

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

County program offers financial incentive to create affordable rental units

Council approves 2015 funding of Ontario Renovates Secondary and Garden Suites program

Midhurst/April 28, 2015 – County Council today approved the program guidelines for the Ontario Renovates Secondary and Garden Suites program. The goal of the program is to increase the number of affordable rental units in Simcoe County by assisting homeowners in creating secondary suites within their homes or garden suites on their property. Ontario Renovates is a component of the Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario program funded by the federal and provincial governments.

“We are committed to aiding and assisting our residents who need a helping hand, while funding strategic initiatives that address our region’s most urgent needs,” said Warden Gerry Marshall. “Our target is to increase the supply of affordable housing in our communities by 2,685 units over the next 10 years. This is a win-win program, as it provides an additional stream of revenue to the homeowner and increases the supply of attainable rental units in our communities.”

The program provides financial support in the form of an interest-free, forgivable loan, up to a maximum of \$25,000 to create a secondary or garden suite, and/or a grant up to \$5,000 for accessibility modifications. Funding is limited and will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The County’s 10 Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy, approved by County Council in January 2014, recognizes the need for more affordable housing throughout the County and suggests that the creation of secondary or garden suites could be a viable solution. Furthermore, amendments to the Planning Act through Bill 140, ‘Strong Communities through Affordable Housing Act’, legislates that municipalities are now required to create policies that not only support existing affordable units, but will encourage the creation of new ones.

For more information or to apply to the Ontario Renovates program, visit www.simcoe.ca/ontariorenovates.

The County of Simcoe is composed of sixteen member municipalities and provides crucial public services to County residents, in addition to providing paramedic and social services to the separated cities of Barrie and Orillia. Visit our website at simcoe.ca.

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