

**DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER
COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

Minutes of the Council Workshop for the District of North Vancouver held at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, October 25, 2021 in the Council Chambers of the District Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver, British Columbia.

Present: Mayor M. Little
Councillor J. Back (via Zoom)
Councillor M. Bond
Councillor M. Curren (via Zoom)
Councillor B. Forbes (via Zoom)
Councillor J. Hanson
Councillor L. Muri (via Zoom)

Staff: Mr. D. Milburn, General Manager – Planning, Properties & Permits
Ms. S. Walker, General Manager – Corporate Services
Mr. A. Wardell, General Manager – Finance/CFO
Mr. R. Danyluk, Deputy General Manager – Finance & Deputy CFO
Ms. J. Paton, Assistant General Manager – Development Planning & Engineering
Ms. T. Atva, Manager – Community Planning
Ms. C. Grafton, Manager – Strategic Communications & Community Relations
Ms. G. Lanz, Deputy Municipal Clerk
Ms. K. Charters-Gabaneck, Research and Communications Assistant
Ms. A. Dalley, Community Planner
Ms. A. Reiher, Council Liaison/Support Officer
Ms. S. Dale, Confidential Council Clerk
Ms. K. Hebron, Committee Clerk

Also in

Attendance: Mr. Matt Thomson, Community Housing – Urban Matters

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1. October 25, 2021 Council Workshop Agenda

MOVED by Councillor BACK

SECONDED by Councillor HANSON

THAT the agenda for the October 25, 2021 Council Workshop is adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1. September 27, 2021 Council Workshop

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

3. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL OR STAFF

3.1. Housing Needs Report – Draft

File No. 10.5040.01/000.000

Mr. Dan Milburn, General Manager, Planning, Properties, and Planning, advised that in 2019 the *Local Government Act* was amended to require all local governments to develop a Housing Needs Report by 2022. He noted that the Housing Needs Report is a useful planning tool designed to establish a trend for population change, extend that trend into the future, and estimate the amount of housing units needed to accommodate the anticipated population. The Housing Needs Report provides a projection of population change and estimates housing demand, but it is not a forecast and it does not provide a normative determination of future population. Given these limitations, it is important to place the Housing Needs Report within the existing policy context, regional trends and characteristics, and existing housing capacity.

Ms. Tina Atva, Manager – Community Planning, introduced the consultant and provided a brief overview of the Draft Housing Needs Report. She advised that to meet the UBCM grant funding requirements, the District's report must be completed and posted online by January 4, 2022.

The Housing Needs Report includes the content required by the Province and provides:

- The number of units required to meet current and anticipated housing needs for the next five and ten years;
- Statements about key areas of local need; and,
- The number and percentage of households in core housing need and extreme core housing need.

Ms. Arielle Dalley, Community Planner, advised that public input and stakeholder engagement was conducted between June and September 2021. Based on stakeholder engagement regarding housing affordability for particular groups and supported by data regarding core housing need, there is a strong need for housing for families, seniors, immigrants, homeless individuals, indigenous households, and people with accessibility needs.

Ms. Dalley highlighted key findings from the report:

- The District's housing stock is predominately single-family homes, with the share of single-family housing being much higher than what is seen regionally;
- Over the last number of years, the District has seen an increase in the share of housing in compact centres which is one of the directions of the Official Community Plan;
- Homes in the District tend to be larger than homes in the region as a whole;
- In 2016, fewer than 200 households in the District, or about 0.5%, were in studios and 10% of households were in one bedrooms, whereas 70% of District households were in homes with three-bedrooms or more;
- The average vacancy rate for purpose-built rental units in the District has remained low since as early as 2005 noting that a healthy vacancy rate is typically between 3-5%;
- There has been an overall rise in the vacancy rate since 2016, but this is likely due to several temporary factors, including a number of units becoming

available in 2017-2018, temporarily raising vacancy rates, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic being linked to temporarily higher vacancy rates across the region due fewer students and international workers moving here;

- On average, vacancy rates have been lower for studios and one-bedrooms, and higher for two and three bedrooms;
- The North Shore Community Housing Action Committee (CMHC) Rental Market Survey reports that the District has just under 1,700 rental units in the primary rental market, which is also referred to as purpose-built rental and is about a quarter of the total number of rental units in the District;
- Purpose-built rental is more secure and is typically less expensive than units in the secondary rental market (which are units such as secondary suites, or condo units being rented out by the owner);
- Approximately 75% of renters in the District live in these less secure units;
- Approximately 20% of the District's residents are renters, and 80% own their home which aligns with the high proportion of single-family housing in the District;
- The District's average sales price has increased fairly steadily, with the exception of around 2018-2019 which may be a result of various regulations that came into effect including the speculation tax and stricter mortgage stress testing;
- As sales prices increase far faster than the median income, the affordability gap grows larger;
- There are three primary indicators of housing vulnerability used by Statistics Canada and CMHC; these are whether a household can afford their home (specifically, whether they're spending more than 30% of their income on housing), whether it's suitable (which is are there enough bedrooms), and is it adequate or in good repair;
- If a household experiences issues in any of these categories and can't reasonably afford an alternative option in their community, then they are in Core Housing Need;
- If a household is experiencing one of these issues and spending more than 50% of its income on housing, then they are in Extreme Core Housing Need;
- There are approximately 1,500 owner households in core housing need and about 1,600 renter households and over a quarter of all renters in the District are in core housing need;
- Nearly half of seniors who rent are in core housing need and approximately 40% of renters who are single-parents or living alone are in core housing need; and,
- Other renters who experience high rates of core housing need include: immigrants, people with disabilities, and Indigenous households.

Mr. Matt Thomson, Urban Matters, summarized key findings in the Draft Housing Needs Report highlighting the following:

- Core Housing Need to grow to approximately 2,100 renter households and 1,950 owner households by 2031 if additional supports aren't developed;
- 7,050 new households are projected for the District between 2021-2031;
- Considering units already approved but not yet occupied, approximately 4,550 more units are needed by 2031; and,
- The unit mix to accommodate all the new households is projected to be approximately: 40-60% studios or 1-bed, 15-30% 2-bed, 25% 3+ bed units.

Staff advised that the Housing Needs Report will be brought to Council by the end of 2021 and once received, it will be posted online for the public. It is anticipated that there may be updates needed to the Housing Continuum and/or the Rental and Affordable Housing Strategy. It was further noted that staff do not anticipate needing to amend the Official Community Plan at this time.

Council discussion ensued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Commented on the timing of the report noting that data from the 2021 Census will be released in February 2022;
- Opined that it is hard for long-term reports to be accurate and should not be used as a guiding document;
- Applauded the Province for mandating reporting on Housing Needs;
- Commented that growth can help provide new infrastructure;
- Noted that the ratio per person, per household, as been decreasing;
- Opined that growth should be focused in areas that have core transit infrastructure;
- Noted that the housing market has changed in the last seven years;
- Spoke to the challenges of obtaining current data;
- Acknowledged that one-bedroom apartments are being sold off-shore;
- Spoke to the importance of enhancing communication to the public; and,
- Mentioned that the international student and foreign workers market has significantly decreased.

In response to a question from Council, the consultant advised that vacancy rates in the District have been historically quite low; however, an increase in vacancy rates has been observed due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is anticipated that the new data in 2020 will show that vacancy rates have decreased.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that in future years when new information becomes available, appropriate adjustments can be made.

In response to a question from Council, the consultant concurred that the Housing Needs Report mandated by the Province is restrictive, has its limitations, and is a simplified projection model. However, it is a useful tool to observe trends when making changes within communities.

Council discussion ensued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Opined that rentals should be long-term;
- Opined that town centres should be densified so residents do not have to get in their cars and drive;
- Stated that the demographics in the District are changing and these trends need to be looked at to identify what type of housing is needed and who is being excluded;
- Commented that the District is a wealthy community and we need to work on making it more inclusive;
- Suggested staff look at the demographic data;
- Commented that the significant increase of median income in the District is directly linked to the existing housing stock;
- Stated that a more balanced housing stock is needed;

- Requested staff add an additional column once the new Census information is released;
- Commented that the Housing Needs Report will help shape future conversations with Council;
- Expressed concern that the data provided is not meaningful;
- Suggested sending a letter to the Province expressing concerns with the projections being enforced;
- Requested that staff report back to Council once the data is released with key changes;
- Commented that low income renters are struggling;
- Commented on the importance of equity;
- Expressed concerns that not all groups of people were engaged in the stakeholder engagement;
- Suggested including the cost per square foot in the report; and,
- Stated that rental is a stepping stone to home ownership.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the Tsleil-Waututh Nation is not required to submit a Housing Needs Report to the Province.

Council discussion ensued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Suggested slowing the pace of development and determining what the actual needs of the District is and building those gaps;
- Commented that seniors need to be taken care of;
- Expressed concern with the lack of employment housing;
- Suggested working with the neighbouring municipalities, the Squamish Nations and Tsleil-Waututh Nation;
- Spoke regarding the significant cost of land in the District;
- Opined that residents displaced from Emery Village will not be able to afford living on the North Shore;
- Commented on the restrictions of those living with pets;
- Opined that infrastructure needs to catch up to the pace of development; and,
- Commented that the North Shore needs to be built as a whole as what the City of North Vancouver does impacts the District.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that a waitlist for non-market rentals can take from month to years depending on the type of housing needed. It was further noted that family and senior housing is a challenge.

Councillor MURI left the meeting at 8:47 p.m. and returned at 8:48 p.m.

Council discussion ensued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Commented that people immigrating and their impact on communities is a global problem;
- Clarified that the Housing Needs Report is a projection of core data and Council is free to make decisions going forward on how best to meet the needs of the community; and,
- Opined that smaller homes are needed in the future.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that Statistics Canada does not include data from shelters or supportive housing.

Public Input:

Mr. Peter Teevan:

- Opined that the Housing Needs Report will be a useful long-term document;
- Commented on the timing of the report noting that data from the 2021 Census will be released in February 2022;
- Suggested that information regarding First Nations land be included in the report;
- Commented that the building industry was consulted;
- Expressed concerns that families displaced from Emery Village, seniors, North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, and North Shore Community Housing Action Committee (CHAC) were not consulted;
- Stated that location, density, and Floor Space Ratio (FSR) are driving property values; and,
- Commented on the need for social housing.

Mr. Hazen Colbert:

- Commented on the timing of the report noting that data from the 2021 Census will be released in February 2022;
- Suggested that Council approve this report in its final form in April 2022; and,
- Commented that non-market housing is a challenge.

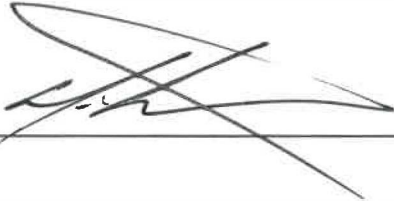
4. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councillor HANSON

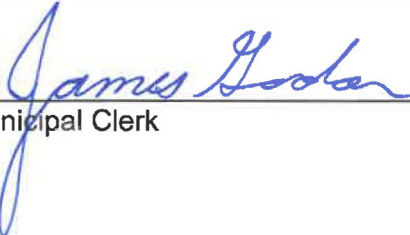
SECONDED by Mayor LITTLE

THAT the October 25, 2021 Council Workshop is adjourned.

CARRIED
(9:13 p.m.)



Mayor



Municipal Clerk