

Report to Council



Date: July 26, 2021
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Infill Challenge Design Competition 2.0
Department: Policy & Planning

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives for information the report from the Policy & Planning Department dated July 26, 2021;

AND THAT Council direct staff to proceed with the Infill Challenge Design Competition 2.0 as proposed in the report from the Policy & Planning Department dated July 26, 2021;

AND FURTHER THAT the Financial Plan be amended to include this \$56,000 project with funding of \$20,000 from a CMHC grant, \$16,000 or contributions from community partners, and \$20,000 from the Policy and Planning 2021 operating budget.

Purpose:

To consider launching the Infill Challenge Design Competition 2.0 project.

Background:

Infill housing is defined as the addition of new housing, ranging from carriage houses to tri-plexes and four-plexes, into existing neighbourhoods. In Kelowna, infill housing has a central role to play in providing critically needed ground-oriented homes that are attainable for a broad range of residents. Currently approximately 80% of Kelowna's residential land is zoned for single dwelling homes (SDH)¹, but only about 20% of Kelowna's residents can afford to purchase a median priced SDH². Infill housing helps to provide diverse housing forms and increase housing choice beyond SDHs and apartment housing. Additionally, infill housing is an important part of the City's strategy to combat the impacts of urban sprawl. Focusing growth in areas with existing infrastructure such as roads, schools, parks, and transit helps build resilient neighbourhoods with access to daily services.

The City of Kelowna has historically shown strong leadership on infill housing, including allowing secondary suites and carriage houses in some areas of the City since the 1990s. In 2016, City staff initiated an innovative Infill Challenge Design Competition. From this, two winning designs were selected which formed the basis of a new sensitive infill zone (RU7). Over 800 parcels in central

¹ Based on Kelowna land zoned for SDHs divided by total amount of land zoned for all residential uses.

² Based on assumptions used in the [Regional Housing Needs Assessment's](#) Homeownership Affordability Analysis.

neighbourhoods were pre-zoned to RU7 and since early 2017 approximately 300 RU7 units have received building permits.

There were several key takeaways from the original Infill Design Challenge and RU7 zone implementation³. The initiative was successful in generating new, more attainable forms of ground-oriented rental and ownership housing in central areas of Kelowna. However, staff acknowledge that while RU7 units were overall more attainable than SDHs, the units produced were generally not considered “affordable” housing. Additionally, there have been challenges in providing infrastructure such as trees, boulevards, and sidewalks in infill neighbourhoods, which affects livability. Finally, there was also feedback that infill housing would benefit from a higher level of design excellence.

Discussion:

Infill Challenge Design Competition 2.0

Infill housing remains critical and is supported by Council’s priority of providing an appropriate mix of context sensitive housing that is affordable and attainable. Infill housing is also supported in current OCP policy and the Healthy Housing Strategy. Additionally, the draft 2040 OCP growth strategy projects that about 25 per cent of future growth will be in the form of infill housing.

Staff are seeking to host a second Infill Challenge Design Competition (IDC 2.0) to show continued leadership on infill housing. The goal of IDC 2.0 is to generate new housing ideas for existing mature lots in established neighbourhoods. Staff estimate that there are 2,500-3,000 existing lots that have considerable potential for redevelopment over the next ten or more years. Examples of these lots, typically developed in the 1960s and 1970s, can be found in neighbourhoods including Rutland, Lower Mission, and Glenmore. A fundamental difference between these lots and the neighbourhoods that were the subject of the initial Design Challenge is the lack of rear laneways, meaning new design ideas are needed. The overarching objectives of IDC 2.0 are to:

- Introduce new forms of infill housing not presently permitted in Kelowna
- Expand the supply and diversity of housing in new parts of Kelowna
- Demonstrate how infill housing can be well designed while meeting various community objectives, including affordability, diversity, resiliency, inclusivity, and livability
- Provide area residents with examples of how infill housing could improve their neighbourhoods
- Reinforce positive relationships between the City, the development and home building industry, and area residents

IDC 2.0 will build upon best practices and lessons learned from the original Design Challenge through these expanded objectives which will be reflected in the judging criteria. Participants in the competition will be asked to provide a rationale for how their proposal can provide diverse forms of affordable housing, contribute an inclusive community with a high standard of livability, increase resiliency in the face of climate change, and achieve design excellence.

Post-competition, IDC 2.0 outcomes are intended to inform updates to the City’s infill policy and zoning. Specifically, staff will review options for implementing the winning designs into new areas of Kelowna, and explore tools such as pre-approved plans, zoning updates, and pre-zoning. Determining options for implementation will involve additional staff review to determine feasibility as well as touchpoints with Council as per the timeline below. Implementation is intended to take place after the adoption of the 2040 OCP, which will further guide decision making on future infill housing. The

³ See Policy & Planning Department report to Council dated September 28, 2020 for full details.

outcomes of the competition could also inform infill housing approaches in other regions as many mid-sized cities are looking for creative ways to encourage a supply of ground-oriented housing.

Process & Timeline

Project Planning – Summer 2021

- Establish internal project team
- Present to Council
- Launch IDC 2.0

Open Competition – Summer 2021

- Promote IDC 2.0 to potential participants
- Finalize jury
- Receive submissions

Selection of Winners – Fall 2021

- Jury to finalize winners; winning submissions to be brought to Council
- Showcase winners

Explore Implementation Options – Fall / Winter 2021

- Staff to examine opportunities to implement new infill design ideas
- Engage with industry partners and community at large
- Staff to bring forward a package of recommendations to Council for consideration, including any necessary changes to policies, bylaws, and processes

Conclusion:

Exploring ideas for new forms of infill housing will contribute to increasing diverse and attainable housing options and help the City achieve 2040 OCP infill housing targets. IDC 2.0 will incorporate lessons learned from the first Design Challenge and encourage participants to meet new and higher standards on several key objectives. IDC 2.0 is not a complete Infill Housing Strategy but will rather act as a catalyst to demonstrate that infill housing can make positive contributions to existing neighbourhoods across Kelowna.

Internal Circulation:

Communications
Development Engineering
Development Planning
Development Services
Parks & Building Planning
Policy & Planning
Purchasing
Utility Planning

Existing Policy:

2030 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 10500

Goals for a Sustainable Future

1. Contain Urban Growth. Reduce greenfield urban sprawl and focus growth in compact, connected and mixed-use (residential and commercial) urban and village centres.
2. Address Housing Needs of All Residents. Address housing needs of all residents by working towards an adequate supply of a variety of housing.

Objective 5.3 Focus development to designated growth areas

Policy 5.3.2 Compact urban form. Develop a compact urban form that maximizes the use of existing infrastructure and contributes to energy efficient settlement patterns. This will be done by increasing densities (approximately 75 – 100 people and/or jobs per ha located within a 400 metre walking distance of transit stops is required to support the level of transit service) through development, conversion, and re-development within Urban Centres (see Map 5.3) in particular and existing areas as per the provisions of the Generalized Future Land Use Map 4.1.

Objective 5.22 Ensure context sensitive housing development

Policy 5.22.6 Sensitive Infill. Encourage new development or redevelopment in existing residential areas to be sensitive to or reflect the character of the neighbourhood with respect to building design, height and siting.

Objective 5.23 Address the needs of families with children through the provision of appropriate family-oriented housing

Healthy Housing Strategy

Action 3.3 – Build the Right Supply. Support a greater variety of infill housing forms.

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

The budget for IDC 2.0 is \$56,000. The Policy & Planning Department will fund \$20,000. The remaining \$36,000 has been provided by a grant from CMHC and sponsorships from community partners including the Urban Development Institute, David Alton, and Jesse East.

Communications Comments:

A communications plan has been created in alignment with the project scope. IDC 2.0 will be promoted through a dedicated webpage and the City's electronic and social media forms of communications.

Submitted by:

A. Janousek, Planner II

Approved for inclusion:



J. Moore, Long Range Policy & Planning Manager

cc:

R. Smith, Divisional Director, Planning & Development Services

M. Bayat, Development Services Director

D. Noble-Brandt, Policy & Planning Department Manager