



STAFF REPORT

Title: Vacant Lot Inventory Update

Meeting Date: January 17, 2023

Executive Summary:

Administration has prepared an analysis of the status of vacant residential lots within new neighbourhoods in the community.

Background:

Between 2008 and 2014 a total of 639 new residential lots were created in the City. Since 2014, no new residential subdivisions have been constructed, owing to a significant inventory of available lots and limited demand for new home construction.

As of January 2023, there are 152 lots still vacant, based on Administration's analysis. For the purposes of Administration's analysis, a lot is considered vacant, if no home is located on the property, and there is no record of a valid permit for construction on the property. Of the 152 lots that are currently vacant, 63 (41%) are still owned by the land developer, and are assumed to be available for sale. The remaining 89 lots (59%) have passed on to secondary owners. Of the lots that have passed to secondary owners, 27 are owned by known homebuilders, and 25 lots currently have active realty listings. A full summary, broken down by neighbourhood, is attached.

Over the past several years, housing starts have rebounded from a low point of 21 units in 2018 to 71 units in 2022. Of the 71 units approved in 2022, 38 were new single-family dwellings, with the remainder being manufactured homes located within privately-owned communities. With the current level of new home construction, the existing inventory of vacant lots would be exhausted in the next 2-4 years. A chart illustrating the trends in housing starts since 2010 is attached.

In 2022, the City approved the first multi-lot subdivision in 8 years, a 37-lot expansion of Parkview Estates, which is expected to start construction in the spring of 2023. While it is anticipated that the City may receive additional subdivision applications in 2023, some land developers may be hesitant to proceed with developing additional lots, given the extended time it has taken for many to sell their existing inventory. Some developers may opt to take a wait-and-see approach, to be assured that there is a sustained demand, before investing in the construction of additional lots.



It should be noted that there are also opportunities for infill development within older neighbourhoods throughout the City, either on currently vacant properties or through demolition and replacement of older structures that are at the end of their life cycle. Council approved an amendment to the City's Water and Sanitary Servicing Policy in 2022, to reduce the risk associated with developing on infill lots, by covering the cost of installation/replacement of the water and sanitary sewer services, should this be necessary to facilitate new construction.

Alternatives:

Information Item

Recommended Action:

Information Item

Budget Implications (Yes or No):

No

Submitted by:

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