

Dear Colleagues,

Attached you will find a letter from Minister Sean Fraser regarding our Housing Accelerator Fund application.

I have also attached a DRAFT response to the Minister's comments. As you can see, it is my intention of addressing all of the Minister's comments including the section on as of right units.

The City of London currently permits as of right building permits for up to 3 residential units wherever a zone permits singles, semis, or street townhomes in accordance with provincial Bill 23. The City is also currently in discussions with our post-secondary institutions and affected parties in the near campus neighbourhoods where up to 5 residential units may be accommodated within dwellings.

Therefore, I am asking Municipal Council to consider the following motion:

That Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to prepare a zoning by-law amendment that would permit as of right building permits for up to 4 residential units wherever a zone permits singles, semis, or street townhomes for consideration by Council as soon as permitted by the statutory requirements of The Planning Act.

And further to this action, that Civic Administration BE DIRECTED at their earliest opportunity, to review and prepare a strategic assessment for Council, of specific neighbourhoods where as of right building permits for more than 5 residential units may be appropriate within the existing framework of neighbourhood development.

I will also indicate that I have a seconder for consideration of this motion in Councillor Lehman.

I appreciate your consideration of this matter,

Josh Morgan

Mayor



August 18, 2023

Josh Morgan
Mayor
City of London
300 Dufferin Ave,
London, ON
N6B 1Z2

Dear Mayor Morgan,

I write after reviewing the city of London's application to the federal government's Housing Accelerator Fund.

Let me first say that I appreciate you taking my phone call on short notice earlier this week. I am glad to be developing a positive and productive working relationship with you. As one of too many cities in Canada facing heartbreaking and unacceptable levels of homelessness, I appreciate that London's housing needs are pressing and substantial.

To adequately respond not only to the housing crisis facing London, but to the housing shortage facing the country, we share the view that it is imperative that we work together and that we pursue bold ideas, while implementing solutions that work for Canadian families and communities.

In this vein, I can share that my team and I were pleased with several of the proposals advanced by London in its Housing Accelerator Fund application. This includes:

- Promoting high-density development without the need for rezoning (as-of-right zoning).
- Creating a process for the disposal of city-owned land assets for the development of affordable housing as-of-right (not requiring rezoning)
- Implementing new/enhanced processes or systems such as case management, e-permitting, land and building modelling.
- Partnering with non-profit housing providers to preserve and increase the stock of affordable housing.

However, before taking a decision on London's application, I respectfully urge you to ensure that the City is offering to do all that is within its power to address the housing

crisis. Specifically, I have three central requests that will improve London's application and better reflect my ambition for the Housing Accelerator Fund:

1. That you revisit the decision on the number of units which can be built as-of-right, and that you modify this number to be even more ambitious, by increasing it from 3 to 4;
2. That you engage with members of my team and with the Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC) to explore ways to leverage this application not only to contemplate, but to complement London's Rapid-Transit plans and increase density within walking distance to major transit areas; and
3. That student housing near or accessible to the City's main post-secondary institutions is integrated within London's broader development plans, including but not limited to transit developments and access to essential services.

If you and Council can supplement your application by addressing these 3 items, it will allow us to partner in a way that helps end London's housing crisis by creating opportunities for your city's residents across the housing continuum.

My colleagues, Members of Parliament Arielle Kayabaga and Peter Fragiskatos, have each been tremendous advocates for the City in each conversation I have shared with them. I trust their advice, and their counsel to me was that I would find a willing partner in you to assist me in fully leveraging this historic opportunity.

We can leave no stone unturned when it comes to tackling the housing crisis in your city. That is why I want to ensure that London fully seizes this opportunity to make the systemic changes required to unlock the housing supply needed to rapidly make housing more affordable for Londoners.

I am eager to be able to approve London's application, but I cannot, in good conscience, do so if I know opportunities to create more homes are left on the table. I understand that addressing these three items outlined in this letter may require you to seek approval of the City Council, and I would request that you keep my team and I apprised of all necessary steps throughout this process. We will remain a steadfast ally of the City's, and of any municipality ready to lead with the ambition needed to solve this crisis.

I sincerely appreciate you entertaining this request and look forward to future conversations.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Sean Fraser, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities

DRAFT

August 30, 2023

The Honourable Sean Fraser, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities
Ottawa, Canada K1P 0B6

Dear Minister Fraser,

Thank you for your correspondence dated August 18, 2023, regarding London's application to the federal government's Housing Accelerator Fund. I am also personally grateful for the time you took to meet virtually with me and my staff earlier this month in order to assist with London's application for funding assistance to help us meet some of our most pressing housing needs.

In response to your three central requests to improve London's application, let me summarize a few of our key planning and development initiatives that support your ambitions for the Housing Accelerator Fund. First and foremost, the City of London has designated a series of Rapid Transit Corridors in The London Plan, our official plan guiding future land use in the City. Those corridors specifically encourage high density residential development and redevelopment in direct proximity to our Bus Rapid Transit system which is now in development. Further, each of these corridors connect with Rapid Transit Villages at key transit destinations. The Rapid Transit Villages promote the highest residential densities in London, commensurate with development in our downtown core.

Residential intensification is an overarching and primary goal of land use planning policy throughout our City. In fact, the London Plan is based on the ambitious goal of achieving 45% of all new residential development through intensification. This planning goal applies to all residential and most mixed land use areas of the City of London, including the parts of the City that are not associated with the BRT.

Residential intensification is also a planning goal of The London Plan for both of the City's "Near Campus Neighbourhoods". These supplementary policies apply to each of the extended neighbourhoods surrounding Western University and Fanshawe College. The near campus neighbourhood planning policies encourage compatible forms of residential intensification within both existing structures and for new buildings. These policies guide "intensification in a proactive, coordinated and comprehensive fashion". As a result, there are many instances where existing dwellings have been converted into as many as 5 apartments.

The City of London also maintains excellent partnerships with both post-secondary institutions, and acknowledgement of their specific housing requirements is accommodated through mutual recognition of their localized needs. In the case of Fanshawe College, The London Plan has designated a Transit Village directly adjacent to the campus. Multiple, high-density residential apartment buildings have already been approved for development in this Transit Village in anticipation of student needs, and the proximity of our new rapid transit service. Western University meanwhile, offers guaranteed student residence for all first-year admissions. Consistent with this successful policy, and Western's anticipated expansion of enrollment, the University has recently announced plans to imminently build two new student residences for the accommodation of at least 1000 students, including both undergraduate and graduate students.

As you are probably aware, the City of London has already amended our zoning regulations in accordance with Bill 23 to permit "as of right" building permits for up to 3 residential units wherever single detached, semi-detached, street townhouse, duplex or triplex residential dwellings are permitted. In accordance with our collective ambitions for even greater residential densities, Council has recently directed our Civic Administration to prepare a by-law for Council's immediate consideration that will have the effect of permitting up to 4 residential units "as of right" wherever 3 units are currently permitted, and further, to explore strategic neighbourhoods where even more than 4 residential units may be permitted "as of right", including neighbourhoods within 1.5 kilometres of a major transit station.

Thank you again for your time and personal attention in support of London's current application to the Housing Accelerator Fund. Let me reiterate my commitment to working with you, your staff, and our local Members of Parliament to find every way possible to rapidly increase London's supply of accessible, attainable, and affordable housing.

Sincerely,

Josh Morgan
Mayor, City of London

Cc The Honourable Peter Fragiskatos, M.P. London North Centre
The Honourable Arielle Kayabaga, M.P. London West
The Honourable Lindsay Matheson, M.P. London Fanshawe
The Honourable Karen Vecchio, Elgin, Middlesex, London