

DATE OF MEETING FEBRUARY 6, 2023

AUTHORED BY SHEILA GURRIE, DIRECTOR, LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

**SUBJECT ASSOCIATION OF VANCOUVER ISLAND AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES RESOLUTIONS**

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report**

Staff is seeking Council direction regarding resolutions for submission to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Convention.

### **Recommendation**

That Council direct Staff to submit the following resolutions to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) for consideration at their 2023 Annual General Meeting:

1. WHEREAS the current Agriculture Land Reserve housing rules limit permitted housing to three residential dwelling units on a farm;

AND WHEREAS increased flexibility in the Agriculture Land Reserve's rules would permit increased food production and training for future farmers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Agricultural Land Commission be requested to seek ways to permit more housing on Agriculture Land Reserve land linked to increased farm activity and food production, subject to control by regulations to guarantee that any new housing could only be occupied by farmers working on the land.

2. WHEREAS the Province, through BC Housing and EMCR, supports year round emergency shelters, temporary winter shelters (operational from November 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>);

AND WHEREAS since 2022 extreme weather response warming/cooling centres to support vulnerable populations which often tend to be for those with acute mental health and substance use disorders;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that BC Housing, EMCR and Island Health enter into an agreement with UBCM to ensure that they support local governments with commitments to provide resourcing for dedicated predetermined long term locations for warming/cooling centres as well as appropriately qualified professionals experienced in managing community members with high health needs including mental health and substance use disorders.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) 2023 Annual General Meeting will be held April 14 - 16, 2023 in Nanaimo. AVICC members are invited to submit resolutions on topics that fall under local government purview, are specific and focus on new issues of provincial or AVICC-wide interest. Resolutions that are endorsed at AVICC are automatically forwarded to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) conference for debate in September.

## **DISCUSSION**

The deadline to submit Resolutions to AVICC is Thursday, February 9, 2023.

### **Flexibility for Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR) Housing Rules**

Current Agriculture Land Reserve housing rules limit the amount of residential housing allowed on farmland. The Agriculture Land Commission increasing this number of residences permitted on designated ALR farmland would allow for increased farm activity and food production.

### **Extreme Weather Response**

For the Resolution proposed regarding “Extreme Weather Response”, for the 2022 and 2023 winter and summer season the City is providing funding to community organizations, the 7-10 Club Society and Risebridge, for daytime warming centres for people experiencing homelessness, and to the Nanaimo Unitarian Shelter to assist overnight guests with daytime warming services as needed. The 2022-2023 funding comes from a successful Union of BC Municipalities ‘Strengthening Communities’ Services program grant to the City to support daytime cold and hot extreme weather services. These services were enhanced in anticipation of a shortfall of available daytime and overnight services including shelters provided through provincial and non-profit resources.

On December 19, 2022, during a period of extreme cold conditions, the City of Nanaimo was directed by the Medical Health Officer to set up a temporary warming centre for vulnerable populations. This proved to be very challenging, due to the availability of staff on call to work outside of regular hours, finding a suitable facility accessible to those in need of warming services, and managing the safety of all given the very limited provision of health professionals with experience working with people with mental health and substance use disorders to assist City staff with operation of the centre.

Local governments need more support from partners to be able to continue to respond to the health and shelter needs of vulnerable populations in extreme weather events. ]

## **OPTIONS**

1. That Council direct Staff to submit the following resolutions to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) for consideration at their 2023 Annual General Meeting:

- a. WHEREAS the current Agriculture Land Reserve housing rules limit permitted housing to three residential dwelling units on a farm;

AND WHEREAS increased flexibility in the Agriculture Land Reserve's rules would permit increased food production and training for future farmers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Agriculture Land Commission be requested to seek ways to permit more housing on Agricultural Land Reserve land linked to increased farm activity and food production, subject to control by regulations to guarantee that any new housing could only be occupied by farmers working on the land.

- b. WHEREAS the Province, through BC Housing and EMCR, supports year round emergency shelters, temporary winter shelters (operational from November 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>);

AND WHEREAS since 2022 extreme weather response warming/cooling centres to support vulnerable populations which often tend to be for those with acute mental health and substance use disorders;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that BC Housing, EMCR and Island Health enter into an agreement with UBCM to ensure that they support local governments with commitments to provide resourcing for dedicated predetermined long term locations for warming/cooling centres as well as appropriately qualified professionals experienced in managing community members with high health needs including mental health and substance use disorders.

2. That Council provide alternate direction.

#### **SUMMARY POINTS**

- Staff is seeking Council direction regarding resolutions for submission to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Convention.
- The Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) 2023 Annual General Meeting will be held April 14 - 16, 2023 in Nanaimo.
- Resolutions that are endorsed at AVICC are automatically forwarded to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) conference for debate.

**Submitted by:**

Sheila Gurrie,  
Director, Legislative Services