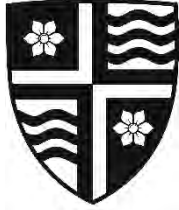


Township of
Langley



Est. 1873

REPORT TO MAYOR AND COUNCIL

PRESENTED: MAY 13, 2019 - REGULAR AFTERNOON MEETING
FROM: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
SUBJECT: UBCM HOUSING NEEDS REPORTS PROGRAM

REPORT: 19-77
FILE: LSP00010

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorize staff to submit an application to the UBCM Housing Needs Reports Program and indicate support for the housing needs report work.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) is currently accepting applications to the Housing Needs Reports Program. The purpose of this grant program is to provide funding for local governments to prepare a housing needs report, which under provincial requirements must be completed by April 2022, and every five years thereafter. Housing needs reports are intended to help identify existing and projected gaps in housing supply by collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative information about local demographics, economics, housing stock, and other factors.

With a population of over 100,000, the Township is eligible for an amount of \$70,000 in grant funding, which represents the largest amount currently available under the UBCM program. The deadline for the submission of applications under the first intake of the program is May 31, 2019.

A Council resolution authorizing the submission of the grant application and indicating support for the housing needs report work is a requirement of the UBCM application criteria. Should the Township be successful with the application and receive the requested grant funding, the Community and Policy Planning Department will be responsible for managing the work program and grant funds. The work program will follow the required processes outlined by the Province and UBCM, which involve data analysis and public and stakeholder engagement. External consultants will be utilized to assist on as-needed basis to augment existing staff resources and provide technical expertise, with related costs being eligible for inclusion as part of the program. Once complete, Council must receive the housing needs report by resolution.

PURPOSE:

This report is to provide information and recommendations concerning a proposed application to the UBCM Housing Needs Reports Program.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY:

In 2018, the Province amended the Local Government Act by requiring that local governments prepare and publish housing needs reports. These reports are intended to help identify existing and projected gaps in housing supply by collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative information about local demographics, economics, housing stock, and other factors.

The provincial housing needs requirements took effect on April 16, 2019 with the adoption of the provincial Housing Needs Report Regulation. Local governments are now required to prepare its first housing needs report by April 2022, with subsequent updates required at intervals of no more than five years.

The commencement of the work on a housing needs report in 2019 is consistent with the memorandum to Council dated May 24, 2018 and Council Report 19-30 dated March 11, 2019.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

The Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) is currently accepting applications to the Housing Needs Reports Program. The purpose of this grant program is to provide funding for local governments to prepare a housing needs report. Funding under the program is scaled based on the population of the municipality. With a population of 100,000 or greater, the Township is eligible for a maximum of \$70,000 in funding, the largest amount under the program.

A Council resolution authorizing the submission of the grant application and indicating support for the housing needs report work is a requirement of the UBCM application criteria. The deadline for the submission of applications under the first intake of the program is May 31, 2019.

Housing Needs Reports:

Together, the provincial legislation and regulations specify requirements for local government related to housing needs reports. These requirements include:

- collecting information to identify current and projected housing needs
- using that information to prepare and publish an online housing needs report which shows current and projected housing needs for at least the next five years
- considering the most recently collected information and housing needs report when amending official community plans

To determine current and projected housing needs, local governments are required to collect approximately 50 distinct type of data about current and projected population, household income, significant economic sectors, and currently available and anticipated housing units. The UBCM program also encourages community consultation and engagement, including collaboration with:

- neighbouring local governments
- First Nations and local Indigenous organizations
- non-profit service providers, health authorities, and/or post-secondary institutions
- non-profit or for-profit development sector
- vulnerable populations

All housing needs reports are required to contain the following, based on an analysis of the information collected:

- statements about key areas of local need, including affordable housing, rental housing, special needs housing, seniors housing, family housing, and shelters and housing for people at risk of homelessness
- the number of housing units required to meet current and anticipated housing needs for at least the next five years, by housing type (defined as dwelling size by number of bedrooms)
- the number and percentage of households in core housing need and extreme core housing need

Once complete, Council must receive the housing needs report by resolution. All project activities under the UBCM program must be completed within one year of project approval.

Intergovernmental Implications:

As discussed above, the UBCM program encourages consultation with neighbouring local governments and First Nations. Should the Township receive the grant funding, neighbouring local governments and First Nations would be advised of and invited to participate in the project.

Project Management:

Should the Township receive the grant funding, the social planning function of the Community and Policy Planning Department will be responsible for managing the work program and grant funds. The work program will follow the required processes outlined by the Province and UBCM, which involve data analysis and public and stakeholder engagement. The public and stakeholder engagement will integrate the recommendations of the Public Engagement Strategy as much as possible in consideration of the time and resource parameters of the project. As the social planning function is already operating at full capacity with other major projects (such as the Social Sustainability Strategy and Child Care Space Creation Action Plan), external consultants will likely be drawn upon to augment staff resources and provide technical expertise. Consulting costs are eligible expenditures under the UBCM grant program.

Financial Implications:

The Housing Needs Reports Program does not require local governments to provide additional funding or support, and it is anticipated that the \$70,000 maximum grant available would be sufficient cover the project costs. It is anticipated that a portion of these grant funds would be used for internal capacity building to ensure future reports can be completed in a cost-effective manner. Staff training and internal capacity building costs are eligible expenditures under the UBCM grant program.

CONCLUSION:

Staff are seeking Council's authorization to submit an application to the UBCM Housing Needs Reports Program and indication of support for the housing needs report work. Should Council authorize staff to submit the grant and the Township be successful with the application, staff will commence the work immediately.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Ward
STRATEGIC/SOCIAL PLANNER
for
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION