



## **STAFF REPORT** **Municipality of Wawa**



**Maury O'Neill, CAO-Clerk**

<b>To: Mayor and Council</b>	<b>Report No.: CAO 2023-10</b>
<b>Date: October 13, 2023</b>	<b>Council Meeting: October 17, 2023</b>

### **WAWA TOURISM PLAN -TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **Recommendation**

**THAT** Council receive Report No. CAO 2023-10 dated October 13, 2023, and approve the Municipality of Wawa Housing Pledge at the November 7, 2023, Council Meeting.

**AND FURTHER** that the Wawa Housing Pledge be included in the Wawa Housing Plan to be adopted by Municipal Council by the end of 2023, after public consultation.

#### **Purpose and Summary**

Mayor Pilon has requested that Council consider adopting a Municipal Housing Pledge to set targets and ways to support the building of new homes in Wawa every year, up until 2031, following the pledges passed by larger urban centres in Ontario, which were mandated by the Provincial Government in 2022.

The Wawa Housing Pledge would include a set of specific actions that the Municipality could undertake to encourage new homes in Wawa and may support that the recently announced funding of \$1.2 billion.

The purpose of this report is to provide a Council with a Municipality of Wawa Housing Pledge that includes the tools that the Municipality will undertake and implement to support and encourage the building of new homes in the community between 2023 and 2031 by the private sector. The Wawa Housing Pledge will support the Wawa Housing Action Plan to be adopted by Council by the end of the year.

## **Background**

### **More Homes Built Faster Act**

The Ontario Government set-out in Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (More Homes Built Faster: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan 2022-23), the Province's goal to build 1.5 million homes in Ontario over the next 10 years.

The Ford government also legislated that large urban centres had to commit to supporting the building of new homes by 2031 and had to adopt Housing Pledge's to support the Province's housing target. Small municipalities were exempted from making Housing Pledges.

Municipal Housing Pledges are to identify the tools and strategies that municipalities intend to use to achieve their housing targets. Pledges may include, but are not limited to, priorities for site-specific planning decisions to expedite housing in priority areas, plans to streamline the development approval process, commitments to plan, fund and build critical infrastructure to support housing, and strategies to use municipal surplus lands.

### **Ontario Building Faster Fund**

The Province has indicated it will provide a three-year, \$1.2 billion fund and will provide up to \$400 million per year to municipalities that have committed in writing to achieve their overall 2031 housing target. Ten per cent (10%) of the overall funding will be reserved for small, rural and northern communities that have not yet been assigned a housing target by the province to support unique needs and circumstances and they have not been required to adopt Housing Pledge's at this time.

The province has indicated that funding from the Building Faster Fund may be directed toward housing-enabling infrastructure and other related costs that support community growth. Eligible expenses will be determined following consultations between the province, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the City of Toronto and the Housing Supply Action Plan Implementation Team.

The portion of the overall funding (\$1.2 million) will also be allocated to single and lower tier municipalities like Wawa that have not been assigned a housing target, including small, rural and northern communities, in order to address their unique needs, following municipal consultations. Those consultations have not taken place as of yet.

## **Municipal Housing Pledge**

Although not provincially mandated to small municipalities, Council can show leadership and commitment to supporting the building of new homes by adopting a Wawa Housing Pledge. This would be a proactive step and demonstrate to the Province, and more importantly to housing developers and local residents, that Municipal Council is working to provide every tool available to it to facilitate the development of new accommodations in the community.

The proposed Housing Pledge also includes a new homes target for the community to achieve of 58 new units by 2031. This estimate of new units to be built over the next eight years is based on the Sault Ste. Marie target which is 1,000 homes by 2031, and based on their population of 70,000, would translate to Wawa's Housing Target being 58 (57.856) by 2031 based on its population of 2,700. This target is reasonable and in-line with historical data and recent trends in local housing development.

The following is a Municipal Housing Pledge developed for Council's input and approval;

### **MUNICIPALITY OF WAWA HOUSING PLEDGE (2023 – 2026)**

Mayor and Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Wawa are committed to facilitate and support the development of new housing in the community for all residents. The Municipality will make every effort to ensure the municipal process to approve development and housing plans is expediated and will make surplus municipal lands available for the building of new housing.

As contained in the Wawa Housing Action Plan (2023), the Municipality of Wawa will leverage all opportunities and available policy tools as it works to encourage the building of new residential units in Wawa. The Municipality of Wawa will use a variety of strategies and actions to increase the supply of affordable housing, set-out below and contained in the Wawa Housing Action Plan. Municipal Council recognizes that the provision of housing for all residents is a joint responsibility of all levels of government and there is an ongoing need for the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada to invest in our communities to ensure housing is built that is affordable and meets local needs.

- Implement strategies to encourage and promote intensification to enable and expedite additional residential units in existing residential areas as set-out in the Wawa Housing Action Plan;

- Employ tactics to ensure the use any municipal surplus lands for housing developments where appropriate;
- Build new municipal infrastructure to support new housing development as outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan (e.g., water, wastewater);
- Ensure strategic and site-specific planning decisions are made by Council to expedite housing in the community;
- Update the Official Plan and Wawa Zoning by-laws to permit a greater range of housing (e.g. nanny flats, secondary units in commercial zones) to be built without the need for minor variance and rezoning applications;
- Lobby and collaborate with Provincial and Federal governments to develop strategies to increase housing supply capacity including the identification of funding required for municipal housing infrastructure, and;
- Work with various partners including ADSAB, the private sector, public agencies, First Nation communities and others to develop housing solutions.

Municipal Council recognizes that there is a strong necessity for new housing to be built to accommodate local need and demand and for new housing options to be built that is affordable to residents. Through this Wawa Housing Pledge, the Municipality of Wawa commits to undertake the initiatives outlined above and contained in the Wawa Housing Action Plan (2023) by working with stakeholders and governments at all levels to deliver the housing, infrastructure and services needed for current and future residents. The Housing Target based on population and local trends is set at 59 homes to be built between 2023 and 2031.

## **Conclusion**


### **Wawa Strategic Plan Alignment**

Adopting a Wawa Housing Pledge is in line with the Wawa Strategic Plan adopted by Council in September 2023, under Section TED-1 – develop and implement a Housing Strategy to increase housing stock.

### **Recommendation – Adopt Wawa Housing Pledge**

It is recommended that Council review the Housing Pledge and adopt the final agreed upon Wawa Municipal Housing Pledge by Resolution at the next Council Meeting on Tuesday, November 7, 2023.

Further, Council should add the Housing Pledge once adopted to the Wawa Housing Action Plan to be adopted by Council after public consultation is completed, and prior to the end of 2023.

Submitted By: 

Maury O'Neill  
CAO-Clerk