

**MINUTES**  
**HOUSING STRATEGY TASK FORCE**  
Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers  
Via Electronic Communications  
November 5, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Chair de Vries and Vice Chair Harper

Staff: Cameron Scott, Manager, Community Planning; Current Planning; Nadine Kawata, Planner, Community Planning; Gina Lyons, Senior Planning, Current Planning; Alanna McDonagh, Planner, Community Planning; and Tara Da Silva, Senior Committee Clerk

Facilitators: Lani Brunn, Lead Facilitator, CitySpaces; Julia Bahen, Facilitator, CitySpaces; Kevin Green, Facilitator, CitySpaces; Spencer Andres, Facilitator, CitySpaces;

Members: E. Dahli; S. Dutchak; C. Friesen; E. Gibson; G. Gillespie; M. Holland; R. Kelley; L. Mari; M. Poirier; D. Posavad; J. Reilly; L. Spalteholz; J. Tarbotton; V. Wynn-Williams

Regrets: C. Forester; K. Wiseman;

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair de Vries called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

**CHAIR'S REMARKS**

- A reminder was given that the meetings are being webcast and about Saanich's Respectful Workplace Policy. This meeting's focus area is Strengthening Partnerships and Building Awareness.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**MOVED by J. Reilly and Seconded by S. Dutchak: "That the minutes from the October 22, 2020 Housing Strategy Task Force meeting be adopted."**

**CARRIED**

**MOVED by M. Holland and Seconded by G. Gillespie: "That the Task Force:**

- Refer proposed action items 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32 to the prioritization process and that the Task Force direct staff, facilitators, and the Council representatives refine these actions based on the considerations from the Task Force.
- Refer the following new actions to the prioritization process and the staff, facilitators, and the Council representatives refine these actions based on the considerations from the Task Force:
  - Expand housing options/certain policies outside the urban containment boundary;
  - Reduce or eliminate landscape bonding for non-market housing applications;
  - Land value capture tax; and
  - Consider typing multi-bedroom requirements to height and density.

- **Refer the following new actions to the prioritization process and the staff, facilitators, and the Council representatives refine these actions based on the considerations from the Task Force:**
  - **One-stop-shop/development portal and online development applications;**
  - **Take a holistic approach to each neighbourhood in applying an appropriate diversity of housing within the local context;**
  - **Prezone to allow ground-oriented missing middle housing in all single-family zones within the urban containment boundary;**
  - **Create incentives for landlords to serve tenants with the greatest need for and barriers to housing;**
  - **Open data on current development timelines for the public to see. Set targets with and around this, not just the creation of affordable housing;**
  - **A policy that supports the equitable distribution of housing types, forms, tenures and prices;**
  - **Explore opportunities to allow for single-family homeowners to convert their property as needed to house people experiencing barriers to housing (for example, transitional housing for new immigrants and refugees);**
  - **Match new restrictive/prescriptive regulations with permissive regulation and deregulation to avoid discouraging housing; and**
  - **Using municipal policies and regulations to discourage speculation and upward pressure on land prices.”**

**The Motion was then PUT and CARRIED**

**MOVED by C. Friesen and Seconded by G. Gillespie: “That the Task Force amend the actions proposed as follows:**

- **Take a holistic approach to each neighbourhood in applying an appropriate diversity of housing within the local context; more guidance is needed regarding what types and quantity of units are built within in individual neighbourhood; this does not apply just to affordable housing;**
- **Match new restrictive/prescriptive regulations with permissive regulation and deregulation to avoid discouraging housing; mitigate negative impacts if possible;**
- **Explore opportunities to allow for single-family homeowners to convert their property as needed to house people experiencing barriers to housing (for example, transitional housing for new immigrants and refugees). Streamline the application process, so it is quick and easy to be compassionate.**
- **Move the updated following action item to action 30:**
  - **A policy that supports the equitable distribution of housing types, forms, tenures and prices as mixed-income communities are positive and healthy;**
- **Move the following action item to action 24 and forward to prioritization:**
  - **Open data on current development timelines for the public to see. Set targets with and around this, not just the creation of affordable housing;**
- **Move the updated following action item to action 27 and forward to prioritization:**
  - **Prezone to allow ground-oriented missing middle housing in all single-family zones within the urban containment boundary. The missing middle has been defined by housing form;**
- **Move the following action item to action 30:**
  - **Take a holistic approach to each neighbourhood in applying an appropriate diversity of housing within the local context;**
- **Refine by staff, facilitators, and Council representatives based on feedback and comments from the Task Force and forward to prioritization the updated action item:**
  - **One-stop-shop/development portal and online development applications.**

- Could look at having a Housing Appointee, separate from the Planning Department, appointed by Council that reviews housing for consistency. Should there be disagreement, applicant could appeal to Council directly. The Appointee that is accountable to Council;**
- **Encourage or incentivize affordable living features to lower transportation costs, utilities and overall living costs. Consider tying into an Area Median Income (AMI) chart;**
  - **Create resources, assistant centres, incentive packages for landlords to rent units to vulnerable households such as refugees, people experiencing poverty, or other vulnerable demographics. Focus on assisting landlords and open opportunities to educate as to what programs exist. Saanich is dependent on small scale landlords to execute this vision; and**
  - **Encourage, destigmatize and properly regulate boarding and rooming houses, shared housing and other low barrier forms of housing.”**

**The Motion was then PUT and CARRIED**

**ACTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND BUILDING AWARENESS:**

J. Bahen, Facilitator, CitySpaces; presented and highlighted to the Task Force:

- Build awareness through communication, education and advocacy
  - Create communication strategies that resonate with residents, such as personal stories from individuals experiencing housing challenges
  - Develop inclusive engagement processes and involve the community early in the process
  - Hold workshops on housing issues
  - Provide online engagement in support of affordable housing
- Advocate for increased tools and funding from senior government
  - Advocate to higher levels of government for change and support, such as through the submission of UBCM resolutions.
  - Advocating to higher levels of government is a key strategy that municipalities can use to enact change since Provincial and Federal governments have greater access to funding and regulatory change.
- Strengthen existing and new partnerships across all sectors
  - Continue to grow the local network of partners on affordable housing, including working with BC Housing, on-profits, private developers, School Districts, Camosun College and the University of Victoria.
- Work with BC Housing on undeveloped/underdeveloped sites
  - Work with BC Housing to explore options to intensify and provide additional affordable housing on existing BC Housing properties in Saanich.
- Build relationships and enhance partnerships with Indigenous communities in Saanich around housing
  - Commit to engaging with local First Nations and urban Indigenous communities to address housing issues and opportunities.
- Support partnerships between the non-profit and private housing sectors
  - Explore opportunities to partner with private developers in different non-profit organizations to deliver units the non-profit can own and successfully manage.
- Support non-profit development opportunities
  - Explore ways to support non-profit housing developers and community land trusts to create more affordable housing in Saanich.
  - Consider non-traditional renting and ownership models such as housing with shared equity models of ownership, co-housing, co-operative housing, and rent-to-own options.

- Policy supports can go a long way to supporting affordable housing creation.
- Expand housing options on institutional lands
  - Work with property owners to develop housing on institutional lands, including post-secondary institutions.
- Align strategic directions of the Housing Strategy with senior government initiatives
  - Align targets, strategies, and actions with those found in the Provincial and Federal strategies.

### **STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND BUILDING AWARENESS NEW ACTIONS**

1. Revitalize the role of community associations. Currently, community associations have a strong role in the development process; there are no resources, the level of community engagement varies.
2. Establish relationships with community partners.
3. Consider a staff team dedicated to housing, create a Saanich development corporation.
4. The municipality can play a range of roles. A discussion needs to occur to determine what roles the municipality is prepared to play. A clear tool kit would be ideal to decide what action to take under a particular circumstance.
5. Increasing referrals to BIAs. See the referral process expanded to other stakeholders like local businesses, major employment centres, student or educational centres to find future residents' voices.
6. Develop a mechanism to capture the voice of future residents. It should be semi-automated, so even if a people's demographic does not show up, their view is taken into account.
7. Look at new ways to support land-use decisions that are collaborative and constructive. Municipalities can take leadership and push for legislative change through UBCM. Invest in neighbourhood groups, run programs with community associations, encourage good neighbourhood initiatives.
8. Engage university students to ease some of the pressure off of staff through co-op positions or internships. Host an architecture and design competition.

**MOVED by G. Gillespie and Seconded by S. Dutchak: "That the facilitators, Saanich staff and Council representatives collect the input from this meeting and organize and submit the summaries for the Task Force's consideration and discussion at the next meeting."**

**CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

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CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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COMMITTEE SECRETARY