

GROWTH COMMITTEE REPORT

M&C No.	2022-384
Report Date	December 08, 2022
Meeting Date	December 12, 2022
Service Area	Growth and Community Services

Her Worship Mayor Donna Noade Reardon and Members of Common Council

SUBJECT: Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI)

AUTHORIZATION

Primary Author	Commissioner	City Manager	Chair of Growth Committee
<i>Jennifer Kirchner</i>	<i>Jacqueline Hamilton</i>	<i>Brent McGovern</i>	<i>Councillor Joanna Killian</i>

RECOMMENDATION

Growth Committee Recommends that Common Council direct staff to submit a coordinated municipal led application, in partnership with our non-profit development community for the CMHC Rapid Housing Initiative Grant program;

And that \$25,000 be allocated from the Affordable Action Housing Reserve to support the hiring of a consultant to prepare the City’s application.

REPORT

The Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) is a funding program for the construction of affordable housing projects led by Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC). The RHI is open to Municipal Governments and Non-Profit Organizations for new construction and conversion/rehabilitation projects that will establish new affordable housing units for a minimum of 20 years.

The City of Saint John is able to form a partnership with Non-Profit Organizations who have projects that meet the RHI Eligibility Criteria. The City would submit an application for the RHI on behalf of these Organizations, which will enable the selected local projects. The benefit of this approach is primarily reduced application requirements.

Non-Profit Organizations will be required to submit eligible projects for assessment and selection for inclusion in the City led application. Those projects that are not selected, will be encouraged to apply independently for the grant program. Staff is recommending the hiring of a Consultant to prepare the

application package for submission. The Consultant will be selected based on their track record of successful CMHC grant applications.

At the December 6, 2022 meeting of the Growth Committee, the proposed approach for a City lead application which is supported through the hiring of an experienced consultant was recommended to Common Council for approval.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

On October 3, 2022, Common Council adopted the Affordable Housing Action Plan.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Common Council has established five priorities for their 2021-2026 term. Affordable Housing aligns with the following Council Priorities.

Grow:

- Population Growth
 - Grow our population at a rate of 2% annually by the end of Council's term.

Belong:

- Livable Neighbourhoods
 - Facilitate a mix of affordable housing in all of our neighbourhoods.

SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

Due to the deadline of the program, staff believe that a consolidated application will need to be submitted by the end of January 2023.

Staff believe that due to the technical requirements of the application, and the amount of work required to obtain necessary information from our non-profit development community to submit a successful application, that additional temporary resources are needed to ensure that the City can meet this timeline

Staff are recommending the engagement of an expert consultant, for an amount not to exceed \$25,000 + HST, to assist with this submission to CMHC. Staff recommend the funding for the consultant be taken from the Affordable Action Housing Reserve.

INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Staff have started meeting with the non-profit development community, and they have expressed interest in partnering with the city on a consolidated application.

The Resolution was developed with the input of Finance, Utilities and Infrastructure, Growth and Community Services, and the City Manager's Office.

The proposed approach received support from the Growth Committee at the December 6, 2022 meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) Discussion