



Town of Newmarket
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Vacant Buildings/Storefronts Information Report to Council

Report Number: 2019-04

Department(s): Legislative Services

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In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

Purpose

The purpose of the report is to provide Council with information regarding the current state of vacant buildings/storefronts in Newmarket.

Background

At its Committee of the Whole meeting on February 6, 2017, Council directed Staff to provide a report detailing options, best practices and by-laws that are used by towns and cities to prevent and/or manage unsightly vacant storefronts in areas of special interest such as Main Street.

Council received Legislative Services staff report [2017-16](#) on September 25, 2017 regarding Vacant Buildings/Storefronts outlining various options for Council to consider and provide input and direction on prior to staff proceeding with some or all of the options. At that time, Council directed staff to report back on Option 2 regarding a Window Wrap Program. Following Council direction, staff further investigated this option and it was determined that the program could not be implemented without a financial incentive framework. Given that the window wrap program would be targeted to a few storefronts and there would be considerable financial impact staff met with the local ward Councillor to review this matter further. Following discussions between staff and the local area ward Councillor, it was determined that these vacant buildings/storefronts no longer appear to be a concern on Main Street.

At its Council meeting on May 6, 2019, Council adopted the Council Strategic Priorities for the 2018-2022 term. Council identified six pillars to establish a roadmap to assist Council in providing the community with the best opportunities to become an even more vibrant, innovative, and sustainable community with exceptional quality of life for the

residents. The Extraordinary Places and Spaces pillar recognizes one of the primary objectives as enhancing the economic and social vibrancy of the downtown core through designing a best practice approach for Main Street.

Discussion

Staff work closely with Newmarket business owners to provide support and opportunities for growth by providing information related to grants, offering site visits, and providing businesses with information about the financial incentive program offered through the Town of Newmarket. This support helps decrease the number of businesses that leave Newmarket and prevent buildings from becoming vacant.

Staff will continue to monitor the area and any complaints received regarding vacant properties, specifically vacant storefronts in the downtown area. All vacant buildings are currently regulated through the Ontario Building Code and are subject to adhering to the Town's Property Standards By-law.

Conclusion

As vacant buildings/storefronts no longer appear to be a concern on Main Street in Newmarket, Staff will continue to ensure that any resident concerns are addressed and that the vibrancy of Main Street is enhanced through the initiatives related to the 2018-2022 Council Strategic Priority Extraordinary Places and Spaces pillar.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

This information report aligns with Council's Strategic Pillar regarding Extraordinary Places and Spaces (priority focus on Mulock Property): Creating an environment for an engaged, accessible and inclusive community.

Consultation

Staff consulted with the Town of Newmarket's Economic Development department and the Ward 5 Councillor when preparing this report.

Human Resource Considerations

None.

Budget Impact

None.

Attachments

None.

Contact

For more information contact Jaclyn Grossi at jgrossi@newmarket.ca

Approval

Kiran Saini, Deputy Town Clerk, Legislative Services

Lisa Lyons, Director of Legislative Services/Town Clerk, Legislative Services

Esther Armchuk, Commissioner of Corporate Services