

Mayor's Task Force on Housing

Update: May 14, 2019



Task Force meetings

The Task Force has been meeting bi-weekly at City Hall. Most of the work today involves task force members gaining background knowledge of housing-related issues and work to date.

Prior to the meetings, co-chairs meet to discuss items that the group has identified they need more information on. Our meetings include a combination of briefings from task force members with particular expertise (ie: costs of construction, public health approach to housing) and presentations from City staff (ie: Planning, Housing and Social Services).

We have spent the last month refining our work plan and public consultation process. Now that we have finalized some of the key questions that frame our work, we're getting excited to get out in the community and learn more from residents with all types of experiences with rental housing in Kingston.

What we have learned so far

We have learned a lot together so far and have begun to understand and probe some housing issues in our discussion. A few of the areas we have identified as key to the task of recommending options for increasing supply and affordability of housing:

- Defining the current 'affordability gap' in Kingston – meaning, the current CMHC definition of affordability is deemed too expensive for residents and current costs of construction for affordable units are deemed too expensive for. What is this gap and how can the City play a role in closing it?
- How can the City achieve a 3 per cent vacancy rate and sustain it?
- What are the other comparator communities doing to achieve greater supply and affordability of housing?

Next steps

Our next meeting will include a presentation on the work of the Housing and Homelessness Plan as it is in the midst of a 5 year review. We will discuss how the work relates to ours and how we might combine our efforts at various stages.

We are also preparing for our first set of Open Houses – scheduled for early June.