



**Office of the Mayor**

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**TOWN OF  
AJAX**

65 Harwood Avenue  
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February 28, 2023

Hon. Steve Clark  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
777 Bay Street, 17th Floor  
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

Submitted via email to [minister.mah@ontario.ca](mailto:minister.mah@ontario.ca) with a copy to [wendy.ren@ontario.ca](mailto:wendy.ren@ontario.ca)

**Re: ERO No. 019-6171 – 2031 Municipal Housing Targets  
Town of Ajax Housing Pledge**

Dear Minister Clark,

On October 25, 2022, Town of Ajax staff received a letter from your office regarding the abovementioned ERO Bulletin related to an assigned Municipal Housing Target and the development of a Municipal Housing Pledge. The Town has prepared a Municipal Housing Target Pledge, as outlined in the attached report presented to the Town's Community Affairs and Planning Committee's meeting on February 6, 2023. The Municipal Housing Target Pledge, with conditions, was endorsed by Council on February 27, 2023.

The Town is looking for innovative ways to support the Province's goal of addressing the housing crisis and building 1.5 million homes in the next 10 years. This includes finding mutually beneficial ways to streamline approvals and enable municipalities to collect the growth-related charges necessary to deliver infrastructure and meet community needs.

While municipalities do not build homes, our pledge showcases how we anticipate reaching the targeted 17,000 new housing units by 2031. It also makes clear our ability to do so through intensification within our urban boundary and without going into any greenbelt lands.

A copy of the Municipal Housing Target Pledge and associated staff report have been included as Attachment 1 to this letter. A copy of Council's resolution from the February 27, 2023 Council

meeting has been included as Attachment 2. Should you have any questions please contact Caroline Murphy, Senior Planner ([Caroline.Murphy@ajax.ca](mailto:Caroline.Murphy@ajax.ca)).

ATT 1: February 6, 2023 Town of Ajax Community Affairs and Planning Committee  
Report: 2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge

ATT 2: Council Resolution from February 27, 2023 Council meeting

Sincerely,



Shaun Collier  
Mayor & CEO - Town of Ajax

Cc: Mark Holland, MP for Ajax  
Patrice Barnes, MPP for Ajax  
Ajax Council  
Geoff Romanowski, Director, Planning and Development Services, Town of Ajax  
Stev Andis, Manager of Planning, Town of Ajax  
Sean McCullough, Supervisor, Planning Policy & Research, Town of Ajax  
Caroline Murphy, Senior Planner, Town of Ajax  
Clerks Department, Durham Region Area Municipalities  
Clerks Department, Region of Durham

# **ATT-1: February 6, 2023 Town of Ajax Community Affairs and Planning Committee Report: 2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge**

## **Town of Ajax Report**



**Report To:** Community Affairs & Planning Committee

**Prepared By:** Caroline Murphy, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Planner

**Report #:** PDS-2023-02

**Subject:** 2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge

**Ward(s):** All

**Date of Meeting:** February 6, 2023

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### **Recommendations:**

1. That the report entitled “2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge” be received for information.
2. That the “Town of Ajax 2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge”, included as ATT-1 to this report, be endorsed to support Council’s commitment to accelerating the supply of housing to meet the 2031 Municipal Housing Target of 17,000 new housing units, subject to the following conditions:
  - a. That the Town not be penalized financially or otherwise, for failing to meet the identified housing target;
  - b. That the housing target be recognized as an aspirational target and that the Town be permitted to continue to utilize the applicable population and employment forecasts from the Growth Plan, 2020 and/or municipal growth allocations assigned to and/or developed by the Town, for the purposes of creating development related studies, plans, and by-laws;
  - c. That the Province continue to work with municipalities to provide grant opportunities, such as the Streamline Development Approval Fund, to aid in the rapid delivery of the identified municipal initiatives and growth-related infrastructure; and
  - d. That the Province continue to consult and engage with municipalities on recent and future legislative changes and initiatives to find mutually beneficial ways to streamline approvals and enable municipalities to continue to collect growth-related charges to deliver infrastructure and community needs quickly.
3. That a copy of this report and Council’s resolution be sent to Minister Steve Clark, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing by March 1, 2023 and a copy also be sent to the Region and Durham area municipalities.

## 1.0 Background:

On October 25, 2022, the Province released the *More Homes Built Faster: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan 2022-23*<sup>1</sup>, with the stated objective to address the housing supply crisis in the Province by helping to provide more housing, streamline development approvals, remove barriers, accelerate planning, and further protect homebuyers and owners. The Province has committed to facilitating the construction of 1.5 million homes over the next 10 years. To support the Housing Supply Action Plan, the Province also released *Bill 23: More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*, which made significant changes to the *Planning Act*, *Development Charges Act*, and *Conservation Authorities Act*, among others, and released a series of bulletins on the Environmental Registry of Ontario related to housing.

To achieve the Province's ambitious housing goal, the Province released ERO bulletin No. 019-6171, which has assigned municipal housing targets to twenty-nine (29) of the largest and fastest growing lower and single-tier municipalities in southern Ontario, including the Town of Ajax. The Town also received a letter from Minister Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, requesting that the Head of Council demonstrate its commitment to accelerating the supply of housing by adopting a housing pledge and submitting it to the Ministry by March 1, 2023. Municipal housing targets are based off the current population and 2011-2021 growth trends within each municipality. As a result, the Town has been assigned a housing target of 17,000 new homes by 2031.

The "Municipal Housing Target Pledge", included as ATT-1 to this report, showcases the Town's initiatives and actions to prioritize and accelerate housing in an effort to implement the Province's assigned municipal housing target.

This report provides a summary of the Town's initiatives that have recently been completed, are underway, planned, and proposed, which will support the Provincial direction to provide more housing.

## 2.0 Discussion:

### 2.1 Municipal Housing Target

The Town will strive to meet the assigned municipal housing target of 17,000 new homes by 2031 while recognizing that components of its implementation are beyond the municipality's control. Housing construction is primarily driven by the market, private landowners and businesses. The Town's focus will be committed to improving matters within its control, such as streamlining development approvals and undertaking studies or initiatives that update the land-use planning framework in the Town to deliver more housing options and/or 'as-of-right' zoning permissions. It should also be noted that servicing infrastructure is under the jurisdiction of the Region of Durham and can have a major impact on the Town's ability to meet the housing target if capital projects related to servicing capacity are delayed.

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<sup>1</sup> [More Homes Built Faster: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan 2022-23](#)

### 2.1.1 Historical Average Growth Rates in Ajax

The 17,000 housing unit target assigned to the Town is ambitious. Between 2006 and 2021, housing unit growth in the Town has averaged 730 dwelling units annually. The average annual growth rate has been incrementally slowing in Ajax from a high of 4.1% between 2006 and 2011, 1.4% between 2011 and 2016, and 1.0% between 2016 and 2021. This is largely driven by the dwindling supply of available greenfield land within the Town.

Meeting the ambitious housing target over the next nine (9) years requires the construction of an average of 1,888 dwelling units per year in Ajax. This is almost 2.5 times the average annual number of units constructed each year between 2006 and 2021. Only in 2006 has the Town come close to the projected annual average units needed to meet the target, with 1,844 dwelling units constructed in that year.

Since 2013, the Town has seen a shift in the type of building permits being issued, with more permits for apartment dwellings. The number of building permits for accessory dwelling units has also been increasing exponentially and has represented a significant number of new units within the Town each year, with 178 permits issued in 2022 alone. Growth within the Town is expected to shift from predominantly low-rise, low-density development to medium and high-density intensification and infill development. This shift is reflected in Durham Region's draft Area Municipal Growth Allocations and Land Needs, 2051<sup>2</sup> report completed by Watson and Associates as part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review. The Region's growth allocations assign an intensification target to the Town of 86%. However, it should be noted that the Region's analysis anticipates that the Town will average approximately 1,070 dwelling units annually to 2051, representing an average annual growth rate of 1.4%, which is significantly lower than the housing target.

While the Town will strive to create a land-use framework that will help meet the assigned municipal housing target, the housing market and ability for the private sector to construct the units may be limited.

## 2.2 Municipal Initiatives

Staff have identified municipal initiatives that will help facilitate an increase in the supply and diversity of housing. It is important to note that some of these initiatives are reliant on our Regional and Provincial partners moving various initiatives forward and are highlighted to identify areas where partners can work together.

Below is a summary of the initiatives that have recently been completed, are underway, planned and proposed. Further details are provided in ATT-1 (Town of Ajax Municipal Housing Target Pledge).

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<sup>2</sup> [Durham Region Growth Management Study – Phase 2 – Area Municipal Growth Allocations and Land Needs, 2051](#)

### 2.2.1 Recently Completed

The “recently completed” category identifies initiatives that are intended to help advance approvals and support housing growth. The municipal initiatives in this category are:

- Central Ajax Intensification, Servicing and Transportation (CAIST) Strategy; and
- Team/POD Restructuring for Development Application Review.

In 2022, the Town completed the CAIST Strategy, which was a strategic initiative to help unlock the growth potential in Downtown Ajax and the Ajax GO Station, by identifying and planning servicing and transportation infrastructure improvements needed to accommodate future growth. The Team/POD is a two (2) year pilot project that was launched in September 2022 with the goal of streamlining and improving the development application review process by creating interdisciplinary teams to identify and resolve potential issues faster.

### 2.2.2 Underway

The “underway” category identifies initiatives that are in various stages of implementation, but have not reached completion, that would help to deliver housing. The municipal initiatives in this category are:

- Region of Durham Municipal Comprehensive Review – Envision Durham;
  - Completion of the Municipal Comprehensive Review
  - Town of Ajax Council Support of Employment Area Conversion Requests
  - Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 186 – Protected Major Transit Station Areas
- Ajax Housing Strategy; and
- Development Approvals Process Improvements
  - Municipal Development Approval Timelines
  - Application Processing Software
  - Pre-consultation Process Updates
  - Terms of Reference Document Creation and Review
  - Delegation of Authority By-law Update.

Achievement of some initiatives identified in the “planned” and “proposed” categories of this pledge are contingent on completion of the Municipal Comprehensive Review and Provincial approval of Durham Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 186, which is needed to delineate the boundaries of the Ajax GO Station Protected Major Transit Station Area. The Town has and will continue to work closely with the Region of Durham to finish the Municipal Comprehensive Review. The Ajax Housing Strategy will identify actions to help the Town create a more balanced housing portfolio to meet the needs of current and future Ajax residents. A key initiative of the Town’s Planning and Development Services department has been to update the development approvals process to streamline approvals and provide guidance to applicants earlier in the process. Implementation of these new processes will result in faster planning approvals, the applicant reaching the building permit stage sooner, and ultimately providing more housing sooner.

### 2.2.3 Planned

The “planned” category identifies initiatives to help deliver housing that are in departmental work plans, have approved budget, are identified in the Town’s Long Range Capital Budget Forecast and/or are legislatively required. The municipal initiatives in this category are:

- Ajax Official Plan Review;

- Ajax GO Station Mixed Use Area Specific Study
- Uptown Regional Centre Area Specific Study
- Midtown Corridor Area Specific Study
- North Harwood Area Specific Study
- Hunt Street Extension and addendum to the approved Environmental Assessment; and
- Architectural Guidelines for Medium-Density and High-Density Development.

The Ajax Official Plan Review is a key project that will help deliver housing faster by creating a framework to enable medium-density and high-density mixed-use development in strategic locations. Through the Official Plan Review, the Town will prepare area specific studies to examine and recommend appropriate heights and densities. The Hunt Street Extension is a strategic infrastructure project that needs to be constructed by 2031 to support growth in the Downtown Regional Centre and was a key recommendation in the Central Ajax Intensification, Servicing and Transportation Strategy. Preparation of architectural guidelines for medium-density and high-density development will help provide guidance to applicants to help address technical issues faster, such as preferred servicing and infrastructure design, parking and site access design, or tower orientation in their development concepts.

#### **2.2.4 Proposed**

The “proposed” category identifies new initiatives that would help deliver housing. These initiatives have not yet been approved, but will be proposed in the Town’s future Long Range Capital Budget Forecasts and/or departmental work plans. The municipal initiatives in this category are:

- Surplus and Underutilized Lands Inventory;
- Inclusionary Zoning Housing Assessment Report;
- Protected Major Transit Station Area Zoning By-law Amendment; and
- Affordable and Supportive Housing Liaison.

A surplus and underutilized lands inventory could help deliver housing faster by identifying public lands that can accommodate residential uses. A Housing Assessment Report would enable the Town to utilize the inclusionary zoning regulatory tool to require and provide needed affordable housing units in the Ajax GO Station. Establishing ‘as-of-right’ zoning permissions within the Major Transit Station Area (i.e. Ajax GO Transit Station Mixed Use Area) can speed up approval timelines and enable projects to go directly for site plan approval. The draft Ajax Housing Strategy has proposed to establish an affordable and supportive housing liaison who can assist in guiding both non-profit and for-profit housing providers through the development process from planning approvals to building permit.

### **2.3 Barriers and Potential Mitigation Strategies**

The Town is faced with several barriers as it relates to the implementation and/or completion of the identified municipal initiatives. This includes frequent and significant changes in legislation which requires reallocation of staff resources away from day-to-day development approvals, and creates other barriers such as the lack of staff resources to align work plans and implement process changes in a timely manner.

There are also barriers in relation to delivery of these initiatives as the Town is reliant on Regional and Provincial partners to assist by way of funding, servicing capacity allocation, and approvals. As an example, the Region and Town are awaiting approval of Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 186 by the Province, to proceed with subsequent planning related to Protected Major Transit Station Areas. It will be challenging to meet various timelines associated with the

implementation of some initiatives particularly when there are a lot of unknowns resulting from Bill 23 (i.e. status of Regional planning). The Town will continue to look for opportunities to support completion of strategic projects to assist in the delivery of housing.

Financial resources are also needed to implement the initiatives, especially given that municipalities may be limited in their ability to collect development charges for growth related infrastructure. Grant opportunities, such as the Streamline Development Approval Fund, are needed to help advance study related initiatives by hiring consultants, and to assist in the construction of major infrastructure needed to support growth.

There is also an opportunity for the Province to work with the Town by opening up underutilized land surrounding the Ajax GO Station to help deliver housing and create a new transit-oriented community.

## **2.4 Housing Unit Projections**

Staff are only able to project unit counts and housing types for some of the initiatives in ATT-1. Projections are primarily based on estimates within completed studies and/or based on historical building permit data. It should be noted that most studies utilize a time horizon of 2051 to align with the Growth Plan, 2020, which have contributed to the creation of this pledge. However, all the initiatives discussed in this report will contribute to the delivery of housing and work towards the assigned municipal housing target.

The Municipal Comprehensive Review Growth Management Study completed by the Region identified that there was potential to accommodate approximately 32,000 dwelling units through intensification in Ajax by 2051. However, when taking into consideration additional unit potential identified in the Central Ajax Intensification, Servicing and Transportation Strategy, Employment Area Conversion Request submissions endorsed by Ajax Council, and active development applications in the midtown corridor, there is potential to accommodate approximately 44,000 dwelling units by 2051. As a result, there is sufficient opportunity for 17,000 units by 2031, and the Town will continue to work towards the target by implementing the policy and zoning framework to position the Town for success.

## **2.5 Conditions of Pledge**

While the Town pledges to meet the assigned municipal housing target of 17,000 new units by 2031, it is acknowledged that housing is inherently driven by market forces and there are significant factors outside the Town's control that may impede success. This includes servicing infrastructure capacity needed to support growth which is under the Region of Durham's jurisdiction. The housing target represents a significant increase in the annual growth rate historically observed in the Town and meeting the target will rely on the market and private sector's ability to physically construct the units fast enough to meet the average annual target. This will especially be important as the Town shifts from greenfield development to intensification and higher-density development. Therefore, the Town's pledge is subject to the following conditions:

- a) That the Town not be penalized financially or otherwise, for failing to meet the identified housing target;
- b) That the housing target be recognized as an aspirational target and that the Town be permitted to continue to utilize the applicable population and employment forecasts from the Growth Plan, 2020 and/or municipal growth allocations assigned to and/or developed by the Town, for the purposes of creating development related studies, plans, and by-laws;



- c) That the Province continue to work with municipalities to provide grant opportunities, such as the Streamline Development Approval Fund, to aid in the rapid delivery of the identified municipal objectives and growth-related infrastructure; and
- d) That the Province continue to consult and engage with municipalities on recent and future legislative changes and initiatives to find mutually beneficial ways to streamline approvals and enable municipalities to continue to collect growth-related charges to deliver infrastructure and community needs quickly.

### **3.0 Financial Implications:**

There are no direct financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report. Some of the initiatives in the 2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge will need to be incorporated into the Town's Long Range Capital Budget Forecast. Implementation of any initiatives with a financial impact will be considered through future budget deliberations and/or decisions of Council. Opportunities for grant funding for any of the initiatives will also be sought as they become available.

### **4.0 Communication Issues:**

There are no communication issues associated with this report.

### **5.0 Relationship to the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan:**

Although a new Strategic Plan is in preparation, the previous Council's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan captures the following actions that are still relevant:

Focus Area: Investing in our Community

Goal 1. Growing and diversifying the local economy

Action 1.4: Facilitate opportunities for mixed use intensification projects along regional corridors and major transit routes.

Goal 2. Encouraging and supporting strategic land use development.

Action 2.3: Complete the Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review ("Zoning Our Future") to include new development standards addressing intensification, urban design, active transportation, and environmental protection.

Action 2.6: Develop a Housing Strategy to identify housing and affordable needs, and propose recommendations to support our community.

Focus Area: Leading in our Community

Goal 1: Advocating for intergovernmental matters important to our community.

Action 1.2: Actively participate in the Region of Durham's Municipal Comprehensive Review.

Action 1.4: Work with Region of Durham to prioritize servicing investments in Downtown Ajax to facilitate growth and development.

These actions demonstrate historical commitments made by the Town to deliver housing quickly.

**6.0 Conclusion:**

The Town has been assigned an ambitious target of 17,000 housing units by 2031 which greatly exceeds the Town's historical growth rates. The Town is committed to making every effort within its control and will work with our Regional and Provincial partners to implement initiatives that will help to increase the housing supply in our community. However, it is recognized that housing is ultimately market-driven and there are many factors outside the Town's control which may impede the Town's success in achieving this goal. This 2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge will help the Town move forward on strategic initiatives to support growth.

**Attachment:**

ATT-1: Town of Ajax 2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge

Prepared by:

Caroline Murphy, MCIP, RPP – Senior Planner

Submitted by:

Geoff Romanowski, MCIP, RPP, CPT – Director, Planning and Development Services

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

ATT-1 - Town of Ajax 2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing assigned Municipal Housing Target (Town of Ajax) – 17,000 new homes by 2031

- PROPOSED – New initiatives that have not yet been approved, but will be proposed in the Town’s future Long Range Capital Budget Forecast and/or departmental work plans
- PLANNED – Initiatives that are in departmental work plans, have approved budget, are identified in the Town’s Long Range Capital Budget Forecast and/or are legislatively required
- UNDERWAY – (As of January 2023)
- RECENTLY COMPLETED – (As of January 2023)

MUNICIPAL INITIATIVES	INITIATIVE OWNER & ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS	CONTEXT & DESCRIPTION OF HOW INITIATIVE ACCELERATES HOUSING	NUMBER OF UNITS & HOUSING TYPE*	CONSIDERATIONS (BARRIERS, IMPLEMENTATION, RISKS, ETC.)	POTENTIAL MITIGATION STRATEGIES AND PROPOSAL TO ACCELERATE HOUSING	POTENTIAL REPORTING & MONITORING MEASURES
Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review	Town of Ajax	<p>The Town is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of the Town of Ajax Zoning By-law. Completing the Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review will implement ‘as-of-right’ zoning permissions and would enable new housing development projects to proceed straight to site plan approval.</p> <p>Technical reports are underway and have been categorized by theme, the following of which will help the Town deliver housing units faster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Intensification Areas</li><li>Stable Neighbourhoods</li><li>Transportation</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Lack of Staff resources has been a significant barrier to the project.</li><li>Frequent and significant changes in legislation have also delayed the project.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Update Accessory Dwelling Unit Building Permit information package to reflect updated permissions.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Final Zoning By-law to be approved by Council.</li><li>Ongoing monitoring and regular reporting of the Town’s housing inventory.</li><li>Undertake comprehensive reviews as prescribed.</li></ul>

\* Note: Housing units estimates are based on previously completed studies and/or based on historical data to create estimates. The delivery of housing units is ultimately market driven and may be impacted by external factors such as Regional servicing infrastructure capacity. Housing units identified above may overlap across municipal initiatives.

MUNICIPAL INITIATIVES	INITIATIVE OWNER & ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS	CONTEXT & DESCRIPTION OF HOW INITIATIVE ACCELERATES HOUSING	NUMBER OF UNITS & HOUSING TYPE*	CONSIDERATIONS (BARRIERS, IMPLEMENTATION, RISKS, ETC.)	POTENTIAL MITIGATION STRATEGIES AND PROPOSAL TO ACCELERATE HOUSING	POTENTIAL REPORTING & MONITORING MEASURES
		<p>The Intensification Areas technical report would update zoning within four (4) intensification areas in Ajax: the Downtown Regional Centre, Uptown Regional Centre, Midtown Corridor, and GO Transit Station Mixed Use Area. The technical report will also update zoning along corridors. The update would align permitted residential uses with the Town's Official Plan and implement as-of-right medium-density and high-density mixed use zoning permissions in these areas.</p> <p>The Transportation technical report will update applicable parking standards within all intensification areas, including areas along corridors. Updating parking standards to ensure that parking spaces are utilized more efficiently will ultimately result in reduced parking standards, especially in transit-oriented communities and walkable neighbourhoods. This will help deliver housing units by ensuring that parking standards reflect best practices and market demand, and could reduce development costs.</p>	<p>Specific unit count cannot be assigned to this initiative.</p> <p>Specific unit count cannot be assigned to this initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sanitary sewer capacity is needed to accommodate growth in the Downtown.</li> </ul>		

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		<p>(locations included in ROPA 186), one (1) for an expanded retail store use, and the five (5) remaining conversion requests cover a total area of 17.4 hectares proposed for residential and/or mixed-use development. The requests were ultimately endorsed by Regional Council and direction was provided to include the conversions in the Growth Management Study. Regional Council supported ten (10) conversion requests and added two (2) additional land areas for a total of approximately 106 hectares. As of the date of preparation of this pledge, the conversions have continued to be presented in documents and the Town will review the draft Regional Official Plan Amendment to confirm that the lands have been converted to Community Area (to permit residential uses). If approved, these conversion requests will facilitate the delivery of more housing in Ajax.</p> <p>Ajax Council passed a motion on January 23, 2023 requesting five (5) Minister's Zoning Orders (MZO) for the above-mentioned five (5) remaining conversion requests.</p>		Region of Durham Official Plan before the Town can proceed with subsequent approvals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the Province approve the MZO requests adopted by Ajax Council.</li> </ul>	provided to Ajax Council.

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MUNICIPAL INITIATIVES	INITIATIVE OWNER & ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS	CONTEXT & DESCRIPTION OF HOW INITIATIVE ACCELERATES HOUSING	NUMBER OF UNITS & HOUSING TYPE*	CONSIDERATIONS (BARRIERS, IMPLEMENTATION, RISKS, ETC.)	POTENTIAL MITIGATION STRATEGIES AND PROPOSAL TO ACCELERATE HOUSING	POTENTIAL REPORTING & MONITORING MEASURES
Regional Official Plan Amendment 186		The Town has supported preparation of Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) No. 186 which delineates and establishes a regional policy framework for the Protected Major Transit Station Areas in Durham, including the Ajax GO Station. ROPA 186 would expand the boundaries of the existing Ajax GO Station Major Transit Station Area boundaries to permit high density mixed use development. Once approved, the Town can start work on updating the Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law to permit high-density mixed-use development.	~6,000 to 7,455 high density dwelling units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ROPA 186 is with the Province for approval and no decision has been made as of the date of preparation of this Pledge. There is risk of the boundaries and/or policy framework not being approved as adopted by the Region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Region of Durham and the Province to complete the Municipal Comprehensive Review in a timely manner.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval of this project will be by the Province and status of the approval will be provided to Ajax Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Ajax Official Plan Review</b>	Town of Ajax	The Town is scheduled to initiate the review of the Ajax Official Plan in 2024. This project is important to update the Town's Official Plan to reflect updated Provincial and Regional policy; implement population and employment growth allocations; and complete area specific studies for existing, new and expanded intensification areas within the Town.	Overall unit potential to be determined through Official Plan Review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awaiting completion of the Municipal Comprehensive Review prior to advancing project.</li> <li>Bill 23 may delay funding for this initiative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town to budget for the Official Plan Review and advance work on Terms of Reference for the project.</li> <li>Identify grant opportunities, such as the Streamline Development Approval Fund, to hire external consultants to assist with the project.</li> <li>Work with the Region of Durham and the Province to complete the Municipal Comprehensive Review in a timely manner.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final Town of Ajax Official Plan to be approved by Region of Durham (or the Province of Ontario).</li> <li>Ongoing monitoring and regular reporting of the Town's housing inventory once Official Plan Review complete.</li> </ul>

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Ajax GO Station Mixed Use Area Specific Study	Additional Stakeholders: Metrolinx, Private landowners	As part of the Official Plan Review, an area specific study to update and expand the Ajax GO Station Mixed Use Area designation to include the expanded boundaries of the Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA) will be completed. Updating the policy framework will enable high-density mixed-use development within the PMTSA and set the basis for updating the Zoning By-law to permit the uses and establish associated performance standards that represent good urban design and meet the minimum population and employment density targets.	~6,000 to 7,455 high density dwelling units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ROPA 186 is with the Province for approval and no decision has been made as of the date of preparation of this Pledge. There is risk of the boundaries and/or policy framework not being approved as adopted by the Region.</li> <li>• Additional Staff resources need to complete the work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the Province to approve Regional Official Plan Amendment 186.</li> <li>• Hire external consultant to assist in the preparation of the area specific study.</li> </ul>	
Uptown Regional Centre Area Specific Study	Additional Stakeholders: Private landowners	As part of the Official Plan Review, an area specific study will be completed for the Uptown Regional Centre (URC). The URC represents the greatest opportunity to provide housing in the Town. An area specific study, in consultation with major landowners, would establish a clear vision to deliver a high-density mixed-use community along the future Durham-Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit corridor. Establishing the policy vision will help create a zoning framework to aid in the delivery of housing.	~11,900 dwelling units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional Staff resources needed to complete work.</li> <li>• Majority of land is held by one landowner. Delivery of housing will be dependent on landowner moving forward on housing projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire external consultant to assist in the preparation of the area specific study.</li> <li>• Work with major landowner on Area Specific Study and find opportunities to advance housing construction.</li> </ul>	

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Midtown Corridor Area Specific Study	Additional Stakeholders: Private landowners	As part of the Official Plan Review, an area specific study for the Midtown Corridor will be completed. The Midtown Corridor is a strategic intensification area that links the Uptown Regional Centre with the Downtown Regional Centre. The corridor is envisioned to accommodate mid-rise development. The Town has received several development applications along the corridor that have required Official Plan Amendments. Updating the policy framework to reflect the growth potential of the corridor will assist in delivering housing more quickly. The corridor could also be a candidate to establish a Community Planning Permit System.	292 high-density dwelling units and 34 medium-density dwelling units have been proposed by way of development applications submitted to-date.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional Staff resources needed to complete work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to process development applications within the Midtown Corridor.</li> <li>Hire external consultant to assist in the preparation of the area specific study.</li> </ul>	
North Harwood Area Specific Study	Additional Stakeholders: Private landowners	North Harwood includes lands that were formerly within the northern portion of the Carruthers Creek Business Park Employment Area. Approximately 50 hectares of land within this area are proposed to be converted from Employment Area to Community Area to permit residential uses.	Unit potential to be determined through area specific study (Estimated to be between 1,500 to 6,500 dwelling units).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional Staff resources needed to complete work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire external consultant to assist in the preparation of the area specific study.</li> <li>Complete the Harwood Avenue North Environmental Assessment and the Rossland Road Environmental Assessment; proceed to detailed design and construction for both projects.</li> </ul>	

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Ajax Housing Strategy	Town of Ajax	<p>The Ajax Housing Strategy is to help the Town ensure that an appropriate range and mix of housing types and tenures are provided in Ajax to meet the demographic and economic needs of current and future residents. The strategy identifies goals and actions to address housing gaps and needs identified within the Town. Thirty (30) draft actions are proposed to help the Town move towards meeting the housing needs of residents across the housing continuum.</p> <p>Work on the project is nearing completion and a draft Action Plan has been presented to Ajax Council. Examples of actions include updating the Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law, introducing a rental housing demolition and conversion by-law, examining publicly owned surplus land suitable for housing, consider establishing a affordable and supportive housing development liaison.</p>	Specific unit count and type cannot be assigned to this initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional Staff and financial resources required to implement actions.</li> <li>Draft Actions are impacted by Bill 23 and will be reviewed and further amended to reflect changes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align and coordinate actions with other workplan projects to implement as quickly as possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Action #15: Monitor and track the Town's housing inventory by dwelling type and tenure.</li> <li>Reporting on the implementation of the Housing Action Plan will also be completed regularly.</li> </ul>

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<b>Central Ajax Intensification, Servicing and Transportation (CAIST) Strategy</b>	Town of Ajax  Additional Stakeholders: Region of Durham	<p>The Central Ajax Intensification, Servicing and Transportation Strategy was a three phase study planning for future growth in the Downtown Regional Centre and GO Transit Station Mixed Use Area to 2051. The Strategy examined transportation and servicing (sanitary, water and stormwater) infrastructure requirements to accommodate envisioned growth to 2051.</p> <p>The Strategy identified a number of infrastructure improvements needed to support growth including, the need for the Hunt Street Extension; several water and sanitary system upgrades; road widening, road network, and signalization improvements; and active transportation improvements.</p>	<p>Phase 1 (approved dwelling units): 2,468 dwelling units and 544 Long Term Care Beds</p> <p>Phase 2 (Ambitious Growth to 2031): 3,605 dwelling units and 282 retirement units</p> <p>Phase 3 (Envisioned Growth to 2051): 14,384 dwelling units</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant cost for infrastructure improvement may delay delivery of housing units if infrastructure cannot be constructed.</li> <li>• Region of Durham is responsible for implementing sanitary and water servicing; and transportation infrastructure improvements on Regional roads.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the Hunt Street Extension was identified as a preferred option to deliver growth to 2031 and would open sanitary and transportation capacity for residential units in Downtown Ajax. Therefore, this infrastructure improvement has been identified as a separate initiative under this Housing Pledge.</li> <li>• The Town will move to incorporate infrastructure improvements within the next Development Charge Background Study and future Long Range Capital Budget Forecasts to implement the infrastructure improvements as soon as possible. The Town will also work to identify other grant opportunities to implement the infrastructure improvements earlier.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing monitoring and regular reporting of the Town's housing inventory.</li> </ul>

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Hunt Street Extension	Town of Ajax	<p>This initiative would extend Hunt Street from the current terminus at Mackenzie Avenue westward to Westney Road South. The extension would create a new two-lane municipal road with cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. The connection would become a primary route to move people between the Downtown Regional Centre intensification area and the Ajax GO Station. It would also provide transportation network capacity to vehicles and buses entering and exiting the Ajax GO Station. The project was also identified as the preferred alternative to provide sanitary servicing capacity for the Downtown Regional Centre, which is currently constrained.</p> <p>In 2016, the Town completed an Environmental Assessment to identify that an underpass as the preferred alternative to providing the connection. Since then, the Town has been exploring other more cost-effective options.</p>	~6,400 dwelling units in Downtown Ajax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project construction costs are estimated between \$17.7 to \$25.5 Million (excluding land purchase costs) and increased construction costs are a barrier to construction.</li> <li>• High land acquisition costs are a barrier to construction.</li> <li>• If Bill 23 prohibits the Town from collecting Development Charges for land acquisition related to road projects, the Town will need to re-evaluate options and this project is likely to be further delayed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town has completed a Feasibility Assessment to explore other alternatives and will complete an addendum to the approved Environmental Assessment.</li> <li>• Seek Provincial funding for the Hunt Street Extension to help open servicing and transportation capacity in Downtown Ajax.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town to monitor housing unit construction within Downtown Ajax.</li> </ul>

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<b>Surplus and Underutilized Lands Inventory</b>	Town of Ajax  Additional Stakeholders: Public bodies such as the Province (Metrolinx), Region of Durham, and School Boards	As per the Town's Housing Strategy Draft Action Plan, the Town hopes to "work with other public bodies, such as Durham Region, Metrolinx and the school boards, to identify surplus land or underutilized properties in their inventories that may be suitable for affordable housing".  Metrolinx owns approximately 11.2 hectares of land surrounding the Ajax GO Station that has been designated in the Ajax Official Plan for high density mixed-use development since 2014. The land is underutilized and primarily accommodates surface parking spaces. Opening up the Metrolinx lands for redevelopment will provide additional housing opportunities in the Town and could accelerate housing in the Ajax GO Station Mixed-use Area.	Total unit count unknown at this time as land needs to be identified. However, analysis through the CAIST Strategy identified that ~1,750 units could be accommodated on lands owned by Metrolinx.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-operation between stakeholders, including Metrolinx, Region of Durham and other public bodies and willingness to open land for housing.</li> <li>Timing of release of surplus lands for development purposes is unknown.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with other public bodies to identify the lands and engage them early in other planning studies where land may be available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As land is identified, ongoing monitoring of implementation and construction will be required.</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusionary Zoning Housing Assessment Report</b>	Town of Ajax	The Town has proposed to complete an Inclusionary Zoning Housing Assessment Report to permit Inclusionary Zoning in the Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA), which would enable the Town to require a minimum	As per proposed amendments to O.Reg. 232/18: Inclusionary Zoning, 5% of new dwelling units in the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Province has not approved ROPA 186 which delineates the boundaries of the PMTSA and must be completed prior to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the Province to eliminate the requirement for a Housing Assessment Report as regulations will establish Inclusionary Zoning parameters, such as the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once Inclusionary Zoning implemented, number of units and agreements to be monitored.</li> </ul>

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		percentage of affordable housing units to be provided in new development.	PMTSA could be required to be provided at an affordable rate.	requiring Inclusionary Zoning units. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapidly changing Provincial Legislation makes it difficult to align workplan and implement changes.</li> <li>• Additional Staff resources needed to complete project earlier.</li> <li>• Decision on proposed amendments to O.Reg. 232/18: Inclusionary Zoning has yet to be released as of the date of preparation of this pledge.</li> </ul>	maximum number of units (5%) and affordability rate.	
<b>Architectural Guidelines for Medium-density and High-density Development</b>	Town of Ajax	The Town proposes to prepare Architectural Guidelines for medium and high-density development projects. These guidelines are intended to assist property owners in addressing technical matters and clearly illustrate best practices. This may include, but not be limited to, best practices for building/tower placement, parking location/parking	Specific unit count cannot be assigned to this item.  Facilitates medium and high-density housing types.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional Staff resources needed to complete project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire external consultants to assist with the project.</li> </ul>	

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		<p>lot design, servicing and infrastructure design.</p> <p>This document will provide further guidance to applicants as they prepare their development concepts. Example concepts within the guidelines may be directly transferrable to other similar sites.</p>				
<b>Protected Major Transit Station Area Zoning By-law Amendment</b>	<p>Town of Ajax</p> <p>Additional Stakeholders: Metrolinx, Private landowners</p>	<p>To implement the Ajax GO Station Mixed-use Area Specific Study, a Zoning By-law Amendment to implement associated zoning standards will be required to be completed.</p> <p>Updating the Zoning By-law will reduce approval timelines by providing 'as-of-right' zoning permissions for high-density mixed-use development that aligns with a comprehensive plan for an emerging transit oriented community.</p>	6,000 to 7,455 high density dwelling units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bill 23 requires the Zoning By-law to be updated within one (1) year following approval of associated Official Plan policy.</li> <li>• Additional Staff resources to complete work required.</li> <li>• Impact to Town's Capital Budget to complete unbudgeted project.</li> <li>• ROPA 186 is with the Province for approval and no decision has been made as of the date of preparation of this Pledge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify grant opportunities, such as the Streamline Development Approval Fund, to hire external consultants to assist with the project.</li> <li>• Align the project to be completed concurrently with the Ajax GO Station Mixed-use Area Specific Study.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing unit construction within the Ajax GO Station to be monitored and reported.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Planning Application Process Improvements</b></p> <p>Municipal Development Approval Timelines</p>	Town of Ajax	Town Staff are facing lengthier review and approval timelines as a result of the reduced quality of application submissions received, the volume of such submissions and lack of staff resources to process applications. This, and proposed legislative changes, prompted Planning and Development Services (P&D) Staff to update their development application review process to help expedite approvals.	Specific unit count and type cannot be assigned to this initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequent and significant changes in legislation divert Staff time and resources away from development application review.</li> <li>Lack of Staff resources to review and process development applications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff have implemented a series of changes and will continue to monitor success and adapt to continuously improve.</li> <li>That the Province continues to work with municipalities to provide grant opportunities, such as the Streamline Development Approval Fund.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor application approval timelines to track success.</li> </ul>
Application Processing Software		P&D Staff are also in the process of implementing application processing software to simplify and expedite the submission of applications to the Town. This software will provide a convenient platform for applicants to submit and track application progress electronically. It will also streamline the review of applications for internal Staff and external agencies since they will be able to access and provide comments more quickly in one convenient location.	Specific unit count and type cannot be assigned to this initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs associated with software updates.</li> <li>Potential system failures and/or internet outages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External consultant has been hired to provide application processing software utilizing the Streamline Development Approval Fund.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to run various reports within the software.</li> </ul>

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Pre-consultation Process Updates		As part of this process update, Planning Staff are implementing an enhanced pre-consultation process to encourage dialogue between the Town, applicants, and their consultants to better respond to potential issues and find mutually agreeable solutions early in the process. This is a two-phase process which will require more detailed information from the applicant prior to a formal application submission. This will result in more detailed comments back to the applicant, and enable issues to be resolved earlier.	Specific unit count and type cannot be assigned to this initiative.			
Terms of Reference Document Creation & Review		<p>Terms of Reference guidance documents for all reports and studies that may be required to support a development application are being developed.</p> <p>Having a complete set of Terms of Reference documents will enhance transparency and streamline preparation of supporting documents.</p>	Specific unit count and type cannot be assigned to this initiative.			

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Delegation of Authority By-law Update (By-law 81-2022)		The Town passed an Official Plan Amendment and updated the Town's Delegation of Authority By-law to delegate the removal of holding provisions and approval or extension of a temporary use by-law to Staff. Delegation to the Staff level allows for a quicker decision on applications of that nature since Council meeting timing does not need to be accommodated. Therefore, planning approvals can be obtained more quickly resulting in the applicant reaching the building permit stage sooner.	Specific unit count and type cannot be assigned to this initiative.			
<b>Team/POD Restructuring for Development Application Review</b>	Town of Ajax	In 2021, the Town implemented a Development Team/POD structure to review and process development applications. Five interdisciplinary teams with representatives from Planning, Engineering, Transportation, Design Services, and Planning Administration were created to improve service delivery and expedite the development application review process. Team/PODs are assigned during the pre-consultation stage and move the applications to permit stages.	Specific unit count and type cannot be assigned to this item.  Potential for all housing types (depends on applications submitted).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of Staff resources to review and process development applications.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application approval timelines to be tracked to monitor success of structure and staffing levels.</li> <li>Forthcoming online interactive mapping with application status and details to be released online.</li> </ul>

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		The members of each interdisciplinary Team/POD work collaboratively to deliver a unified and consistent streamlined approach to development review which will result in the applicant reaching the building permit stage sooner.				
<b>Affordable and Supportive Housing Liaison</b>	Town of Ajax	Action #21 in the draft Ajax Housing Action Plan directs the Town to consider establishing an affordable and supportive housing liaison. Responsibilities associated with this position would provide application guidance and help facilitate partnership opportunities between non-profit community housing providers and for-profit developers to deliver special needs housing, community housing and housing projects with affordable dwelling units.	Specific unit count and type cannot be assigned to this item.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional Staff resources needed to implement action.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify grant opportunities, such as the Streamline Development Approval Fund, to hire external consultants to assist with the project.</li> <li>Provide the liaison detailed training on the land use and housing development process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor success of position by tracking housing units constructed with assistance of position and satisfaction of applicant.</li> </ul>

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# **The Corporation of the Town of Ajax**

## **February 27, 2023**

### **Council Resolution Extract**

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The following resolution pertaining to the business of the Community Affairs & Planning Committee Meeting of February 6, 2023 was adopted by Council of the Corporation of the Town of Ajax at its meeting held on February 27, 2023:

#### **5. Presentations / Reports**

##### **5.1 PDS-2023-02: 2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge**

###### Main Motion as Amended

Moved by: L. Bower

Seconded by: J. Dies

1. That the report entitled “2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge” be received for information.
2. That the “Town of Ajax 2031 Municipal Housing Target Pledge”, included as ATT-1 to this report, be endorsed to support Council’s commitment to accelerating the supply of housing to meet the 2031 Municipal Housing Target of 17,000 new housing units, subject to the following conditions:
  - a) That the Town not be penalized financially or otherwise, for failing to meet the identified housing target;
  - b) That the housing target be recognized as an aspirational target and that the Town be permitted to continue to utilize the applicable population and employment forecasts from the Growth Plan, 2020 and/or municipal growth allocations assigned to and/or developed by the Town, for the purposes of creating development related studies, plans, and by-laws;
  - c) That the Province continue to work with municipalities to provide grant opportunities, such as the Streamline Development Approval Fund, to aid in the rapid delivery of the identified municipal initiatives and growth-related infrastructure; and
  - d) That the Province continue to consult and engage with municipalities on recent and future legislative changes and initiatives to find mutually beneficial ways to streamline approvals and enable municipalities to continue to collect growth-related charges to deliver infrastructure and community needs quickly.
3. That the Municipal Comprehensive Review Growth Management Study completed by the Region identified that there was potential to accommodate approximately 32,000 dwelling units through intensification in Ajax by 2051 demonstrating that Ajax already has enough land available within its urban boundary to nearly double the housing target as set out by the province so any greenbelt lands are not required.

# **The Corporation of the Town of Ajax February 27, 2023 Council Resolution Extract**

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4. That a copy of this report and Council's resolution be sent to Minister Steve Clark, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing by March 1, 2023 and a copy also be sent to the Region and Durham area municipalities.

CARRIED

Questions regarding the contents of this extract may be directed to the undersigned.



Jason McWilliam  
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Town of Ajax  
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E: [Jason.McWilliam@ajax.ca](mailto:Jason.McWilliam@ajax.ca)