

Report to Council



Date: April 12, 2021
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Ru7 Infill Housing- Fast Track Program Updates
Department: Development Planning

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Development Planning Department dated April 12, 2021, with respect to the RU7 Infill Housing Fast Track program;

AND THAT Council direct Staff to terminate the fast-track process as it relates to the Infill Challenge.

Purpose:

To request Council direction to officially terminate the fast-track development permit process.

Background:

The Infill Challenge was a collaborative design competition process that resulted in two winning submissions. The fast track program has run for a 3-year period and has allowed applicants to have an accelerated Planning and Building Permit approval process. The winning designs were exempted from the requirement to obtain a Development Permit and Building Permit reviews were expedited. This has ultimately reduced processing times for applicants by +/- 6-8 weeks. The fast track, in combination with pre-zoning has proven to be a powerful incentive that has helped realize the potential of infill housing. The two winning submissions are shown below:

Inhabit 4



Simple



Discussion:

Initially, the fast-track process was intended to conclude on July 13, 2021; however, Staff have reviewed the RU7 Infill zone and built form outcomes in the community and propose that the process conclude now. The “simple” winning submission has seen great success and popularity in the community and Staff are concerned that continued inundation of this building form in the RU7 areas will result in repetitive streetscapes and a lack of design diversity.

Staff are proposing to keep the Development Permit application fee at \$0 and note that concluding the fast-track process does not preclude an applicant from developing one of the winning submissions. Applicants may make an application as a Staff issued Development Permit which will be reviewed as per the typical application review process, with an attention to Urban Infill Design Guidelines, the preservation of existing trees where possible and landscaping requirements. Additionally, the fast track process is one which can be revisited in the future, potentially with other infill designs.

Conclusion:

The fast track process has been an excellent incentive for the development of the award-winning designs, specifically, the “simple” design. Staff believe it is now time to conclude the program to allow for greater review of Development Permit applications and ultimately encourage greater design diversity in the RU7 neighbourhoods.

Internal Circulation:

Policy and Planning
Building and Permitting

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