

THE CORPORATION OF THE  
**CITY OF WHITE ROCK**  
CORPORATE REPORT



**DATE:** November 25, 2024

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Anne Berry, Director, Planning & Development Services

**SUBJECT:** Housing Accelerator Fund Application – Second Intake

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT Council;

1. Receive for information the report to Council titled “Housing Accelerator Fund Application – Second Intake” from the Director of Planning & Development Services, dated November 25, 2024; and
  2. Endorse the actions and correlating initiatives outlined in this corporate report as described.
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to present Council with an updated Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) application for the second intake, and to seek Council endorsement of the proposed actions to support the City’s HAF application.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION**

<b>Motion # &amp; Meeting Date</b>	<b>Motion Details</b>
2023-294 July 10, 2023	THAT Council receive for information the corporate report dated July 10, 2023, from the Director of Planning & Development Services, titled “Federal Housing Accelerator Fund Application Requirements and Recommended Process” for consideration; and  1. Approve the allocation of \$15,000 from the Operating Contingency to retain the services of a consultant to assist in the preparation of an application to the Housing Accelerator Fund; and  2. Direct staff to prepare an Action Plan for Council approval, with recommendations on seven actions the City could commit to in support of an application to the Housing Accelerator Fund; and  3. Direct staff to identify which strategic and departmental priorities are recommended to be paused in order to allocate resources to the Housing Accelerator Fund application, and subsequent processes.

<p>2023-329 August 14, 2023</p>	<p>THAT Council receive the corporate report dated August 14, 2023, from the Director of Planning &amp; Development Services, titled “Housing Accelerator Fund Application – Proposed Action” for consideration; and</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Direct staff to continue to work with the consultant to complete the submission of an application on behalf of the City of White Rock to the federal government Housing Accelerator Fund; and</li> <li>2. Endorse the seven (7) actions and correlating initiatives outlined in this corporate report as described.</li> </ol>
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**INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

In August 2023, Council endorsed an application to the Federal Housing Accelerator Fund for grant funding available to local governments for the provision of housing, to encourage improvements to the pace of the development of new housing across the country. The Fund is administered by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

Seven actions and their correlating initiatives were developed, based on the submission criteria requirements and taking into consideration existing densities within the Official Community Plan at the time of application. Many of those actions were completed as a result of the Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing legislation implementation. Ultimately, the City was unsuccessful in the 2023 grant application.

A second intake was opened for submissions on July 15, 2024, with a submission deadline of September 13, 2024. For this round the HAF criteria was also updated so that any updated action plan initiatives should align with the ten (10) Housing Accelerator Fund best practices, as follows, which would present density changes for the City of White Rock in addition to the ones that were automatically implemented via the mandated provincial SSMUH requirements:

1. End exclusionary zoning.
2. Make municipally owned lands available for housing.
3. Increase process efficiency.
4. Prioritized/enhanced development approval process.
5. Comprehensive review of development charges and fee schedules.
6. Reduce or eliminate parking standards.
7. Eliminate restrictions.
8. Develop affordable housing community improvement plans.
9. Design and implement guidelines.
10. Develop grant programs.

Staff worked with Modus Planning, Design & Engagement Inc. to conduct the assessment and determine recommendations for the specific actions which would best meet application criteria established by CMHC, taking into consideration the above best practices and that several of the previously submitted initiatives were made redundant for the City by the Province’s implementation of the Bill 44 legislation. The new proposed initiatives are summarized in Table 1 that follows.

Table 1: Initiative Details

Action	Initiatives	Anticipated Number of Units (in 3yrs/in 10yrs)	Anticipated Score (Out of 35)
<b>Expand as-of-right zoning permission on frequent transit corridors for midrise development</b>	Update Zoning Bylaw to allow up to 6-8 storeys of multi-family residential development in close proximity to White Rock frequent transit corridors	45 /150	14.0
<b>Remove minimum parking requirements for residential uses in downtown area</b>	Update Zoning Bylaw to remove minimum parking requirements for zones in White Rock Uptown area and allow market to decide how much parking is needed and can be built for individual projects	30/100	14.0
<b>Waive DCCs for non-market affordable housing</b>	Prepare a new DCC waiver bylaw and determine the percentage of waiver to be offered for eligible non-market affordable housing developments	30/150	14.0
<b>Below-Market Redevelopment</b>	Determine appropriate municipally owned lands and seek out non-profit housing and development partners to scope a project for developing an identified site for affordable housing	0/110	8.0
<b>Develop e-application and e-permits for all planning applications</b>	Explore options and implement an e-application and e-permitting systems for all planning applications to reduce processing times and improve the efficacy of development services at City Hall	41/332	14.0
<b>Remove Barriers for Affordable Housing</b>	Update the Planning Procedure Bylaw with new procedures for below-market housing projects that meet the OCP's vision and policies; Remove the need for review by design panel, public hearings, and Council approved Development Permits.	22/120	16.0

<b>Action</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>	<b>Anticipated Number of Units (in 3yrs/in 10yrs)</b>	<b>Anticipated Score (Out of 35)</b>
<b>Develop systems to monitor and publicly report on application processing times</b>	In conjunction with e-applications and e-permitting, develop a system where application processing times, unit counts, and other key statistics are reported on and made publicly available. Develop standardized processing times and flow charts for applications and update existing systems to support notifications and alerts, and quarterly reporting.	0/0	6.0
<b>Pre-approve designs for plex-homes</b>	Engage an architect to develop different designs for plex-homes (up to six units on a single detached lot) that meet the goals and objectives of the OCP’s DP areas and applicable zones. Refine the designs through a community engagement process.	28/126	14.0
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>196/1,088</b>	

The overall intent of the initiatives is to seek a gentle increase in the number of residential units being created, however staff notes that these initiatives are more robust than the previous application, and will require more significant bylaw amendments, including potential increases to current density provisions in the OCP, should Council choose to continue to pursue the application.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no further budgetary implications anticipated for the application portion of HAF. If successful, and once the grant funding is awarded, there would be reporting requirements on the part of the City. Should the City be successful in being selected to receive funding, staff recommend reporting back to Council with the grant amount, and estimates for any costs associated with the actions, to ensure the funding is adequate to proceed, prior to accepting the funds.

At this time, based on the unit potential within the City’s application, it is estimated that the City could receive up to \$9.3M in funds. These funds can be applied towards a variety of projects, such as redevelopment of city owned lands, creating an Amenity Cost Charge bylaw, community amenities, other capital projects, and planning processes for the initiatives themselves.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

At the request of staff, the consultant submitted the application to the HAF by the August 13, deadline. Submissions were permitted in advance of Council endorsement of the application, however the City is not eligible to receive funding unless a Council resolution in support of the application is submitted.

### **COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Community engagement levels would vary depending on each individual action selected.

### **INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS**

None at this stage. Other departments will have involvement subject to the actions selected.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

Increasing residential units within the City will support enhanced transit infrastructure in the future and will help to decrease pressures to develop environmentally sensitive areas and on protected agricultural lands in other parts of the lower mainland.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR TREE PRESERVATION AND TREE CANOPY ENHANCEMENT**

The requirements of the Tree Protection Bylaw would apply; however, the tree protection bylaw cannot be utilized to restrict densities required by Provincial Legislation.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

Several of the proposed actions are in alignment with Council's strategic priorities.

1. Enable appropriate market housing builds to address inventory shortages and build tax revenue.
2. Increase at and below market rental housing inventory.
3. Improve permit process to reduce wait times.
4. Realize service delivery efficiencies via digital transformation and aligning existing processes with best practices.
5. Deliver a plan, identifying location, funding, and partners, to build an affordable housing project

### **OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES**

Should Council wish to pursue the status quo, and not apply to the HAF, the following alternative recommendation is provided for Council consideration:

1. That Council direct staff to continue to focus on the currently established strategic and departmental priorities without pursuing the Housing Accelerator Fund.

**CONCLUSION**

The initiatives submitted meet the intent of the HAF application guidelines and requirements, however as noted in the body of this report these initiatives will require bylaw amendments that include potential changes to density and parking requirements in certain parts of the City. If Council wishes to continue to pursue the application staff will forward the supporting Council resolution so that the application can be fully eligible for grant award consideration by the CMHC.

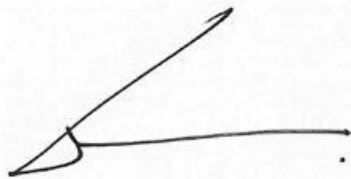
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne Berry", written over a light grey rectangular background.

Anne Berry  
Director, Planning & Development Services

**Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer**

I concur with the recommendations of this corporate report.

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Guillermo Ferrero  
Chief Administrative Officer