

DISTRICT OF  
**OAK  BAY**

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Bruce Anderson, Director of Building and Planning

**DATE:** January 24, 2019

**RE:** Strategic Planning: Housing Workshop

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This memo serves as an introduction for Council to the Strategic Planning: Housing Workshop to be held on January 29, 2019. The information presented here is intended to help frame the discussion on how to achieve the Strategic Priority: Ensure Access to Diverse Housing Options.

Housing has been identified as a key issue for Oak Bay. The Official Community Plan, previous strategic priorities, and the more recent statements of Council have each confirmed housing is a priority for consideration. Oak Bay is a mature residential community experiencing relatively moderate growth on a predominantly built out, limited land base. This, combined with the rich natural and cultural heritage of buildings and landscapes, produces a unique set of conditions for Oak Bay in the effort to ensure access to diverse housing options in the community.

Oak Bay is a community of approximately 18,094 residents living in 8122 households (2016 Census). The current housing stock is primarily single detached dwellings (64%), followed by apartments (27%), duplexes (8%) and row housing (1%). Land values are high for the region, as are average home values, presenting a challenge for entry into the single detached and condominium housing market. Rental supply (typically in the form of duplexes, suites, townhouses, and apartments), is relatively limited; and rental vacancy rates are also very low for the region, as demand exceeds the supply. These are all significant challenges for the community of Oak Bay to ensure access to diverse housing options.

The Official Community Plan (OCP) does offer direction for addressing housing needs in Oak Bay, where broad objectives and specific policies give clear guidance and provide opportunities to respond to the challenges facing the community. Policy directions and implementation strategies for actions to be taken are contained in the OCP. These can be reviewed and selected for further consideration as part of this Council's Strategic Initiative(s) for Housing.

The Housing Workshop is intended to document the key housing issues identified by Council, to place those in the Oak Bay context and policy framework for housing, to examine potential approaches to address housing issues, and then to determine Council's strategic initiatives to ensure access to diverse housing options.

The Housing Workshop will first strive to identify the key issues for Council related to housing in the community. An overview of the current housing supply in Oak Bay, as well as the policy, regulatory, community and regional influences on housing supply and demand, will be presented. This information provides the background for a review of the range of potential approaches that can be taken to address the key housing issues identified by Council.

Council will then be asked to consider the range of approaches to address the key issues for housing in Oak Bay; and to focus on developing strategic initiatives with staff, that have the potential to move closer to accommodating the specific housing needs identified as priorities for the community. The resulting draft strategic initiatives will be further detailed by staff in terms of project management, resources, and anticipated timelines for the 2018 - 2022 Strategic Planning period. This information will be prepared for the upcoming Strategic Priority Session: New Initiatives February 13, 2019, and then brought forward to the Budget Estimates process.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Anderson', is written over a horizontal line.

Bruce Anderson, Director of Building and Planning