

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



TO: Planning & Development Committee
FROM: B. Newell, Chief Administrative Officer
DATE: October 3, 2019
RE: Housing Needs Reports

Administrative Recommendation:

THAT the RDOS submit an application to the Province to initiate a Rural Housing Needs Report in 2020; but including the District of Summerland, the Village of Keremeos.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of a new provincial requirement to complete Housing Needs Reports by 2022, and to review provincial grant funding available for this project.

Background:

Reporting Requirements

On April 16, 2019, Bill 18 - 2018 came into effect, which amended the *Local Government Act* to require all local governments in B.C. to complete Housing Needs Reports by April 2022, and every five years thereafter.

To determine current and projected housing needs, local governments are required to collect approximately fifty (50) distinct kinds of data about current and projected population, household income, significant economic sectors, and currently available and anticipated housing units.

The reports must contain statements about key areas of local need, including affordable and rental housing, as well as housing for seniors, families, persons with special needs, and for those at risk of homelessness. They must also include data about households in the “core” and “extreme core” housing need categories, and provide five-year projections (minimum) for housing supply needs.

When the reports are complete, local governments are required to receive the report at a public council or board meeting, and publish the report on the internet.

The province has stated that regional districts must include all of the required content for each Electoral Area, regardless if an Electoral Area has an OCP or a Zoning Bylaw.

Provincial Grant Program

Currently, the province is providing a three-year funding program for local governments to undertake Housing Needs Reports, which is administered by the Union of BC Municipalities. The next deadline for grant submissions is November 29th, 2019. The available grants are scaled to the net population of the planning area as such:

Table 1: Funding Maximums

Population	Funding Maximum
Under 5,000	\$15,000
5,000 to 14,999	\$20,000
15,000 to 49,999	\$30,000

Alternately, local governments can choose to participate in a more comprehensive region-wide report, with up to \$150,000 in funding available to each Regional District. In this case, the Regional District can coordinate the project on behalf of their members, as long as community-specific information and reporting is provided for each individual Electoral Area and participating municipality.

Under the Province's rules, the RDOS would be the "primary applicant" for the grant, and would be required to submit a Board resolution. Each partnering community outside of the RDOS's jurisdiction would also need to submit a Council resolution that states their approval for the RDOS to apply for, receive and manage the grant funding on their behalf.

Analysis:

Through literature review, it seems that a number of regional districts are undertaking a more collaborative approach with their member municipalities to complete a housing needs report. Some of the main reasons provided for this region-wide approach include:

- the Regional District would be one body coordinating a single project, which means increased value for tax dollars through service delivery efficiencies.
- recognizing that the commuter-shed is larger than one individual municipality, and that attainable housing issues cross municipal boundaries into their surrounding areas.
- recognizing that no single community could address the full range of affordable housing needs of the region (nor would likely need to).
- ultimately, supporting a coordinated and consistent response toward regional housing goals, including a solid basis for any future follow-up initiatives.

Presently, it is understood that the District of Summerland and Village of Keremeos are two municipalities that are interested in pursuing a regional-level housing report project for the purpose of meeting the requirement. The City of Penticton has already completed a Housing Needs Report that will meet the provincial requirement, and the Towns of Oliver and Osoyoos preferred to complete their own individual reports.

The Town of Princeton has expressed interest, but only for a sub-regional project scope that would include the Town and Electoral Area H. Given that the Town has already received grant funding for their own individual project, and this unique partnership would entail the mobilizing and monitoring of two separate and housing needs projects, it would make more sense to incorporate Electoral Area H into the larger regional project, while sharing the report and its findings with the Town of Princeton.

Alternatives:

1. THAT a grant application for a regional Housing Needs Report be initiated, with the following participating local governments:
 - a) TBD
2. THAT a regional Housing Needs Report and provincial grant funding application not be initiated at this time.

Respectfully submitted:

Cory Labrecque

C. Labrecque, Planner II

Endorsed by:



B. Dollevoet, G.M. of Development Services