

UBCM Housing Needs Report Program

RECOMMENDATION:

That Committee of Council recommends that Council authorize staff to apply to the 2020 UBCM Housing Needs Report intake program for funding to develop housing needs report.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report recommends that staff be directed to apply to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) for funding to prepare a housing needs report. Development of a housing needs report is mandated by the Province and is intended to help municipalities determine current and future housing needs, and to identify housing policies, regulations and programs to address these needs.

BACKGROUND

The Province of BC has passed the *Local Government Statutes (Housing Needs Reports) Amendment Act, 2018*, S.B.C. 2018, c. 20 which requires local governments to collect data, analyze trends and present a comprehensive report that details current and future housing needs for each respective municipality. In accordance with this legislation, municipalities and regional districts in B.C. are required to complete housing needs reports by April 2022 and every five years thereafter.

The Province has allocated \$5 million dollars in funding to help municipalities produce their first housing needs reports. The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) has been tasked with administering the funding and has structured a Housing Needs Report intake program with funding scaled on the net population of the planning area; for municipalities with populations of 50,000 to 99,999 (which includes Port Coquitlam) the maximum funding that may be provided is \$50,000.

The UBCM program intake deadline for 2020 is May 1st, 2020. Staff is requesting Council's authorization to apply for this program in order to complete the assessment.

SCOPE OF WORK

The Province expects the reports to strengthen the ability of local governments to understand what kinds of housing are most needed in their communities, and to help inform local plans, policies, and development decisions. Work to complete the report is expected to include two phases:

1) Data Collection: Municipalities are required to collect statistical information on current and projected population, household income, significant economic sectors, current available housing units and anticipated housing units and housing typology. Approximately, 50 distinct kinds of data is anticipated to provide the basis for determining current and projected housing needs – some of this information is available through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs or through Metro Vancouver.

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This phase is also expected to include community engagement, including collaboration with neighboring local and regional governments, partner organizations, community surveys, and engagement activities.

Assessment and Action Plan: This phase will include a comprehensive analysis of the data collected in the first phase, including the number of housing units required for each type of housing to meet current and anticipated housing needs for at least the next 5 years. The intent is to provide more refined information on housing trends within the city that is updated more frequently than the OCP. Key areas include affordable housing, rental housing, special needs housing, seniors housing and shelters for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Under the UBCM Housing Needs Reports program, eligible costs and activities must be cost-effective and can include data collection, research, assessment, community engagement, drafting and publication of the report, and presentation of the findings. Eligible expenses also include project management and coordination staff costs, consultant costs and capacity building for staff to undertake subsequent updates to the housing needs report.

All applications will be assessed and scored based on criteria that include:

- Demonstrated need for an updated housing assessment;
- Adherence to the data collection, assessment and reporting expectations for the report;
- Broad community consultation with stakeholders and sectors;
- Strategies to building capacity for municipal staff to undertake future assessments; and,
- Cost-effective and provision of in-kind or monetary contributions.

DISCUSSION

The City's Official Community Plan policies and objectives support the provision of housing within the community that meets a wide variety of needs, including form, location, tenure and price. The 2015 Housing Action Plan described the City's current housing conditions and proposed six broad directions to address gaps and meet future needs. The Affordable and Family Friendly Housing policy, adopted in 2018, is intended to boost the City's supply of affordable and family-oriented housing.

Creation of a housing needs assessment will provide an opportunity for the City to carefully analyze existing housing stock and supply, understand the potential gaps, over and undersupply, and identify clear actions to address housing needs for the community. The UBCM funding program is unique in that it allows the City to utilize a portion of the funding to train staff on the data model and how to undertake the assessment, so the capacity for future assessments can be retained in-house. Staff expect that the project would be managed and administered by staff, but also include external consultants to provide technical expertise and training on statistical modelling and population forecasting, and to provide report graphics and

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formatting, communication, and engagement services. If the City is not successful in receiving the UBCM Grant funds, we will bring forward a budget request to complete the work in 2021.


FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All monetary costs are proposed to be funded through the UBCM grant program. Staff expect a budget of \$50,000 would be adequate to undertake this assessment and could off-set both consultant costs, staff training and project management costs. Staff recommend the housing needs report application include the provision of in-kind costs including administration, use of software and mapping programs. If UBCM approves the \$50,000 grant, an amendment to the financial plan would be required.

CONSULTATION

Consultation with the community and stakeholders including non-profits, development community, health authorities, vulnerable populations and First Nations is required in order to meet the UBCM criteria. Staffs anticipate the need to work closely with Metro Vancouver to ensure report consistency with municipalities in the region and will collaborate with surrounding municipalities, particularly Coquitlam, Port Moody, Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge.

OPTIONS

	#	Description
	1	Recommend to Council that staff be directed to apply to the 2020 UBCM Housing Needs Report program for fund the development of a housing needs report.
	2	Request additional information prior to making a decision on the recommendation of this report
	3	Determine that consideration not be given to using provincial funding to facilitate the development of a housing needs report.

Attachments: Housing Needs Report Program