

**MINUTES**  
**HOUSING STRATEGY TASK FORCE**  
Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers  
Via Electronic Communications  
October 29, 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; Matt Blakely, Planner Senior Planning Technician – Research and Analysis (Community Planning); and Tara Da Silva, Senior Committee Clerk

Facilitators: Lani Brunn, Lead Facilitator, CitySpaces; Julia Bahen, Facilitator, CitySpaces; Kevin Green, Facilitator, CitySpaces; Anna Zhuo, Facilitator, CitySpaces;

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

Regrets: L. Mari

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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 Reduce Barriers to Housing.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**MOVED by L. Spalteholz and Seconded by E. Dahli: "That the minutes from the October 22, 2020 Housing Strategy Task Force meeting be adopted."**

**CARRIED**

**MOVED by M. Holland and Seconded by K. Wiseman: "That the Task Force refer proposed action items 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 to the prioritization process and that the Task Force direct staff, facilitators, and the Council representatives to refine these actions based on the considerations from the Task Force."**

**CARRIED**

**MOVED by M. Poirier and Seconded by E. Dahli: “That the Task Force refer the following new actions to prioritization process and that the Task Force direct staff, facilitators, and the Council representatives to refine these actions based on the considerations from the Task Force:**

- Investigate the use of pre-approved modular homes as garden suites;
- Develop policy and guidelines for family-appropriate housing
- Land capacity analysis;
- Update RS Single-Family Housing Zones to allow for multiple units (to be combined with action 22);
- Allow the stratification of garden suites; and
- Utilize a 3-D adaptive modelling program.”

**CARRIED**

**MOVED by G. Gillespie and Seconded by S. Dutchak: “That the Task Force refer the following new actions to prioritization process and that the Task Force direct staff, facilitators, and the Council representatives to refine these actions based on the considerations from the Task Force:**

- Review and revise the growth management model and policies in the Official Community Plan (OCP) and prioritize an OCP update or Saanich-wide plan for Land use and planning over the continuation of Local Area Plans;
- Establish an innovation district for performance-based zoning;
- Create a University District;
- Encourage co-operative housing and co-housing.”

**CARRIED**

**MOVED by C. Forester and Seconded by E. Dahli: “That the Task Force refer the following new action to the meeting for Focus Area #4:**

- Reduce barriers in new developments.”

**CARRIED**

**MOVED by G. Gillespie and Seconded by K. Wiseman: “That the Task Force refer the following new action to the meeting for Focus Area #5 for further discussion during Focus Area 5:**

- Look at affordable homeownership and long-term leases.”

**CARRIED**

**MOVED by D. Posavad and Seconded by L. Spalteholz: “That the Task Force refer the following new actions to prioritization process and that the Task Force direct staff, facilitators, and the Council representatives to refine these actions based on the considerations from the Task Force:**

- Support housing options that allow for ageing in place and first time home buyers;
- Develop strategies to address demand and speculation; and
- Develop strategies for shifting towards the right kind of supply.”

**CARRIED**

## **ACTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR REDUCING BARRIERS TO HOUSING**

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

- A housing strategy outlines recommended steps to address identified needs.
  - Evidence-based – A successful action plan is tied to demonstrated community need. Typically, action plans are developed following an assessment or analysis of community trends (e.g. housing gaps and needs).
  - Implementation – An action plan must be realistic and measurable. The identified actions should be achievable and within the purview of a local government.
  - Equity lens – An action plan must be crafted in recognition of power dynamics, including structural racism. To create real change, an action plan seeks to address inequities in marginalized communities.
1. Development application process review – This is a parallel initiative. The purpose of the Development Process Review is to assess the practices and procedures followed by Current Planning to improve the Division's efficiency and effectiveness.
    - The key goal of the review is to improve the application process times.
    - The focus of the review is on rezonings, form and character development permits, and development variance permits as they form the bulk of the department's applications, which are decided on by Council.
    - The review will include engagement with staff and key stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in the development process review.
    - To ensure an equitable approach, a diverse group of stakeholders, including various staff, applicants, and developers, will be invited to participate.
    - Recommendations will be provided to enhance the processes' effectiveness further, expand stakeholder understanding of the processes and expectations, and, where possible, improve processing times for the subject types of development applications.
    - Timeline: RFP will be posted in November/December, and the expected completion date is Q3 2021.
  2. Community amenity contribution (CAC) and inclusionary zoning policy – This is a parallel initiative. Develop a CAC and inclusionary zoning policy that will result in a fair, transparent and focused process for negotiating amenities and affordable housing.
  3. Bonus density zoning – This is a parallel initiative. When developing the CAC and inclusionary zoning policy, examine the use of bonus density zoning in key locations where additional development or density is appropriate. Bonus Density Zoning is established through a zoning schedule that permits additional density to provide pre-defined amenities or affordable housing needed by the community.
  4. Explore opportunities for pre-zoning – consider pre-zoning areas of Saanich to encourage the type of development needed to meet current and future housing needs. For example, pre-zoning for infill can incentivize the development of attainable and diverse housing.
  5. Update parking bylaw requirements – Review and update/modernize parking bylaw requirements as necessary for different zones and housing typologies.
  6. Develop a financial strategy with tools and incentives to facilitate housing development for low to moderate income households. Explore options to encourage affordable housing development through the use of financial tools and incentives such as grants, reduced permitting fees, and property tax exemptions.
  7. Consider ways to advance equity and inclusion – This action is about equitable access to affordable housing options.
    - Explore ways to ensure equity is prioritized while developing housing policies, regulations, and programs.
    - Integrating equity could include compiling and reporting on equity data, developing ongoing relationships with equity-seeking groups in the community to inform housing actions, and applying an equity lens to better address the diverse housing barriers, needs, and priorities of residents.

8. Expand adaptable design guidelines – Investigate ways further to support adaptable and universal design in new developments.
  - Saanich’s Basic Adaptable Housing standards require newly constructed residential buildings serviced by an elevator containing an apartment or congregate housing uses.
  - The District’s voluntary Enhanced Adaptable Housing standards apply to apartment buildings. They provide a higher level of accessible and adaptable features than Basic Adaptable and are appropriate for seniors housing.
  - Basic Adaptable Housing is
    - barrier-free access to all suites and amenity areas;
    - wider doorways;
    - maneuvering at suite entries and corridors;
    - access to a main-floor bathroom;
    - reinforcement of bathroom walls for future installation of grab bars, and;
    - accessible door handles, switches, and outlets.
9. Set targets and monitor development – monitor and report on affordable housing creation in Saanich to track progress towards meeting targets.
  - Develop 10-year housing targets that respond to the type and amount of housing needed to meet existing and emerging housing demands and set a clear direction for Saanich.
  - Monitoring and evaluation – develop a framework to monitor and report progress towards achieving targets and actions and assessing current housing market conditions.

#### **REDUCING BARRIERS TO HOUSING NEW ACTIONS**

1. Take a holistic approach to each neighbourhood in applying an appropriate diversity of housing within the local context.
2. Develop a one-stop-shop development online portal for development applications.
3. Use municipal regulations and policies to discourage speculation and upward pressure on land prices.
4. Create incentives for landlords to service tenants with the greatest need or barriers.
5. Match new restrictive/prescriptive regulations with permissive regulation/deregulation to avoid discouraging housing.
6. Pre-zone to allow ground-oriented missing middle housing by right in all single-family zones within the urban containment boundary.
7. Create an open data source for current development timelines for the public to view. Set targets around this, not just the creation of affordable housing.
8. Explore opportunities to allow for single-family homeowners to convert their property as needed to house people with barriers to housing (i.e. transitional housing for new immigrants, refugees).

**MOVED by E. Dahli and Seconded by R. Kelley: “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 7:52 pm.

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CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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COMMITTEE SECRETARY