boundary of the UGC, which makes Policies 2.3.3 b) and 2.3.3 d) ii) important considerations for this project.

Policy 2.3.2 Urban Growth Centre (UGC)

b) The Urban Growth Centre will be planned to be a complete community, and as a strategic location for the concentration of the highest densities and widest mix of uses in the city. This will transform the Urban Growth Centre into a dynamic place to live, work, shop, and connect.

The proposed development aligns with the intent of the UGC as it provides for increased density in the form of a mixed-use development with commercial uses at-grade. The proposal contributes towards the achievement of complete communities, including the provision of affordable housing units (where 15%, or 136 units, are designated as affordable), and provides a dynamic place to live, work, and shop, and is in close proximity to the Barrie Waterfront.

Policy 2.3.2 Urban Growth Centre (UGC)

d) ii) Require that at least 20% of housing units developed in the Urban Growth Centre satisfy the criteria for affordable housing according to the policies in Section 6.4.2 of this Plan.

This policy direction balances achieving affordable housing in market developments, with the deeper affordability provided in new community housing developments.

Although an OPA is proposed, the subject application does align with the policy of section 2.3.2d) as it aims to provide approximately 15% of the units as affordable ownership. These approximately 136 units would provide a significant contribution to the overall number of new affordable units created within the Urban Growth Centre and would provide an opportunity for affordable ownership housing in Barrie's downtown.

Providing affordable ownership options aligns with the housing needs identified in the June 7, 2023 Housing Needs Assessment presented to City Council, where it was identified that there are no affordable ownership opportunities for households in the 60th income percentile. This project proposes to provide 136 entry-level condominium units that would enable moderate income households to establish themselves in the ownership market.

Policy Section 2.5

l): The City will require the provision of a minimum of 15% of all new housing units each year to be affordable housing, as per the policies in Section 6.4.2 of this Plan. The City will be guided by provincial direction and the City's Affordable Housing Strategy to implement this affordable housing target.

This policy in Barrie's Official Plan balances achieving affordable housing in market developments, with the deeper affordability provided in new community housing developments.

The proposed development at 126 Bradford Street aims to provide approximately 15% of the units as affordable ownership; these approximately 136 units would provide a significant contribution to the overall number of new affordable units created city-wide, a need recently identified in the Housing Needs Assessment presented to Council on June 7, 2023.

6.4.2. Affordable Housing

e) i) Development and redevelopment applications occurring outside of Employment Areas and through draft plan of subdivision, draft plan of condominium, site plan or part lot control shall be supported by an affordable housing report. The report will be prepared in accordance with the City's current terms of reference, and provide an opinion by a qualified professional as to how the proposed development or redevelopment provides housing to meet the needs of current and future residents;

This Affordable Housing Report fulfills the requirement in Section 6.4.2.e) i) for an affordable housing report that details how the project will provide housing that meets the needs of current and future residents.

3.4 Review and compliance with the Affordable Housing Strategy

The City of Barrie approved a new Affordable Housing Strategy. This development proposal aligns with the affordable housing requirements of the Official Plan, which aims to provide 15% affordable housing across the UGC and 15% affordable housing across the entire city. Providing approximately 136 ownership units that would be affordable to the 60th percentile household will provide a balance between affordable ownership and rental options in Barrie's downtown.

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

This proposed development at 126-140 Bradford Street for 912 units, including approximately 136 affordable ownership units, on a currently commercial site provides a significant increase in housing options in Barrie's downtown. The Housing Needs Assessment presented to Council on June 7, 2023 identified a need for affordable ownership options affordable to households with moderate income, which this project aims to provide. Providing affordable ownership options in this development will balance a mix of affordable rental and ownership in downtown, with the expectation that any community housing developed in the UGC would be rental tenure.

The affordable housing component of this project aims to provide housing for moderate income households in the 60th percentile, providing housing options for working families and young professionals in Barrie's downtown. These households occupy a space between the high-income households that can afford market-priced condominiums downtown and lower income households that would occupy community housing in the community. There is a current lack of affordable homeownership units available in the City, as demonstrated through a review of recently approved developments and the City of Barrie Affordable Housing Monitoring Report. The proposed development provides much needed affordable homeownership units to the City's affordable housing target and increases the overall attainable housing stock within the City of Barrie.

This desirable outcome of creating 136 new affordable housing units can best be achieved through a partnership between this development and the City of Barrie. With recent construction cost escalation, it is important for the City to waive or reimburse municipal fees and charges for the affordable units to ensure that the project continues to be viable while providing these affordable units. Ensuring that the eventual affordable housing agreement includes a suite of incentives will reduce the risk of this project. The suite of incentives that are being requested are either currently offered as part of the Planning Act, or have recently been offered by the City of Barrie:

1. Exemption or reimbursement of development charges for the affordable units
2. Exemption or reimbursement of parkland dedication for the affordable units
3. Exemption or reimbursement of CBCs for the affordable units
4. A parking reduction for the affordable units
5. Reduction in application fees (Re-Zoning, SPA, Building Permit) for the affordable units
6. A 10 year term for affordability, after which the unit is free in clear to be sold for market value
7. No requirements to obtain Building Permit within a set period, after the development application is submitted.
8. An affordable housing grant to match the recent HST rebates that have been introduced by the Province and Federal government for purpose built rental projects, in recognition of the need for both new affordable ownership as well as new rental units in Barrie.

This development proposes to provide approximately 15% of the units as affordable ownership, providing a significant contribution to the affordable housing goals of the City of Barrie in both the Urban Growth Centre and across the city.