

# Report to Council



**Date:** June 25, 2018  
**File:** 1200-40  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** James Moore, Long Range Planning Manager & Michelle Kam, Sustainability Coordinator  
**Subject:** Healthy Housing Strategy

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Long Range Planning Manager and the Sustainability Coordinator dated June 25, 2018, with respect to the Healthy Housing Strategy;

AND THAT Council endorse the Healthy Housing Strategy as attached to the report of the Long Range Planning Manager and the Sustainability Coordinator dated June 25, 2018;

AND THAT Council direct staff to begin implementation of the actions, including the request of budgets in appropriate years, as outlined in the Healthy Housing Strategy as attached to the report of the Long Range Planning Manager and the Sustainability Coordinator dated June 25, 2018.

## **Purpose:**

To present Council with the Healthy Housing Strategy for endorsement.

## **Background:**

Kelowna is facing serious housing challenges. For some residents in our community, accessing or maintaining healthy housing is a constant struggle. Homelessness is on the rise across Canada and Kelowna is no exception with a 23 per cent rise in the number of people experiencing homelessness since 2016. Kelowna also has a critically low rental vacancy rates and escalating home prices, leaving many of our residents housing vulnerable. The Healthy Housing Strategy is a direct response to these critical issues, and draws on the vital relationships between health and housing to position Kelowna for long-term success.

The Healthy Housing Strategy is the second of six theme areas of the broader Healthy City Strategy, a multi-year partnership between the City of Kelowna and Interior Health that seeks to provide a framework to change the conditions that impact the health and well-being of our community residents.

In addition, the Healthy Housing Strategy was developed in alignment and collaboration with the Journey Home Strategy to address Council's top priorities of *homelessness* and *housing diversity*. By design, these Strategies are closely aligned. Going forward it will be important to ensure that the implementation of the Strategies stay closely linked and that they are considered in tandem.

The links between health and housing are diverse and complex. The approach of the Healthy Housing Strategy is not to address them all comprehensively. Rather, it is a 5-year strategy, right-sized for Kelowna, that focuses on the most pressing of these connections, acknowledging that later theme areas of the Healthy City Strategy will enhance the efforts to more comprehensively address health and housing.

## Wheelhouse

Through the development of the *Housing Needs Assessment* endorsed by Council on November 20, 2017, and through the development of the Healthy Housing Strategy, housing has been categorized



through the new and innovative approach of the Wheelhouse.

The new Wheelhouse is circular in structure and promotes equity and inclusion, as it recognizes that people may move across categories of the Wheelhouse throughout their lives and that home ownership is not the destination for all residents. Additionally, the Wheelhouse recognizes that our housing stock needs to reflect the diverse socioeconomic and demographic needs of Kelowna residents and should not focus exclusively on market housing. The Wheelhouse can be viewed as a system in which people move among different housing forms, tenures and price points. Changes to one aspect of the system influence other parts of the system.

## Major Project Milestones

The Healthy Housing Strategy used numerous inputs to ensure the development of a Plan that includes Council priorities, best practices, housing and health-related research, partnerships and staff, stakeholder and public engagement.

On March 12, 2018 Council received the Healthy Housing Strategy Proposed Actions council report and directed staff to further investigate and to engage on the proposed actions for the Healthy Housing Strategy. Since that time, staff have refined the actions and completed further stakeholder engagement to finalize the Healthy Housing Strategy.

Below is an outline of the major milestones for the development of the Healthy Housing Strategy:

- Housing Needs Assessment Research and Development (June to November 2017)
- Council endorsement of Housing Needs Assessment (November 20, 2017)
- Phase 1 Public Engagement (December 2017 to January 2018)
- Healthy Housing Strategy Development (February to April 2018)
- Council endorsement of Healthy Housing Strategy Proposed Actions (March 12, 2018)

- Phase 2 Public Engagement (May 2018)
- Finalize Healthy Housing Strategy (May to June 2018)

### **Key Directions and Recommended Actions**

Four key directions emerged as priorities through the development of the Healthy Housing Strategy. These key directions are as follows:

1. Promote and protect rental housing;
2. Improve housing affordability and reduce barriers for affordable housing;
3. Build the right supply; and
4. Strengthen partnerships and align investments.

Using the key directions as the framework, the Healthy Housing Strategy includes 19 actions to be implemented over the next five years. Each action is assigned to one primary key direction, even though it may support multiple key directions to a lesser extent. The actions themselves range from adjustments to existing regulations or policy all the way to major new initiatives that will require bold leadership and commitment to change. It will take several years for the full effects of many of the actions to be felt. Nonetheless, each action builds on the momentum of previous ones, multiplying their individual benefits.

Implementation of select recommended actions set out in the Strategy will begin in 2018. While some initiatives are already underway and will need to be continued or expanded, others will be introduced over the next five years through individual implementation efforts that will require synergies to be formed, public consultation, and innovative approaches that cross traditional boundaries and mandates.

Delivering on the full spectrum of the Wheelhouse requires challenging decisions that will impact various stakeholders both positively or with resistance. The actions recommended in this report position the City into a leadership role to make real change on Kelowna's housing market, and will also require action from community partners.

The financial implications for the actions outlined in this report may seem modest to achieve the major changes in the housing system that the Healthy Housing Strategy proposes. However, these budget estimates are principally identified to complete the detailed research, stakeholder engagement and analysis to prepare for implementation of the 19 actions. Once this work is complete, some of these actions will be brought forward to Council for consideration with more significant, ongoing financial impacts.

The housing challenges facing Kelowna today are significant and the consequences of inaction are clear. But, the future is hopeful. The Healthy Housing Strategy sets out a bold vision and a 5-year plan that will start to move the community in the right direction. This plan requires the collective efforts of all levels of government, public and private sectors, community partners and residents to implement and embrace the 19 actions. It also requires innovation, collaboration and new approaches to housing to shift us towards a collective path where our current and future residents can access and maintain the housing they need to thrive.

**Internal Circulation:**

Director, Community Planning & Strategic Investments  
Director, Active Living & Culture  
Development Services Director  
Director Strategic Investments  
Infrastructure Engineering Manager  
Social Development Manager  
Neighbourhood Development Coordinator  
Community Planning Department Manager  
Community Planning Supervisor  
Urban Planning Manager  
Property Officer  
Community Engagement Manager  
Strategic Transportation Planning Manager

**Existing Policy:**

Official Community Plan goal:

*Address Housing Needs of All Residents. Address housing needs of all residents by working towards an adequate supply of a variety of housing.*

Official Community Plan objectives:

- 5.9 - Support the creation of affordable and safe rental, non-market and/or special needs housing
- 5.23 - Address the needs of families with children through the provision of appropriate family-oriented housing
- 10.3 - Support the creation of affordable and safe rental, non-market and/or special needs housing

Official Community Plan policies:

- 5.22.7 - Healthy Communities
- 5.22.10 - Adaptable Housing
- 5.22.11 - Housing Mix
- 5.22.13 - Family Housing
- 5.23.1 - Ground-oriented Housing
- 7.3.1 - Housing Mix
- 10.3.1 - Housing Availability
- 10.3.2 - City-Owned Land
- 10.3.4 - Use of the Housing Opportunities Reserve Fund

**Financial/Budgetary Considerations:**

Of the 19 actions in the Healthy Housing Strategy, 5 actions are accompanied with estimated budget requests that are expected to be brought forward for Council consideration between 2018-2020. Four of the budget requests are one-time requests to fund detailed implementation-related work and total \$85,000.00. One request is for an ongoing annual increase of \$180,000 to the budget allocation starting

in 2019 for affordable rental housing grants to provide partial relief from Development Cost Charges. The remaining 14 actions are expected to be able to be more exhaustively scoped using existing staff and budget. However, a few notable actions will require significant and ongoing budget requests (ie. Affordable Housing Land Acquisition) and will be deliberated at a future date.

Submitted by:

J. Moore and M. Kam

**Approved for inclusion**



Danielle Noble-Brandt, Policy & Planning Department Manager

Attachments:

Healthy Housing Strategy

cc:

Director, Community Planning & Strategic Investments

Director, Active Living & Culture

Development Services Director

Director Strategic Investments

Infrastructure Engineering Manager

Social Development Manager

Neighbourhood Development Coordinator

Community Planning Department Manager

Urban Planning Manager

Property Officer

Community Engagement Manager

Strategic Transportation Planning Manager

Healthy City Strategy Steering Committee

Healthy Housing Stakeholder Advisory Committee