



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Municipal Hall
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Esquimalt, B.C. V9A 3P1

Legislation Text

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REQUEST FOR DIRECTION

DATE: September 26, 2017

Report No. DEV-17-059

TO: Laurie Hurst, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Marlene Lagoa, Community Development Coordinator,
Bill Brown, Director of Development Services

SUBJECT:

Official Community Plan - Housing Policies Review

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

What type of housing policies should be included in the updated Official Community Plan?

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee of the Whole receive Staff Report DEV-17-059 for information and provide any additional direction to staff as the COTW considers advisable, and direct staff to prepare a draft Official Community Plan for Council's consideration.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this report is to review draft housing policies that are being proposed for the updated Official Community Plan (OCP).

The Township began the review and update of its OCP in Fall 2015. An Affordable Housing Workshop was held on May 5, 2017 with the intent of providing focused stakeholder input into affordable housing solutions for Esquimalt. Policy briefs were distributed to participants ahead of time on Esquimalt's housing trends and on affordable housing forms, policy tools and resources. The Affordable Housing Workshop policy briefs are attached as Appendix A.

A summary report outlining the activities and findings from the Affordable Housing Workshop was received at the June 19, 2017 Committee of the Whole (COTW) meeting. The consultant's summary report is attached as Appendix B.

At the July 17, 2017 Council meeting, Council directed staff to schedule a Special COTW Meeting to review and discuss affordable housing policies prior to the development of a draft Official Community Plan.

ISSUES:

Affordable Housing Workshop

Staff requires further direction on whether the Township wishes to pursue any of the following recommendations coming out of the Affordable Housing Workshop.

- A. Strategies supported by workshop participants for creating affordable housing:
1. Providing incentives and pre-approvals for affordable housing, potentially including different processes for non-profit developers.
 2. Ensuring new housing fits into the neighbourhood (through the neighbourhood plan and good design).
 3. A housing fund.
 4. Working with non-profit organizations/developers, including the need to ensure these organizations are funded.
 5. Utilizing non-profit owned land and assets.

For more information on the strategies supported by workshop participants, please see Appendix B - Affordable Housing Workshop Summary Report.

- B. Consultant's recommendations for further engagement opportunities on affordable housing:
1. Host a follow-up workshop to focus on OCP policy development.
 2. Host a design charrette to identify parcels of land where housing could be built and the partners that need to be involved.
 3. Create a housing task force that can identify the terms of reference for a housing fund and to explore options for a housing organization.
 4. Host another discussion or learning opportunity about resale price restrictions and/or municipal land acquisition.
 5. Host a follow-up workshop with the development/building community to identify the key steps required to support the building of affordable housing.

A table outlining the above consultant's recommendations, along with comments from workshop participants, Council, and staff, is attached as Appendix C.

- C. Additional directions given to staff at the June 19th COTW meeting:
1. Invite CRD staff and the Coalition to End Homelessness to make a presentation to Council.
 2. Provide stats on the number of legal vs. illegal secondary suites in Esquimalt.
 3. Research what other municipalities have done to address parking requirements.
 4. Create more rental units through relaxations to secondary suites and introduction of detached accessory dwelling units (DADUs).
 5. Investigate the possibility of tiny homes in Esquimalt.
 6. Research what other municipalities have done to encourage apartment buildings and stratas to allow pets.
 7. Encourage developers to building 3 and 4 bedroom units in multi-family developments.

A table summarizing the additional direction given to staff at the June 19th COTW meeting, along with staff comments, is attached as Appendix D.

Draft Housing Policies

Staff is seeking feedback on the updated draft OCP housing policies attached as Appendix E. Staff considered the public input received throughout the OCP review process when drafting the housing policies. Public input received from community engagement opportunities in 2016 and 2017 are attached as Appendix F and Appendix G respectively.

Direction is needed on whether the Township wishes to introduce new housing policies related to detached accessory dwelling units and secondary suites.

Detached Accessory Dwelling Units

There has been a lot of interest expressed in introducing detached accessory dwelling units (DADUs) to Esquimalt. Other common names include garden suite, coach home, or laneway house. DADUs are secondary dwelling units that are operated in the same manner as a secondary suite (i.e. long-term rental). However, instead of the rental unit being located within the primary dwelling, it is located in a stand alone building located on the property.

If the Township wished to allow DADUs, there are four regulatory tools available:

1. Site specific rezoning: This is the most onerous option. Site specific rezoning applications are the only option to come before Council and require a public hearing.
2. Development permit: The option of establishing development permit guidelines for the exterior form and character of DADUs.
3. Permitted use in residential zones: The option of amending the Zoning Bylaw to allow DADUs as a permitted use within current residential zones (i.e. RS-1, RS-2, RS-3, RS-4A, RS-4, RS-5).
4. New residential zone: This option gives staff the greatest control to zone selected parcels (based on site specific suitability) as a new residential zone with DADU (e.g. RS-6).

A matrix evaluating the different regulatory tools for allowing DADUs is attached as Appendix H. It is important to note that options 1, 3 and 4 are mutually exclusive options with a choice of implementing only one tool. However, Option 2 - Development Permit - is a regulatory tool that can be combined with any of the other three options.

Secondary Suites in Duplexes

Secondary suites are currently permitted in detached single family dwellings only. The issue of expanding secondary suites to two unit family dwellings (duplexes) has been brought before Council in recent years.

The main challenge to allowing secondary suites in duplexes is the cost of bringing an existing duplex up to the standards of the BC Building Code. The Building Code requirements for secondary suites in duplexes are the same as building a fourplex. Hence, permitting secondary suites in duplexes is likely to encourage secondary suites in new duplex developments but unlikely to impact current housing stock as the cost of renovating can be cost prohibitive. Another option to increase density on parcels with an existing duplex is allowing a detached accessory dwelling unit (DADU).

Short-term Accommodations

There is no change being proposed to the Township's policy on short-term accommodations. Short-term accommodations in designated residential land use areas are only permitted where RS-4 or RS-4A zoning for a bed and breakfast has been sought and secured. There is no intention of permitting short-term accommodations in other residential zones as it would not serve the Township's goal of improving the availability of affordable housing.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. That the COTW receive Staff Report DEV-17-059 for information, provide any additional direction to staff as the COTW considers advisable, and direct staff to prepare a draft Official Community Plan for Council's consideration.
2. That the COTW provide alternative direction to staff.
3. That the COTW request further information from staff.