

Report to Council



Date: May 2, 2022

To: Council

From: City Manager

Subject: Housing Needs Reports Program Grant Application

Department: Policy & Planning

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Policy & Planning Department dated May 2, with respect to the UBCM Housing Needs Reports Program;

AND THAT Council directs staff to apply for grant funding for a Housing Needs Assessment through the UBCM Housing Needs Reports Program;

AND THAT Council support the current proposed activities and endorse staff to provide overall grant management;

AND FURTHER THAT, should the grant application be successful, the 2022 Financial Plan be amended to include the receipt of funds.

Purpose:

To approve staff to apply to UBCM's Housing Needs Reports program to fund a Housing Needs Assessment.

Background:

Since April 2019, local governments have been required by the provincial government to develop housing needs reports, also called Housing Needs Assessments (HNAs), on a regular basis. HNAs are intended to strengthen the ability of local governments to understand what types of housing are most needed, and help inform local plans, policies, and development decisions. UBCM's Housing Needs Reports Program supports local governments in undertaking HNAs to meet provincial requirements.

The City of Kelowna completed a HNA in 2017 and, to meet provincial requirements, staff also brought the RDCO's HNA to Council in January 2021. Since these HNAs were completed, there has been rapid change in Kelowna's housing system including escalating home prices and impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. New data from the 2021 census is also available. The City is required to prepare a new HNA by 2023, and staff are seeking to start developing this new HNA in fall 2022.

Discussion:

The funding available from UBCM's Housing Needs Reports Program is population based. The City of Kelowna can apply for up to \$70,000 in funding for eligible costs. Policy & Planning staff have prepared

an application for the full funding amount, which would largely be used to retain the services of a consultant. The consultant would collaborate with City staff to support data collection, public engagement, community consultation, analysis, and reporting.

Overall, an updated HNA will support the work of multiple City departments – including Policy & Planning, Development Planning and Real Estate – as well as the development of an updated Housing Strategy. Additionally, an updated HNA will help to inform decision making on housing and allow for alignment with housing-oriented Council priorities, City plans, and policies. The funding application is supported by community partners including Interior Health and the Central Okanagan Journey Home Society, indicated through letters of support that would be attached to the grant application.

Conclusion:

With Council's approval, the City of Kelowna will apply for funding under the Housing Needs Reports Program to prepare an updated HNA. If funded, the updated HNA will provide foundational information needed to make informed decisions about housing going forward.

Internal Circulation:

Financial Services
Social Development
Partnership & Investments
Real Estate Services
Communications

Considerations applicable to this report:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

If the City's grant application is successful, the 2021 Financial Plan need to be amended to include the receipt of funds.

Submitted by: A. Janousek, Planner

Approved for inclusion:



J. Moore, Infill Housing Planning Manager

cc: Divisional Director, Planning & Development Services
Divisional Director, Financial Services
Social Development Manager
Grants & Special Projects Manager