

DATE OF MEETING JUNE 27, 2022

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**SUBJECT PROPOSED 2023 INITIATIVES TO INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report**

To present the Governance and Priorities Committee with a proposed 2023 list of projects intended to increase affordable housing in the City of Nanaimo.

### **Recommendation**

That the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council endorse the Staff recommended projects for 2023 to support and increase affordable housing in the City of Nanaimo as presented in the report dated 2022-JUN-27 by Christy Wood, Social Planner and Lisa Brinkman, Manager of Community Planning.

## **BACKGROUND**

The 2018 Nanaimo Affordable Housing Strategy (the 'Strategy') provides a framework to guide future projects to increase affordable housing in the City of Nanaimo. In addition, direction is provided in the Health and Housing Action Plan (2021), and in the proposed City Plan to inform affordable housing objectives and potential projects. Staff have also completed a summary of approaches used by other municipalities to increase affordable housing and compared them to what the City is currently doing, see "Attachment A – Review of Affordable Housing Initiatives from other Municipalities."

## **DISCUSSION**

Staff recommend the following initiatives and projects be considered for 2023 to support the increase of affordable housing units in the City of Nanaimo:

- a) Explore and support further opportunities for infill and intensification in existing neighbourhoods.
- b) Provide education and awareness to developers and other housing providers on the current ways the City supports affordable housing (including infill housing).
- c) Complete an analysis of proposed Urban Centre and Corridor land use designations in City Plan if adopted by Council, with the objective of pre-zoning appropriate parcels for affordable housing, and to align densities in the Zoning Bylaw with the OCP or City Plan density targets.

- d) Review the “Officers Appointment and Delegation Bylaw 2006 No. 7031” to increase the threshold for when the General Manager of Development Services can approve a development permit (DP) for affordable housing projects, such that the DP does not need to be approved by Council. Currently, development permit approval is delegated to the General Manager of Development Services for proposals with 100 units or less, and for smaller variances.
- e) Develop a Tenant Relocation Policy to require tenant relocation plans as a condition of rezoning or redevelopment of purpose build rentals of four or more units and mobile home parks.
- f) Complete a Family Friendly Housing Policy that reflects the results of a market study to increase the number of family friendly residential units in the city.
- g) Complete an Adaptable and Accessible Housing Policy that reflects the results of a market study to increase the number of adaptable and accessible units in the city.
- h) Explore options for amending Schedule D of the Zoning Bylaw 4500 to further incentivize affordable housing. This includes considerations to incentivize affordable family friendly housing with three or more bedrooms, and accessible and adaptable housing units. Schedule D of the Zoning Bylaw contains a list of amenities that a developer can provide in order to achieve more residential units within a development than the base zoning designation allows.
- i) Evaluate a recent update to the *Local Government Act*, which removes the default requirement for local governments to hold public hearings for zoning bylaw amendments that are consistent with an Official Community Plan (OCP), to determine if this can support and encourage affordable housing developments. |

## **OPTIONS**

1. | That the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council endorse the Staff recommended projects for 2023 to support and increase affordable housing in the City of Nanaimo as presented in the report dated 2022-JUN-27 by Christy Wood, Social Planner and Lisa Brinkman, Manager of Community Planning.
  - The advantages of this option: The proposed projects for 2023 as listed in this Staff report provide a strategic and targeted approach to reducing barriers for future affordable housing development proposals, and to supporting the types of affordable housing needed in the city.
  - The disadvantages of this option: Council may wish to explore other affordable housing approaches or projects besides those listed.
  - Financial Implications: The proposed projects for 2023, as listed in this Staff report, may require some consulting services however the projects can be achieved within the typical annual budget for the Development Services Department.
2. That Council provide alternate direction to Staff. |

### **SUMMARY POINTS**

- Nanaimo's Affordable Housing Strategy (2018), Health and Housing Action Plan (2021), and proposed City Plan provide guidance for future projects to increase affordable housing in the city.
- A review and comparison of approaches used by other municipalities to increase affordable housing and what the City is currently doing was completed.
- A Staff recommended list of projects for 2023 is proposed to increase the amount and diversity of affordable housing options by increasing awareness of existing opportunities, and further reducing barriers and incentivizing affordable housing developments.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

ATTACHMENT A: Review of Affordable Housing Initiatives from other Municipalities |

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